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ABSTRACT

The research is set in Sri Lanka, where official policy and legislation advocates' inclusive education (National Policy on Education, 2003) but schools are not obligated to implement inclusive educational practices (Kulasekera, 2006; Stubbs, 2005). Within this backdrop a private boys' school, which on its own initiative seeks to be inclusive, is selected for the research.

The thesis follows the journey of six primary grade teachers and their students, aged six to eleven years, who are identified with speech, language and communication difficulties. The research demonstrates the manner in which, as a school based consultant speech and language therapist I seek to inspire teachers to engage in more inclusionary practices in adult-child communication, because I agree with the author who explains that inclusive education is a call to identify and destroy exclusionary practices within education (Slee, 2011).

An action research methodology is selected to guide the research process, because action research is considered to be highly suitable when studying the social world to bring social change (Neuman, 2006). In keeping with the current trends in research (Moore 2011; Ghaziani, 2010; Martin and Miller, 2003; Slee, 1999; Freire, 1972) and the UN conventions (UN Standard Rules 1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997; UNESCO, 1994; UNICEF, 1989), the voices of students and parents form a critical element in shaping the action process.

My commitment to learn and improve my practice as an effective consultant speech and language therapist is witnessed through two action cycles. Further, I provide empirical evidence for schools in Sri Lanka and countries in the South experiencing similar conditions, to initiate the process of becoming more inclusive. Therefore, the research has implications for schools locally and internationally and for students with speech, language and communication difficulties, for whom the research is meant.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
ASHA	American Speech-Language Hearing Association
CALSPA	Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders
EFA	Education For All
IASLT	Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists
ICD-10	International Classification of Diseases
IRE	Initiation-Response-Evaluation
IRF	Initiation-Response-Feedback
MoE	Ministry of Education
RCSLT	Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SPAA	Speech Pathology Association of Australia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation

"To begin a story someone in some way must break a particular silence" (Wiebe and Johnson, 1998 p.1)

The thesis revolves around a research process that brings to the forefront the story of including students with the label of Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) in primary classrooms in Sri Lanka. The research intends to break the silence surrounding teachers' attitude towards disabled students which is reflected in the manner in which they communicate with these students. By breaking the silence I seek to produce meaningful change within a single school environment.

I am an independent practitioner of speech and language therapy, in a country where the medical model of disability (Peters, 2003) or the 'deficit approach' (Slee, 2004), which considers the child to be a problem that needs to be cured, is popular (Mittler, 2000; MoE, 2000). Within this macro context, I work in clinical, school and higher educational settings as clinician and consultant. My everyday routine as a clinician involves assessing, diagnosing and providing therapeutic interventions as prescribed in the job description of speech and language therapists by internationally recognised professional associations (RCSLT, 2009; ASHA 2004 in Steppling et al., 2007). As a consultant in school settings I create awareness, educate and advise administrators, teaching staff and parents concerning including all students, provide speciality testing for students and coordinate collaborative teams for student support. Within higher education I fulfil the roles of lesson writer, lecturer, examiner and programme coordinator.

I believe in social justice and equality for all. I believe that children who are marginalised within the education system in Sri Lanka, due to medical diagnosis, as other authors have discussed, must be educated together with their peers (Schwartz, 2005) while being acknowledged and treated with respect (Armstrong, 2008; Booth and Ainscow, 2002) instead of being devalued due to their impairments (Slee, 2011). I believe that society must consider the social model of disability (UPIAS, 1976 and Oliver, 1996 and 2009 in Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Mittler, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999) and take responsibility to recognise and remove barriers that prevent inclusion (Moore, 2011; Beazely, 2000; Corker and French, 1999; Beazely and Moore, 1995).

Hence, my vision is to see all students being treated fairly and nurtured with respect in schools through inclusionary school cultures and practices in communication, curriculum, pedagogy (Moore 2011; Slee, 2011; Corbett and Slee, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999) and staff attitudes and perceptions (Vlachou, 1997; Mittler, 2000; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2002). This is in contrast to the current position in Sri Lankan educational establishments where education for disabled students is described as a negative and oppressive experience (Stubbs, 2005; National Policy on Disability, 2003; Yokotani, 2001). Evidence regarding this situation and contesting it is offered throughout the thesis.

A RESEARCH IDEA IS BORN

In practice the research emanated from problems that arose within a school setting due to teachers' lack of understanding regarding speech, language and communication difficulties and their resistance to support students who have been identified with these difficulties via collaborative teaming with or without my input as a consultant speech and language therapist. This lack of understanding, built on longstanding cultural beliefs and prejudices (Gomesz, 2010), despite government policy supporting inclusive education (UNICEF, 2003; MoE, 2004; Hargreaves, Montero, Chau, Sibli and Thanh, 2001), makes the job of a consultant, an outsider to the classroom, more onerous.

The research is therefore about how I recognised the transformative potential of humans and engaged in an action research project. I selected action research because it encourages the study of the social world to bring about change (Neuman, 2006) through the dual focus of improving learning and improving practice (Armstrong and Moore, 2004).

USE OF TERMINOLOGY

To continue engaging in a discourse involving disabled students requires the need to acknowledge the dichotomies that exist in disability discourse, due to increased sensitivity to language and its impact on individuals (Corker and French, 1999). Disability which has been viewed as a social issue since the 1990s in countries of the North is reported to have influenced discourse surrounding this theme (Pledger, 2003). However, the debate regarding what constitutes the disability phenomenon; the biological and social perspective, it has been explained, continues to date (Hedlund, 2000). Researchers are cautioned to recognise the power of words and use them with care due to its ability to influence (Fulcher, 1989 in Slee, 2011) people and situations. Having

considered the context of the research, international views and my personal values and beliefs, I settled for specific terminology which is explained in the paragraphs that follow.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

For the purpose of identifying the group of students selected for the research and having considered the terminology associated with speech, language and communication difficulties in different contexts, I settled for the preferred label in contemporary thinking, in the UK (RCSLT, 2009); Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN). I considered the commonly used terms in Sri Lanka; communication disorders (Wijesinghe, 2010) and speech and language disorders (Inoon, 2008) and believed that by combining the terms, as indicated by SLCN, I will be minimising confusion. Hence, throughout the thesis students whose speech, language and/or communication capabilities do not match society's norms (Pope and Tarlov, 1991 in Pledger, 2003) are referred to as students with the label of SLCN.

I use the phrase 'students with the label of SLCN' to establish my positionality regarding labelling children by focusing on their deficits. Labelling I believe is detrimental especially in countries such as Sri Lanka where knowledge and attitudes towards disabilities as already mentioned reflect a medical perspective. Within such contexts it is highlighted that labels can 'depersonalise and dehumanise' individuals (Shakespeare 1999 and Barton, 2000 in Gwynn, 2004, p117) and grant permission to isolate and exclude (Slee, 2011). By using the phrase 'students with the label of SLCN' I attempt to convey the message that the label does not reflect the 'whole child' but an aspect that needs consideration to allocate adequate resources for successful inclusion.

The description connected with the label of SLCN is borrowed from the Bercow Report (2008) which refers to difficulties in "fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what others say, and using language socially" (Bercow, 2008, p13). This description aptly describes the areas of mismatch in speech, language and communication of the cohort of students selected for the research although the underlying causes of their difficulties are multivariate.

Impairment

Traditionally the term 'impairment' has been used to describe the biological basis of disability and disease (Pledger, 2003, p222) by following the medical model (Martin and

Miller, 2003). Although the medical diagnosis of impairments contradicts the social model theory I agree with the author (Hedlund, 2000) who suggests that diagnosis is necessary for rehabilitation and provision of services that would improve or change disabled persons' situation. Within the thesis the term student/s with impairments is therefore used, when required to acknowledge the personal and pathological deficits that characterise behaviours in some students (Moore, 2010; Corker and French, 1999).

Disability

In developing economies a 'people first language' is favoured and the term 'students with disabilities' is advocated (Miles and Singal, 2010). However, I am drawn to the argument that whilst impairments are present within certain groups of students, disability is not inherent but experienced when the environment and persons collide (Brandt and Pope, 1997, Pope and Tavlov, 1991 and Nagi, 1976 in Pledger, 2003). Environmental factors are recorded as the physical, social and attitudinal environment that people interact in which is influenced by cultural and religious beliefs and practices people follow (National Policy on Disability, 2003).

Hence, disability as several authors explain is conditional and changeable depending on the barriers that are erected or dismantled (Moore, 2010; Corbett and Slee, 2000). The possibility of a change of status from enabled to disabled, it is explained is due to decisions and actions (Slee, 2011) that influence external factors or the socio-ecological context, referred to as the 'enablement/disablement phenomenon' (NIDRR, 2000 in Pledger, 2003). Disability is therefore considered as a process rather than a hopeless ending (Hedlund, 2000). Hence, the term disabled students is present in this thesis when referring to the exclusion of students with impairments, while keeping in mind that determining the threshold when a person becomes disabled is subjective (Jette and Badley, 2000 in Pledger, 2003).

Countries of the North and South

I have opted to refer to developed countries as 'countries of the North' and developing countries as 'countries of the South' (Peters, 2003). Hence, countries which are considered to be wealthier are referred to as countries of the North and economically poor countries are referred to as countries of the South (ibid) within this thesis. According to the United Nations Development Programme Report (HDR, 2005) countries of the North refers to 57 countries mostly in the Northern Hemisphere with the exception of Australia

and New Zealand while countries of the South refers to 133 countries, including Sri Lanka, located mostly in the Southern Hemisphere.

DETERMINING THE WRITING STYLE

As I articulate the story of inclusion, my voice appears as the dominant voice. However, I consciously include other voices those of administrators, teachers and parents, through their stories and views expressed on different occasions, which represent the manifold realities of the context (Armstrong, 2003). I present these voices through a narrative style of writing because narratives can make practice real (Carter, 1993), elucidate multiple voices (Moen, 2006), reveal the part of the world from which it is born and enable interpretation in the light of the life and culture that creates it (Patton, 2002) by unravelling the highly complex layers present in cultures different from countries of the North (Armstrong, 2003).

Further, as a post-modern action researcher, I challenge the traditional view regarding 'silent authorship' (Charmaz and Mitchell, 1997 in Quicke, 2008) and use a first person narration (Macintyre, 2000; Oliver, 2004) to personalise my writing (Lichtman, 2010) and to make it an 'honest and direct' account (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p201). Hence, the thesis is presented by using a narrative approach, written as a first person account.

USING ACRONYMS

Because the thesis may be of interest to individuals from different fields and because acronyms are usually specific to a particular field of study (Thomas, Saxby, Jones, Carruthers, Abal and Dennison, 2006) I follow suggestions (Einshon, 2000; Journal editors, Disability & Society) and minimise the use of acronyms. Hence, acronyms are used for organisations or departments, countries and labels approved by organisations such as 'SLCN' (RCSLT, 2009). Where acronyms are used they are explained in the first instance (Thomas, et al., 2006) except for well known organisations such as UNESCO (Einshon, 2000).

I consciously refrain from applying acronyms to people since I agree with writers (e.g. journal editors, Disability & Society) who highlight that it diminishes the value of the individuals. Instead pseudonyms are used to identify research participants while preserving confidentiality.

The thesis is organised in seven chapters.

Chapter one takes the reader into my world. It opens with a description of the research contexts; Sri Lanka and the focal school followed by a discussion of my life journey and positionality within the research. This chapter also offers an overview of the aims of the research, the research question that I seek to answer and the significance of the research.

Chapter two contains the literature review of the key themes that weave throughout this research; inclusive education, speech, language and communication need (SLCN) and adult-child communication within classrooms. The literature review begins by considering the historical response to educating students with impairments and moves on to discuss the more recent development of the philosophy of inclusive education. Examples and ideas from countries of the North and South are considered with specific focus on the Sri Lanka's response to the global ideal of inclusive education. The chapter next explores ideas surrounding students with the label of SLCN, prevalence data, the impact of speech, language and communication difficulties on school aged children and the manner in which students with the label of SLCN can be successfully included in educational settings. The importance of collaborative teaming and the role of consultant speech and language therapists are also explained. Finally, international developments in classroom communication and influences on adult-child communication are considered prior to discussing inclusive adult-child communication strategies and the role of reflection to encourage teachers' to transform their practice.

Chapter three explores research methodologies prior to identifying action research as the preferred methodology to guide the research process. The influential models in action research and the model designed for this research are discussed next. An account of data collection methods including interviews and observations and qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis are presented finally.

Chapter four concerns the pre-action stage of the action research process. Through data collection and analysis I attempt to show the situation as it is. Data collection occurs as a triangulation exercise and involves different individuals and data collection instruments; interviews and classroom observations. For data analysis I use a mixed methods approach which combines qualitative and quantitative analysis, to provide multiple perspectives of the same data.

Chapter five takes the readers through the first action cycle (actionC1) consisting of four phases; critical reflection, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation. Critical reflection is aided by the outcomes of data analysis. It is conducted as a self-reflective and collaborative exercise. Planning is a collaborative process of identifying and selecting adult-child communication strategies which reflect inclusive education. The action phase discusses the manner in which the plans are implemented. This is followed by a detailed discussion of the monitoring and evaluation phase which includes data collection and analysis to measure changes as a result of action plans, for subsequent reflection.

Chapter six focuses on the second action cycle (actionC2) and the four phases of critical reflection, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation. The critical reflection phase consists of dual activities; self-reflection and critical collaborative reflection similar to actionC1. The planning phase involves organising a teacher training programme in addition to teachers agreeing to implement the communication strategies selected in actionC1. The action phase details the manner in which the plans are executed. This is followed by a discussion of the monitoring and evaluation phase which involves data collection and analysis. The critical reflection phase subsequent to actionC2 is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter seven summarises my vision for students with the label of SLCN and my belief in the transformative potential of humans which led to the research activity. It then moves on to discuss the key topics that dominate the research; inclusive education, including students with the label of SLCN through inclusionary practices in adult-child communication and action research. The manner in which the research aims are met and the research question answered is critically discussed thereafter. This is followed by a discussion regarding limitations, suggestions for further research and recommendations.

CHAPTER 1
SETTING THE STAGE
1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research contexts, personal influences, the research aims and question and finally the impact the research is expected make at national and international level. The research contexts, country and school, are clarified because it has been suggested that when discussing social issues, the meaning must be viewed and understood within the specific cultural contexts (Ghai, 2001, in Swain, 2007).

First a short description of Sri Lanka, the attitude of Sri Lankans towards disability and national developments in education with specific focus on education for disabled children is presented. This is followed by a brief discussion of the history of the focal school, the school organisation, aspects of inclusion already present within the school and other initiatives taken to include disabled students.

Thereafter I trace my journey which led to the decision to undertake the research. The choice of research focus is placed before the reader as an acknowledgement of my presence and positionality and its influence on the research (Moore 2011; Mullings, 1999). The research aims and the research question are stated prior to discussing the impact the research may have on local, national and international arenas.

1.2 THE MACRO RESEARCH CONTEXT: SRI LANKA

The research is situated within the broader arena of a country, Sri Lanka, which is an island located in the South Asian region and a commonwealth country which gained independence from British colonial rule in 1948. Since independence Sri Lankans have enjoyed the rights of participatory governance which provides opportunities to vote for their leaders and publicly discuss issues (Lakshman and Tindell, 2000) including education of disabled students.

Sri Lanka with an estimated population of 22 million people (ADB, 2002) has been home to six major ethnic groups for centuries. However, tensions between the dominant ethnic groups, Sinhalese who comprise of 75% of the population and Tamils who are 12% of the population (Carment, James and Taydass, 2006) have been present for the past 30 years. The 'Sinhalese only' movement which came into effect in 1956 it has been argued, served to estrange the minority groups from the Sinhalese (De Votta, 2004). Since then

the Tamils, have sought for a separate state in the North and the East of Sri Lanka (Kelegama and de Mel, 2007). This development disturbed the previous calm coexistence of a multicultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious community and instead created a setting where diversity is not very well tolerated (BBC online network, 1998).

The research is conducted during a period, when the government of Sri Lanka decided to engage in intense military action to eradicate the threat of what it describes as 'terrorism' from within its borders. The resulting tensions extended to non-conflict zones including the commercial capital Colombo and its suburbs due to activities of terror (Kelegama and de Mel, 2007). Hence, unforeseen school closures, disruption to everyday life, displacements and high turnover of students and teachers due to migration became a norm (De Votta, 2004). Those who survived the ordeals of bomb attacks and shootings, it is reported suffer from psychological trauma and physical, sensory and health impairments (ADB, 2002).

1.2.1 DISABILITY IN SRI LANKA

A majority of Sri Lankans follow Buddhist or Hindu doctrine. Hence, it is highlighted that they view disability through the lens of religious beliefs that associate disability with demonic powers, karma or revisiting of past sins and astrological deficiencies (Danseco, 1997). Religious ceremonies are therefore held to plead with the deities for pardon and compassion, for the disabled and their families (Gomesz, 2010). As elders describe, in the past, the stigma attached to disability and social ostracizing of the family encouraged the denial of the existence of persons with disabilities. However, others fondly recall the manner in which individuals with impairments, especially from poorer families while being denied education were included in the life of the community as labourers. These individuals were identified by their impairments and are fondly remembered by phrases such as "*dumb Mary who used to wash our clothes every Friday*" (Field notes January, 2009). At present I witness a similar mixture of exclusionary and inclusionary practices in rural communities while working on community based rehabilitation projects.

1.2.2 DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION

Education in ancient Sri Lanka as literature suggests was a system of exclusion, as only males from wealthy and high caste families were afforded the opportunity to learn in 'Pirivenas' or Buddhist temples and 'Guru Gedera' or homes of expert teachers (Kulasekera, 2006). From 1505, a part of education shifted into the hands of missionaries,

who arrived from Europe with fleets of conquering ships, whose sole intention was to propagate Christianity (Jayaweera, 2007). Education according to a western curriculum focused on producing elite English speaking scholars necessary for the workforce, it is highlighted, was introduced in 1834 by the British, with the setting up of a Central School Commission (Peebles, 2006). This system is said to have run parallel to education in the vernacular languages, Sinhalese and Tamil, which was learned by 85 percent of the students (Jayaweera, 2007).

From the 1930s until the early 1990s it is reported that focus was turned to providing free primary and secondary education (World Bank, 2005). This decision it has been explained brought Sri Lanka on par with developed countries in terms of basic education attainment (ibid). However, policy decisions during this period were not driven by research but rather by political intuition (Gunawardena, 1991 in Ginige, 2002).

Recent statistics reveal that primary and secondary education is dominated by 9790 public schools administered by the government and 78 private schools (MoE, 2004) established by the missionaries and managed by the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches, aided schools subsidised by the government (Peebles, 2006) and Pirivenas managed by Buddhist organisations (Hargreaves, et al., 2001). Further, it is reported that a new group of schools have emerged in the recent past referred to as international schools and managed by the board of investments (Hargreaves et al., 2001). These schools teach only in the English medium and are outside the purview of the ministry of education (ibid).

The global aim to achieve 'Education for All' (EFA; UNESCO, 2000) is reported not to be a major concern in Sri Lanka, a country in the South, with a 97 percent school enrolment rate in grade one with almost all students completing primary education at the age of 10 years and 81 percent at the age of 14 years (World Bank, 2005). The high literacy level reported in Sri Lanka (UNICEF, 2007) is an indication of the priority given for education.

1.2.3 EDUCATION FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

The establishment of a systematic education system for disabled children in Sri Lanka is traced back to 1912, when the first school for the 'deaf and blind' was established by the Church of England, in the outskirts of the capital, Colombo (Kulasekara, 2006;

Gunawardena and Dhanapala, 2000). The setting up of this school reflected the global trend in that era, of evangelical commitment to serve this community (Winzer, 2007). Around this time it is reported that other religious orders and Non-Governmental Organizations also set up residential and day-school facilities, many of which function to date (UNICEF, 2003). Research also indicates that provision of Primary and Secondary education for disabled children has been in existence in Sri Lanka, (then Ceylon) since 1939 (Alwis, 2005; Yokotani, 2001).

Since gaining independence educating disabled students has been addressed through the National Education Policy (ADB, 2002). In 1968 a cabinet paper emphasized integration of disabled students between the ages of 5-14years (UNICEF, 2003). A public school per educational zone was selected and a Special Education Unit; often a single classroom, with a single trained teacher and students of mixed ages and impairments, was allocated for this purpose (ibid). It is highlighted that 907 special education units were present in public and assisted schools throughout the island in 2002 (ADB, 2002). Integration of students with impairments within the life of public schools as some authors explain meant that the government for the first time was responsible for providing opportunities for disabled students within the existing school system (Hegarty and Alur, 2002).

The National Education Commission (1992) and the Salamanca Convention (1994) subsequently encouraged the adoption of the concept of inclusive education (UNICEF, 2003). In 1997 'The Compulsory Education Ordinance' concerning children aged 5–14 years, introduced primary schools reforms with emphasis on competency based curriculum and continuous assessment (MoE, 2004; Hargreaves et al., 2001). The ordinance supports the philosophy and practice of inclusive education (ibid). However, the ordinance requires that students be assessed by a medical practitioner and the class teacher with parental involvement prior to school enrolment (Mittler, 2000). This process was not implemented (ibid).

The National policy on disability (2003) focuses on 'inclusion as the basis for education' (Rieser, 2008 p76) while the National Education Commission (2003), proposed 'Education for children with disability' by considering policy and strategy recommendations at National level (Jegarasasingham, 2007). The constitution of Sri Lanka has stated its commitment to provide 'all persons of the right to universal and

equal access to education at all levels' (MOE, 2004, p1) while the Parliamentary Act (no: 28, 1996) purports to ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons (ADB, 2002).

Currently the 'National Committee for Special Education' is responsible for decision making, obtaining of approval from the Ministry of Education and implementing educational programmes for disabled individuals (Kulasekara, 2006). The Committee comprises of representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Services, associations of specific interest groups such as mental health, special schools and non-governmental organisations (ibid).

Having followed developments within education for some years, I am aware that a few private schools, since the recent past, have embraced the idea of integration. These schools seek to support students with impairments by involving teachers, parents and professional/s including speech and language therapists, psychologists and special education specialists. The service provision in these schools varies and knowledge sharing is rare. As highlighted by authors in other contexts (Moore and Slee, 2011) these special units I believe are established to raise the schools' profile.

Despite a long history of seeking to educate disabled children less than half of the disabled children in Sri Lanka benefit from any form of educational provision (UNICEF, 2003). The lack of clarity in the Salamanca statement, as other authors (Miles and Singal, 2010) have highlighted may be a barrier for the Ministry of Education to articulate clear policies. Poor funding for education (World Bank, 2005), unwillingness to introduce compulsory provisions to the entire education system to embrace inclusive education (National Policy on Disability, 2003), reluctance of professionals to engage in collaborative practice and slow progress of attitudinal changes towards disability within society (Kulasekara, 2006) are cited as reasons that prevent education reaching all disabled students.

While, it can be concluded that provision for disabled students is improving in Sri Lanka, the pace of development and the degree to which gains are experienced remains problematic.

1.3 THE MICRO RESEARCH CONTEXT: PALMYRAH COLLEGE

The focal school, henceforth referred to with the pseudonym Palmyrah College, is an Anglican Church School, established by missionaries in 1851. It is located in the suburbs of the city of Colombo. Since its inception, Palmyrah College is considered as one of the foremost educational institutions for boys, in Sri Lanka (Peebles, 2006). Many eminent Sri Lankans and their sons have received and continue to be educated at this school. However, as explained by the administrators, Anglican students are given priority in accordance with regulations in Sri Lanka which oblige private schools to offer preference to students who belong to the religious denomination the school represents (Field notes, August 2007).

1.3.1 SCHOOL ORGANISATION

Palmyrah College is run by a board of Governors and chaired by the Anglican Bishop of Colombo with day-to-day administration headed by a warden and sub-warden (STC, 2010). The College comprises of the Upper, Middle and Lower School sections; each managed by a Headmaster with sectional heads appointed for every grade (ibid).

The school boasts of a diverse student population of approximately 2500 students from Kindergarten to General Certificate of Education - Advanced level (STC, 2010). Their ages range from 5-19 years. Lesson instruction is conducted in the three main languages spoken in the island; English, Sinhalese and Tamil. According to my observations each classroom consists of approximately 35 students. Each primary grade comprises of four classrooms in which the dominant language of instruction differs. Kindergarten and Form one classrooms consist of a class teacher and an assistant teacher. Form two, Lower and Upper three classrooms have a single teacher per classroom responsible for key subjects including mathematics, first language and environmental studies while other subjects including second and third languages are taught by subject teachers. Each middle and upper school classroom is overlooked by a teacher in–charge while subject teachers are responsible to teach specific subjects (Field notes, January 2010).

The school year is similar to the government school calendar. Therefore a typical school year begins in January and ends in December with three school terms in between; January-April, May-August, September-December. School vacations are in the months of April, August and December. Prior to each vacation students' memory skills are measured by written 'knowledge tests'; a practice followed in all schools in Sri Lanka. A

report card is issued and test scores are analysed at a staff meeting comprising of the warden, grade and sectional heads and teachers (Field notes, October 2007).

1.3.2 TEACHER ENROLMENT

The basis for employment of teachers to Palmyrah College as in most private schools in Sri Lanka, as described by the administrators, is ad-hoc. Pre-service training is not a pre-requisite for employment. The importance placed on in-service training is best described by the warden's own words.

> *"It is planned, yet unplanned. There is no linking of training – one workshop with another. We aim at having a full day's workshop once a term as school begins; the day before the children come in. … there is no follow up and no programme has touched on inclusive education. The topics depend on the availability of speakers" [Field notes 12th August 2008]*

However, the College provides small loans and study leave for teachers and encourage them to seek professional development through off-site programmes. An informal survey conducted by me revealed that teachers often enrol in popular programs including child psychology, early childhood development and counselling to raise their profile rather than courses aimed at inclusive educational practices; a trend it is reported is common even in countries in the North (Kosko and Wilkins, 2009).

1.3.3 STUDENT ENROLMENT

Students are admitted to Palmyrah College, according to the warden, via a selection process. The procedure for kindergarten enrolments involves parental interviews, and oral and written tests of basic language and number skills, for students.

Whilst the school is a fee paying school, the school labourers children and a limited number of children from Anglican families who live in close proximity to the school identified as families with low income, are enrolled free of charge or at a nominal fee. Other students pay premium fees as day scholars or full-time boarders.

1.3.4 ASPECTS OF INCLUSION THAT IS ALREADY PRESENT IN THE SCHOOL

Students and teachers of multiple races, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers and Moors, whose religions include Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and its denominations learn and teach in the same classrooms irrespective of any differences. During time allocated for religious studies students disperse to different classrooms to

learn their respective religions. All religious and cultural festivals are celebrated in the school in an atmosphere of respect.

Students in the primary and secondary sections of the school as in other government and private schools in Sri Lanka, learn three languages; their mother tongue which is Sinhalese or Tamil, English as a second language and the link language, Tamil or Sinhalese, which is not their mother tongue. The link language is taught as part of the nations drive to bring reconciliation and build cross-cultural unity between the two major ethnic groups, Sinhalese and Tamils. English is taught as a second language to aid Sri Lankans to be competitive in the information age and to benefit from globalisation. Students are also permitted to participate in extracurricular activities without discrimination.

Events such as year-end concerts and sports meets, for students between ages 5-9 years are gatherings where all students share the same stage irrespective of ability or disability. This tolerance is however, is not extended to competitive events.

The curriculum and pedagogy is similar to the government schools. Students with recognised impairments are expected to follow the same curriculum with minimal accommodations. Differentiation in the form of photocopied notes and reduced workload is practiced rarely.

Examinations are conducted to gauge learning of individual subjects during the immediate and preceding terms of a school year. The students' ability to memorise and regurgitate are tested at these examinations. A very few students are provided with modified assessments and different testing conditions, including a lower grade exam paper, text reader, quiet location and extra time according to their recognised impairment.

1.3.5 SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH IMPAIRMENTS

Due to the efforts of the Parent-Teacher Association, in 2004 a Student Support Unit (SSU) was established and a support team comprising of a psychologist, senior teacher-in-charge and two learning support teachers was identified. Since I took on the role as consultant speech and language therapist in 2006, the team expanded and currently comprises of a senior teacher-in-charge, three learning support teachers, three trainee teachers, a school counsellor and a social worker.

Enrolment of students with impairments is at a fledgling stage at Palmyrah College. Each year a few students with medically diagnosed impairments; physical, hearing and visual, are enrolled to different grades after consulting with the support team, prospective class teachers' regarding their willingness to physically include the students and parents' readiness to engage in a collaborative partnership (Field notes, November 2008).

Students already in school who fail to meet classroom expectations and preset standards at term tests are also referred for student support services. The student support service allocates a learning support teacher after considering the language the student learns in. The support teachers assess students, identify the barriers students face and draw up individualised plans for parents to implement. Thereafter they monitor students' progress through a collaborative partnership with parents. The administrators do not insist that classroom teachers, be partners to this process (Field notes, November 2008).

In summary, Palmyrah College currently displays some aspects of inclusion. Further, its commitment to include disabled students is undisputed. However, lack of a clear vision for inclusion prevents the school from identifying barriers and providing better conditions for the students.

1.4 TRACING MY JOURNEY

Before I embark on the research journey I wish to identify my position within this research. By being willing to acknowledge my presence, I am choosing not to fade into the background and disguise my existence, but as some authors have suggested to engage in a reflexive exercise (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007) and provide a synopsis of the most relevant aspects of my life events which have shaped my beliefs and influenced my judgments and views of the world.

By doing so, I am declaring like other researchers (Moore 2011; Moser, 2008) that my views could be biased according to the experiences and exposure I have received. Therefore I cannot make claims to complete neutrality or impartiality. I declare this position at the outset as suggested (Sparks, 2009) so that readers are left in no doubt regarding my position within the research.

1.4.1 PERTINENT LIFE EVENTS

I am a blend of two distinct cultures; my father a direct descendent of British and Portuguese settlers and my mother a member of the dominant indigenous race, the Sinhalese. I was brought up with my two sisters, in an urban background, within the secluded walls of a convent school for girls. I have been influenced and shaped by Christian values, taught and practiced at home, in school and within both my cultures. I have however, been influenced more by my western genealogy, due to the geographical proximity to my paternal relations and the influence of Irish nuns, my teachers at the convent school. A predominantly female upbringing, the position of the middle child surrounded by four dominant personalities, continuous challenges due to health impairments and western ideologies discussed, debated and practiced within the home, I claim have contributed to shaping a unique personality.

As a child, my contact with persons with impairments was limited to a few neighbours and relatives who were pitied and tolerated and viewed from a medical perspective. Challenged by health impairments I faced bullying and social isolation as a child and young adult. I also vividly recollect my peers who were unable to succeed as learners and were misjudged, labelled and ridiculed by the teachers.

1.4.2 RE-ENTERING THE WORLD OF WORK

Questions resurfaced as I returned to work after a 10 year break, to a new profession as a speech and language therapist and an independent practitioner. As I listened to my young clients relate the unhappy conditions of their classrooms I began maintaining a diary with their voices. I began maintaining a diary with their voices. As I periodically read through these extensive entries I realised several patterns of thought, relating to exclusion. The entries suggested exclusion through communication, organisation of curriculum, pedagogy and the physical and social environment of the classrooms. However, majority of entries, as the excerpt below clearly highlights, concerned teacher communication and the disastrous consequences for the students.

> *"Teacher calls me a 'donkey' and hits me on my head. It hurts and I cry. Then the other children laugh and call me a 'cry baby'. I hate school! [Anjalie 8yrs]*

When I visited my young clients in their classroom settings, I became aware of common communication strategies adopted by teachers when faced with students with

impairments. These strategies are similar to those reported by other authors in both countries of the North and South as discussed below.

When unable to transform children to fit the system teachers locate the problem within children, label, categorise and write them off to be cognitively less capable than their 'normally' functioning peers (Beazely, 2000; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2000; Kyriacou, 1998). Teachers' tendency to label students who do not match their ideal, as 'slow learners' is articulated in the following vignette.

> *"Parents don't have much hope for these children. They know that the children are slow learners and they just want them to belong to some school. We give them that chance. What more can you expect us to do?"* (Diary entry 2003: A teacher)

Teachers, as reported from other countries, publicly yell and use sarcasm (Thomas, 2000; Kyriacou, 1998) with the firm belief and in their own words, to '*awaken the lazy child'(Diary entry 2004)*. According to my knowledge of schools in Sri Lanka these practices are considered the norm and therefore go unchecked.

Being privy to such information I knew that I could not stand aside and continue to watch such events unfold. I had to take action on behalf of my young clients whom I have observed over the years wilt under immense pressure or rebel against the injustices or elect to be mute at school and finally reject schooling. Watching these children protest silently or noisily, I recollect my own classrooms. Nothing seems to have changed. While politicians, entrepreneurs and the military are weighted down with concerns of national development, economic growth and national security (World Bank, 2005), children who do not fit the image of the ideal student are disabled, despite policy and legislation to protect them (Albrecht and Bury 2001; Yokotani, 2001).

1.4.3 WIDENING MY KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

My belief in social justice and equality kept me searching for alternative views regarding including students with the label of SLCN to the life of school and community. My search initially led me to the writings of educationist Paulo Freire who was deeply concerned about students and teachers in a country in the south with which I could identify with ease (Freire, 1998). I am also drawn to John Dewey's views of democracy and school reform (Flinders and Thornton, 2004), works published by writers in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Slee, 2011; Armstrong, 2008; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Martin and Miller, 2003; Booth and Ainscow, 2002; Mittler, 2000; Slee, 1999; Armstrong

and Barton, 1999; Ballard, 1995) and institutional publications (UNESCO, 2005, 2001, 2000, 1994; ICIDH-2 2001; UNICEF, 1989) which discuss inclusive education as a forerunner to inclusive societies. Further, as a doctoral student the encouragement I received to study and reflect on the efficacy of the social model of disability which expects society to take responsibility to eradicate oppressive practices that create disabled students, instead of focusing on individual pathological deficits (UPIAS, 1976 and Oliver, 1996 and 2009 in Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Mittler, 2000) also influenced my thinking.

Having studied the different views regarding inclusive education I consider inclusive education as a means of making even the opportunities all children receive to learn and succeed in schools and in their communities (Slee, 2011; O'Hanlon, 2003; UNESCO, 2001). From a Sri Lankan perspective, children ought to be enrolled to the neighbourhood schools whether in the city, town or rural areas which have the same zeal towards eliminating barriers in areas of communication, pedagogy (Corbett and Slee, 2000), the physical and management structure of the school, school culture, the curriculum (Armstrong and Barton, 1999), attitudes, resources and cultural beliefs (Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011). It also means that every school ought to be equipped with similar resources; human and material.

As I see it, inclusive education is the way forward to inculcate from childhood the lesson that, collective characteristics of individuals ultimately contributes towards the formation of a balanced and harmonious society (Lenney, 2006). Hence, inclusive education I believe will teach children that diversity should be celebrated (Corbett and Slee, 2000) and valued and categorising or excluding children due to differences must be abandoned (Pignatelli, 1993). Therefore inclusive education will destroy society's interpretation of the ideal child. I further believe that in the long term if the political will, commitment of authorities and legislation supports such a change due to the democratic values that inclusive education advocates (Slee, 2011; Miles and Singal, 2010; UNESCO, 1994), it will positively affect the political and economic climate of countries and subsequently the world at large.

I also see inclusive education as a dream that might begin to materialise at a superficial level in countries of the South to satisfy international organisations that seek to promote inclusive education and then fizzle out. It may also remain as rhetoric due to political

instability, interest in economic development and creating competitive educational options rather than considering a philosophy that requires sustained effort to transform communities (Slee, 2011). Hence, those who advocate for inclusive education I believe must be deeply committed to strive for change, as is evident through research studies in countries in the south (Miles and Singal, 2010; Engelbrecht, Oswald and Forlin, 2006; Singh, 2006; Ahuja, 2005; Timmons and Alur, 2004).

Encouraging people to embrace the ethos of inclusivity I consider is important in Sri Lanka for two reasons. Firstly, I believe inclusive education with its aim at advancing democratic principles and values and beliefs (Slee, 2011; Miles and Singal, 2010) as discussed previously is a way of erasing the ethnic tensions of more than three decades, that has woven itself into the very fabric of the population, causing misunderstanding, distrustfulness and hatred across all ages (Carment, James and Taydas, 2006). Secondly, I see inclusive education as other authors have highlighted as a process that would diminish the medical or deficit view and encourage the more liberal social model view that will eradicate barriers that prevent inclusion (UPIAS, 1976 and Oliver, 1996, 2009 in Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Mittler, 2000).

1.4.4 TAKING ACTION

Like Freire (1998) I believed that I could:

> *"... only diminish the distance between myself and those who are exploited by the injustices imposed upon them when, convinced that a just world is a dream worth striving for, I struggle for a radical change in the way things are rather than simply wait for it to arrive because someone said it will arrive some day" (Freire, 1998, p122).*

Wanting to understand the ground reality I searched through the limited array of research in Sri Lanka. I also sought appointments with officials at the Ministry of Education and Department of Examinations and university personnel knowledgeable and interested in the education of students with impairments. My search revealed two key problems. Firstly, that the pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes for government school teachers while teaching the theoretical perspectives of inclusion (MoE, 2004) do not emphasise inclusive educational practices. Secondly, the absence of training programmes, for private and international school teachers focusing on promoting inclusive education, in the English language.

My vision is to see all students been treated fairly and nurtured with respect as discussed in the preamble. Therefore I decided to empower teachers who shape the students' worlds

by sharing my learning and skills with them. I stepped in to address the first problem by undertaking to teach a module on inclusive classroom practices for the teacher training programme at the National Institute of Education. Through this module I encourage teachers to identify and eliminate barriers to inclusion. I sought to solve the second problem by affiliating with a teacher training institute in Colombo and developing programmes which impart the message that,

> *"Failure is not solely representative of students' capacity to learn; it reflects a much more complex pathology of schooling...limitations in the imagination of curriculum developers and the teaching repertoire of teachers" (Slee, 1999:221).*

Advocating for inclusive educations was a turning point in my own life as I attempted to amalgamate two roles; clinician within hospital settings and professional seeking to promote inclusive practices in schools. Recognising that students with the label of SLCN require therapeutic intervention as well as successful inclusion within their schools, I embraced these roles with optimism. However, as I took on the challenge to promote inclusive education and therefore the social model of thinking I became isolated from my professional community because speech and language therapist trained in Sri Lanka work predominantly in clinical settings and follow the medical model. They are hesitant to acknowledge their role in education fearing lack of prestige as demonstrated by a comment made by one therapist and echoed by many.

> *"In the hospitals we are treated like doctors. This prestige is important for our families; if we start working in schools people will think we are teachers."*   [Diary entry, June 2006]

This attitude also prevents the therapists from collaborating with education like their counterparts as reported from the UK (Lindsay, Dockrell, Desforgest, Law and Peacey, 2010). However, rather than letting this development deter me, with a vision for social justice I taught and coordinated teacher training programmes not realising the extent of influence it would exert on the provision for students with impairments within Sri Lanka and other neighbouring countries. Success stories within Sri Lanka are reported from public, private, international and pre-school settings in Colombo, its suburbs and major towns while overseas locations include India, Bangladesh, the Maldives Islands, and countries in the Middle Eastern region. The success of the venture also spurred other higher educational institutions including local and overseas universities based in Sri Lanka to request that I conduct modules on inclusive education.

1.4.5 EMBRACING A NEW ROLE

Requests to take on the position of a consultant within schools arose due to my involvement in these different programmes. One such request was from Palmyrah College, which had a support service for students with impairments and was seeking to fill a vacancy for a consultant speech and language therapist to liaise with members of the support team, parents, teachers and administrators, train staff and play an advisory role. The job title 'consultant' made me hesitate to take on the job since it contradicts my beliefs of social justice and equality for all. By setting myself above the teachers who are experts in their own right, I believed I would be creating a form of exclusion while subscribing to the medical model. However, upon reflection I realised that within Sri Lanka due to cultural beliefs that prompt individuals to adhere to suggestions by individuals perceived as experts, this was perhaps the only way that the teachers would listen to my voice and consider change.

I agreed to take on the job on the precondition that the administration would approve and support the process of introducing inclusive practices through collaborative teaming within classrooms (Field notes, August 2006). Soon, I discovered that although administrators' rhetoric articulates inclusion, they act with caution and avoid committing to the removal of institutional or pedagogical barriers that disable students. They base their decisions on a model of physical and social integration that enables classroom teachers to focus on the majority students while learning support teachers and assistant teachers as noted in other countries (Slee, 2011) are employed to make life tolerable for disabled students, during a limited part of the school day. Discussions concerning barriers within the school that prevent learning or ways of accommodating students with impairments in classrooms is discouraged by the administrators who argue that the current school policy is to provide a professional service for parents (Field notes, December 2008).

Although disillusioned by this attitude, I was not deterred from trying to 'create good orders' (McNiff and Whitehead, 2000, p10). Instead it moved me to engage in an action research project aimed at establishing a collaborative relationship with teachers as allies. I selected the action research methodology because of my prior interaction and participation in action research as a Master's student. The previous research was conducted in a special school in a rural setting that is hard-to-reach in Sri Lanka. Its aim was to identify the effectiveness of naturalistic teaching methods for language

intervention, for students with learning difficulties. The outcomes suggest that students with learning difficulties learn language best in informal situations while engaging in real everyday activities that help foster oral language development. (Wickremesooriya, 2004). By electing to engage once more in action research I sought to contribute towards creating a just world which is comfortable with diversity and sees impairment as a natural phenomenon experienced by some members of any society and therefore not a reason for exclusion.

1.4.6 STATING MY POSITIONALITY

Positionality has been described as ones perspectives influenced by gender, race, class, nationality, religion and a range of other identifiers (Mullings, 1999). The research is based on my vision for disabled students, which is influenced by my beliefs in social justice and equality for all.

In the capacity of a consultant through the research I seek to bring people together to work towards the common goal of inclusion. I attempt to reach this goal by listening to the voices of all concerned and inspiring teachers to transform their practice especially adult-child communication, to reflect inclusive pedagogies.

I therefore conclude by stating that my life events have led me to a position to advocate for a voiceless minority in Sri Lanka. I have recognised my role and taken action in different ways. However, realising that my journey has only begun, I continue to seek, learn and understand what the future holds for me.

1.5 RESEARCH AIMS

The aims of the research evolved from my vision for students with the label of SLCN. The aims are also shaped by the social-educational-political climate that existed at the time when the research was conceived. Two key aims are selected to be fulfilled through the research.

➢ Learning to be an effective consultant speech and language therapist
➢ Providing empirical evidence to Sri Lankans regarding the manner in which schools can initiate the process of becoming more inclusive

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

A set of questions widely used in action research (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002) was considered to help me to articulate the research question.

> **Q: *What is my concern?***
> A: *The manner in which teachers communicate with students with the label of SLCN.*
> **Q: *Why am I concerned?***
> A: *Because I believe that all children have a right to be treated fairly and nurtured with respect in inclusive school settings.*
> **Q: *What do I think I can do about it?***
> A: *Influence the way teachers engage in communication.*
> **Q: *What will I do about it?***
> A: *Gather data and objectively analyse to identify the existing style of communication and evaluate the extent to which exclusionary practices are problematic for students with the label of SLCN. Then I will think of possible solutions.*

The question that emerged from the reflexive process reads as:

"How do I as a consultant, inspire teachers to be genuinely interested in employing adult-child communication practices which promote active learning, enhance self-esteem and improve social relationships of students with the label of Speech, Language and Communication Needs?"

1.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MY RESEARCH

Speech and language therapy service is a relatively new profession in Sri Lanka (Gomesz, 2010). It was introduced as a result of identifying the need for post-surgery intervention for cleft palate (Wicknden, Hartley, Kariyakaranawa, & Kodikara, 2003) in 1998 through a partnership between a local and UK based university (Wijesinghe, 2010). At present approximately 100 qualified Speech and Language Therapists work in clinical settings mostly in the city and major towns (Gomesz, 2010) of whom I am aware about a dozen are qualified in UK, USA, Australia and India.

Amongst the general public, speech, language and communication difficulties is not widely known or very well understood. Neither is there statistical data on the prevalence of individuals with speech, language and communication difficulties. To date, there is only a single research, conducted by me as a master's student concerning students with the label of SLCN in special school settings (Wickremesooriya, 2004). The current research will therefore have the distinction of being the first within a private school setting and the second within educational settings in Sri Lanka. My hope is that the research will provide the stimulus for more research in the future.

The research has a social agenda. Firstly, by acknowledging the benefits that can be derived from democratic participatory processes the research involves a diverse community of participants; administrators, teachers, parents and students. Secondly the research endorses the importance of providing a platform for different voices to be heard when dealing with socially important issues such as inclusive education by presenting relevant individual views, uncensored.

The research is intended to have an impact at the political level by highlighting exclusionary practices and influencing teacher training. By writing a thesis and disseminating knowledge at a national scale and sharing findings especially with schools in the region, the impact will be both at a national and international level.

The thesis supplements the global literature concerning removal of exclusionary practices in adult-child communication to successfully include students with the label of SLCN within educational settings. The lessons learned maybe useful for persons in different professions. Further, the thesis provides insights regarding the manner in which speech, language and communication difficulties is viewed in a country in the South, the challenges encountered by school based consultant speech and language therapists when working in contexts that display a preference for the medical approach to disability and navigating practice when operating in stressful conditions of war.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The research is set in Sri Lanka, a country which has endorsed inclusive education and has a long history of attempting to provide education for disabled students, through policy and legislation (Alwis, 2005; MoE, 2004; ADB, 2002; Yokotani, 2001). However, in the absence of the need to follow compulsory policies, implementation of inclusive education is unsystematic and sometimes an absent factor (Kulasekera, 2006; National Policy on Disability, 2003).

The focal school, Palmyrah College has been concerned about improving the quality of experiences for disabled students for almost a decade. However, involving teachers in the process of inclusion is challenged, due to the endorsement of physical and social integration and lack of systematic teacher training programmes directed at promoting inclusive education.

My own life events have made me position myself to seek for social justice and equality for students with the label of SLCN. Given this position, the attitude towards educating disabled students within the focal school where I took on the role of consultant, caused a dissonance within me, as previously experienced by other researchers in countries in the North and South (Slee, 2011; McDonagh, 2006; Timmons and Alur, 2004).

Hence, I sought to eliminate the contradictions and to bring social justice and equality for these students by answering a single research question. Through the research I seek to fulfil two aims; improving my practice to ensure better provisions for disabled students and providing empirical evidence regarding ways in which schools can initiate inclusive education, nationally.

The research is expected to have an impact at a personal, school, country and global level. It is also expected to impact the fields of education and speech and language therapy.

The chapter that follows is a critical and in-depth review of pertinent literature to provide readers with reasons for selecting the research question.

CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is a 'critical evaluation, analysis and synthesis of existing knowledge relevant to the research problem' (Hart, 2005 p153). As discussed in the introductory chapters the thesis is about students with the label of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and their inclusion in a private school in Sri Lanka where the consultancy model of speech and language therapy is followed. The focus of the research is directed at one aspect necessary for successful inclusion; adult-child communication. The literature review therefore looks at two key topics; inclusive education and facilitating successful inclusion for students with the label of SLCN through adult-child communication in classroom settings.

The ideas surrounding the theoretical themes set out below, mostly from the recent past, are drawn from books, dissertations, journal articles, government documents, newspapers and electronic resources. I also present a combination of material from across the globe to form a richer conceptualization of ideas that will ultimately influence my practice.

2.2 THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

As political beliefs, governments, fashions, values and such have changed through history, so has the concept of disability and education of disabled students (Singh, 2006). Findings from literature set out in the discussion that follows, reveal that education for disabled children has moved through several stages including segregation, integration and inclusion.

Much of history regarding disabled individuals is surrounded with speculation and mystery, due to limited recorded data (Osgood, 2008). Available accounts indicate that they have been the target of discrimination, isolation, exclusion and even destruction across cultures for thousands of years (Braddock and Parish, 2001) because their impairments were considered as a 'Curse from God' (Singh, 2006). Hence, individuals with impairments were denied their basic rights and often locked up in jails and charitable institutions, considered 'human warehouses' without adequate basic necessities (Schwartz, 2005, p10).

This situation changed with the intellectual movement in France, referred to as 'Enlightenment', which was spurred on by the French revolution of 1789 and a call for 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" (Braddock and Parish, 2001). The movement created a new wave of thinking regarding human freedom as it sought to increase independence and to give self respect and dignity to individuals including those with disabilities (ibid).

2.2 .1 SEGREGATION

As a result of this movement, in the mid 18th century, institutions in Britain and Europe, often run by state or religious orders, began providing segregated 'special education' and training in residential facilities with the underlying motive of charity by focusing on the deficits of individuals (Winzer, 1993). The initial focus was on individuals with visual and hearing impairment (Peters, 2003).

The deficit view gave rise to the 'medical model' (Peters, 2003) or psychological perspective that focuses on the pathological deficits present within some individuals (Corker and French, 1999). Hence, differences due to disease, trauma or other health conditions which need medical intervention are emphasised within this model (Pfeiffer, 2003).

Special interest, was next directed at children considered to be 'feeble minded' and 'defective' who were then subjected to 'mental testing' (Tomlinson, 1982 in Armstrong and Barton, 1999) by assuming that the learning deficits were caused by the impairments that reside within them (Mittler, 2000). The interest to educate individuals with intellectual impairment within residential facilities continued in the 19th century, due to the efforts of European physicians and teachers such as Itard and Senguin (Singh, 2006). These facilities grew significantly in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Armstrong and Barton, 1999). Institutionalization also encouraged a new wave of professional teachers and the experimentation of teaching methods and curriculum (Winzer, 1993).

At the beginning of the 20th century there was much debate regarding the efficacy of institutionalization, since institutions had become places to discard individuals considered to be different (Singh, 2006). The heavy criticism, led to the shutting down of residential facilities (Barton, 1999). Further, the universal declaration of Human Rights (1948) which categorically states that education is for ALL children between the ages of 5-14

years, stipulates that education systems reduce barriers and increase participation for all children (Rieser, 2008). Despite these stipulations society persisted in viewing and classifying disabled children from a medical or 'deficit approach' (Slee, 2004) which encourages invisibility (Yokotani, 2001). Therefore these children were 'educated' in 'Special' day schools, outside the general education system (Singh, 2006).

2.2.2 INTEGRATION

The Warnock Report (1978, in Wise and Glass, 2000) in the UK and research in the USA (O'Brien et al., 1989 and Stainback and Stainback, 1990, 1992, in Thomazet, 2009; Armstrong and Barton, 1999) changed the idea of a separate education system to serving specific needs of disabled children, within integrated settings. The Convention of Rights of Children (UNICEF, 1989) which re-emphasised the need for all children to be in school, by dedicating articles and acknowledging the existence of vulnerable and marginalized children and children with disabilities (Peters, 2003) contributed to the new thinking.

The UN's Jomtien Declaration (1990) set the goal for "Education for All" (EFA) by the year 2000 in the presence of representatives from 155 countries including Sri Lanka. Schools responded to EFA by enrolling students with impairments and placing them in a special classroom or section of the school giving rise to the concept of "Integration" (Thomazet, 2009). Integration was based on a "Readiness model" (Lipsky and Gartner 1997 in Ripley, Barret and Fleming 2001) that expected children with impairments to be prepared to fit into the mainstream school (Zalaieta, 2004). The emphasis remained on the medical model of disability as students were placed in separate classrooms within schools where traditional teaching methods used in segregated settings were employed (Armstrong, 2008). Even as the technicalities of location change were performed, disabled students still remained segregated (Armstrong, Armstrong and Barton, 2000) as their ability to fit into the system described as 'square peg[s] struggling to fit round holes', was determined (Corbet and Slee, 2000, p. 140). Thus, integration, instead of creating acceptance of diversity became another way of isolating and excluding disabled students (Slee, 2011).

Integration takes three forms; physical, social and/or pedagogic integration (Wolfensberger and Thomas, 1983 in Thomazet, 2009). The enrolment of disabled students to the school with no level of involvement with other pupils is considered as

physical integration. Social integration encourages disabled students to join peers for activities other than academic subjects. When disabled students learn the same curriculum with differentiated objectives as other pupils this is referred to as pedagogic integration (ibid). Pedagogic integration is unpopular because schools forget to consider the teachers and the social and academic problems created due to added responsibilities that come from mixed-ability classes and pedagogical changes required for students to access the curriculum (Vlachou, 1997).

2.2.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

International researchers and institutions who were interested in the lessons learned through integration and long term effects of special education placement (Clark et al., 1999 and Tossebro and Haug, 1998 in Thomazet, 2009), while arguing for the rights of disabled individuals (Rioux, 2007), played a key role in promoting the ideal of inclusive education for an inclusive society. Further, the Disability Discrimination Act (1995, UK) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990, USA) were influential in moving inclusive educational practices at a global scale (Peters, 2003). Discourse on inclusion has also gained momentum, because diversity in societies due to human migration is becoming increasingly observable (Lenney, 2006).

The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (UNESCO, 1994). The theme of inclusive education was restated at the World Education Forum (UNESCO, 2000) through the Millennium Development Goals. Further guidelines for inclusive education was issued at the disability convention "Ensuring Access for Education for All" while earmarking the year 2015 as the target achievement date (UNESCO, 2005).The more recent UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, which came into effect in May 2008, also emphasizes inclusive education (Rieser, 2008).

Inclusive education emphasises the fundamental right of people to receive 'equal recognition, respect and treatment regardless of difference' (Armstrong, 2008, p12). It is viewed as a political solution to the problem of exclusion (Moore and Slee, 2011) and discourages exclusion of children and individuals from education due to 'learning, language, cultural, racial, class, religious or behavioural differences' (O'Hanlon, 2003, p.13). Inclusive education demands that 'all children regardless of their physical,

intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions' (UNESCO, 2001) be educated with their peers alongside their nondisabled peers (Schwartz, 2005).

It is cautioned that inclusive education must not be confused with Special Needs Education and the view of a defective child, but be seen as an approach that calls for changes in society and schools that all people must be concerned about (Slee, 2011). Inclusive education therefore challenges the medical or deficit perspective and introduces the 'Social Model' of thinking (UPIAS, 1976 and Oliver, 1996 and 2009 in Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Mittler, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). This model which was conceived with the publication of the 'Fundamental Principles of Disability' (UPIAS, 1976 in Slee, 2011), blames communities and establishments for creating and maintaining exclusionary practices that are 'oppressive, discriminatory and disabling' (Mittler, 2000, p3). Therefore according to the social model, disablement is considered as repression and requires social changes in attitudes and ideologies to include all members of a community (Slee, 2011). If the social model is followed, it is argued, that disability can be wiped out by considering all the needs of a population and dismantling obstructions (Tregaskis, 2004). Hence, inclusive education which leads to inclusive societies is advocated as a desirable state that societies should aspire for (Slee, 2011).

When education is organised to recognise and respond to a diverse population of learners with a view to including all and eliminating exclusion inside the classrooms and beyond the activities of teaching and learning (UNESCO 2005:13) it benefits not only disabled children, but also their peers, their families and entire communities (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2004). As a result of inclusive education, children benefit from appropriate role models, learn to respect one another, appreciate differences, build friendships (Kemple, Duncan and Strangis, 2002) and support and help each other (Charles, 2004; Sebba and Sachdev, 1997). Inclusive education has resulted in students with impairments gaining in learning, self esteem and social relationships while the stigma attached to pull out programmes is avoided (Salend and Garrick 1999 in Berry, 2006).

2.3 DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Inclusive schools are portrayed as 'the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all' (UNESCO, 1994, article 2). When schools move away from the 'one size fits all' model to being aware and responsive to the needs of each and every child (Mittler, 2000)

in the belief that ALL children can and will learn (Hopkins, 2007) societies will witness the building of 'socially just schools' (Kemmis, 1994 in Barton, 1997). As schools follow democratic principles of mutual respect and cooperation (Armstrong, 2008; Booth and Ainscow, 2002; Jacobson, 2000) they will join the political struggle for inclusion or '... against failure and exclusion' (Slee, 2011, p121) to ultimately eliminate prejudice and unfair practices in society (Ballard, 1995).

A three tier model of developing inclusive schools is suggested (Corbet and Slee, 2000, p140). Within this model the first level, 'surface inclusion' focuses at policy and school effectiveness, the second concerns modifying the schools' physical environment and the curriculum while the third level, the 'deep culture' looks at the values, beliefs, customs and practices followed in schools on a daily basis (ibid). Other views are that success of inclusive schools depend on reforms within the school, teachers ability to transform existing practices and attitudes that increase segregation (Ainscow, 1995) and active involvement of parents (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003) and students in the collaborative decision making process (UN Standard Rules1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997; UNESCO, 1994; UNICEF, 1989).

A discussion of changes at school and teacher level and collaborative partnerships with parents and students follows.

2.3.1 CHANGES AT SCHOOL LEVEL

Even when policy makers suggest and sometimes make it obligatory for schools to adopt inclusive educational practices, the ultimate responsibility lies with the school governing bodies and local authorities to manage the process of change (Pijl and Frissen, 2009). Areas that require attention within a school include the school ethos, current practices, resources and services.

The school ethos needs to be reviewed for inclusive education to take root (Sayed, 2002 in Berry 2006) because inclusive education is identified as a philosophy, a belief and a way of life that must be deeply rooted into the very heart of the school (Levin, 1997). It has been cautioned that inclusive education must not be considered as another feature to be added on to existing school systems; not 'old wine in new bottles' (Clough, 1999, p65). Hence, schools are expected to dismantle barriers present due to attitudes and

reactions to varied social classes, ethnicity, religions, gender and abilities (Vitello and Mithaug, 1998 in Ainscow, 2005).

Other reformations that schools ought to consider include policy and practices (Thomazet, 2009; Barton, 1999), communication, curriculum and pedagogy (Moore 2011; Slee, 2011; Schwartz, 2005; Corbett and Slee, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). Assessment (Moore and Slee, 2011), specialised aids and services (Heeks and Kinnell, 1997 in Sadler, 2005), provision of suitable support (Rieser, 2008) and physical structures (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009) are also identified as points for consideration.

2.3.2 CHANGE AT TEACHER LEVEL

Staff composition (Moore and Slee, 2011) and staff perceptions and attitudes (Vlachou, 1997; Mittler, 2000; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2002) ought to be considered when planning for inclusive education. Teachers are a key element to 'educational change and school improvement' (Vlachou, 1997, p172) because they are in a unique position to demonstrate acceptance of diversity through changes in communication practices, expectations of students, flexibility and adaptability (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997).

Teachers however, like any other professionals, learn and work within limitations set by intellect, society and culture in which they live in and are influenced by their own beliefs, values, their exposure to learning opportunities, the school environment and their personal lives (Levin, 2001 in Day, 2002). Hence, individuals who choose the profession of teaching ought to be personally responsible for their own development (Grundy and Robinson, 2004) and learn from their day-to-day experiences (Brownlee and Carrington, 2000), informal opportunities that arise in school settings and through formal learning which may occur within and outside the school environment (Bubb, 2004). Such opportunities for change will affect the classroom culture or the social climate (Berry, 2006) and classroom practice (Lieberman, 1996, in Keltchtermans, 2004).

When administrators make their schools 'the hub and focus of their staff's professional development' (DfEE, 2001, p13) this helps teachers to cultivate positive attitudes towards inclusion and improve their competencies and knowledge (Brownlee and Carrington, 2000). Schools' failure to take care of the personal needs and growth of the teaching staff can result in negative consequences as teachers 'go off the boil' (Bubb, 2004, p10) due to under stimulation. A study conducted in New York public schools in 1999, revealed that

50% of the teacher population was exhausted and angry; disillusioned and unhappy (Day, 1999) while another study, in 1996, in the UK, indicates that 23% of the sample teacher population was diagnosed with stress related illnesses (Day, 1999) causing disillusionment and lower morale amongst staff.

Learning from experience

By giving teachers the opportunity on site to work together in groups and to learn from one another through active dialogue and honest sharing of views in an atmosphere of respect, schools provide rich opportunities for learning from one another (Smylie, 1995 in Keltchtermans, 2004). These learning opportunities that teachers may experience consciously and/or unconsciously have the power to awaken in teachers the ability to care and enjoy teaching; crucial elements for a meaningful practice (Freire, 1998). Learning from others can directly or indirectly benefit students and the school and influence the characteristics of the classroom (Day, 1999). It is also an effective and efficient way of achieving professional development (Smylie, 1995 in Keltchtermans, 2004; DfEE, 2001).

An opposing view is that learning from experiences, limits and stunts the growth of individuals (Britzman, 1991, in Day, 2002). Teachers very early in their career develop a style of teaching to cope with the demands of their classroom and school (Petty, 2004) which may become routine and hamper the teachers' own growth. Further, friendships between teachers can prevent them from wanting to deal with problematic areas and to explore different views, thus minimizing opportunities for professional development (Achinstein, 2002 and Avila de Lima, 2001 in Keltchterman, 2004).

Conducting in-house training programmes

Change becomes inevitable when schools implement a planned, rigorous, classroom based, continuous training programme on a regular basis (Kosko and Wilkins, 2009) by taking into account issues relevant to the school, the students and the teachers (Noddings, 2005; Keltchtermans, 2004). The training programmes ought to focus on developing pedagogy, assessment and skills for collaborative teaming (Meijer, Soriano and Watkins, 2007), assist teachers to 'confront and change' their current attitudes regarding disabled students (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2002) and to support 'sustainable effective practice' (Peters, 2003, p2).

The 'technical, moral, political and emotional' dimensions (Hargreaves, 1995 in Keltchtermans, 2004, p227), the 'psychological, personal, social and intellectual' (Levin, 2001, in Day, 2002) wellbeing of the teachers and their 'cognitive and emotional needs' (Day and Leitch, 2007, p707) ought to be considered when designing training programmes. The designing of professional development programmes that focus on 'technical preparation' or 'knowledge and pedagogy' (Day, 2002, p60) which emphasize on the importance of the school at the cost of forgetting the personal development of the teachers (Christie, Harley and Penny 2004) is discouraged.

The present emphasis within teacher training programmes, on teaching disabled students is criticised as insufficient to help teachers prepare to meet the range of needs that could be present within a school environment (Marshall, Ralph and Palmer, 2002 and Dew-Hughs and Brayton 1997, in Sadler 2005). A majority of the current programmes aim at familiarising teachers with impairments, syndromes and disorders and country specific policies, instead of providing teachers with a platform to discuss and debate current practices and the powerful messages given by disabled researchers and those who advocate for them (Moore and Slee, 2011). Hence, it is suggested that 'enquiry driven and learning oriented' (Fielding, 2006) professional development programmes be developed by bearing in mind the different learning preferences that individual teachers have (Honey and Mumford 2000, in Bubb, 2004).

Global reports regarding teacher training

When comparing studies regarding teacher training programmes, the level of emphasis placed seems to vary across countries and continents. Training programmes in the UK which began in the 1960s and 70s emphasized on in-service education with no follow up (Grundy and Robinson, 2004). In the 1980s the importance placed on combining school and professional development to make education 'more economically efficient and effective' (Grundy and Robinson, 2004, p150). From this stance the focus shifted in the 1990s to include concepts such as collaboration, reflexivity and school development while also placing the responsibility of initial teacher training on individuals (Harvard and Hodkinson, 1994). Several government documents since the late 1990s imply continued emphasis on professional development in the UK (Neil and Morgan, 2003).

A study in Botswana (Tabulawa, 1997 in Christie et al., 2004) highlights that despite been provided with opportunities to acquire the skill and knowledge to bring about

change, the deeply rooted tradition of teacher centred classrooms discouraged the teachers from embracing learner centred pedagogies introduced via professional development programmes. Another study in Kenya (Christie et al., 2004) reveals that teachers preferred demonstrations rather than lectures. Research from Israel (Smith 2005) and Finland (Trggvason, 2009) highlights that the discrepancy between practices followed and advocated by teacher-educators are a deterrent towards promoting new thinking.

The low number of graduate teachers and shortage of effective facilitators for teacher training are cited as reasons for poor teacher development programmes in Singapore (Tripp, 2004). In-service training on a continuous basis for primary grade teachers, at district and sub-district level is recognized as the vital ingredient to ensure EFA in India (Chatterjee, 2006). Core teams consisting of trained special education teachers attached to provincial education offices provide holiday training programmes for teachers in Sri Lanka, with the aim of encouraging inclusive practices within schools (UNICEF, 2003).

It is argued that the quality of teacher training programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa must be critically evaluated and improved before 'a strong impact on educational reform' (Smith and Motivans, 2007, p390) is felt. The study further notes the low participation of teachers at training programmes ranging from 20–50% (ibid).

2.3.3 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

When schools are organising for inclusive education they ought to consider including parents in the collaborative teaming process (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003) because parents are considered experts regarding their children's abilities and impairments (Hutchins, Howard, Prelock, and Belin, 2010). The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) also places special emphasis on parental involvement in the decision making process.

Legislation and policy in the UK and USA recognises the importance of parent knowledge of the child and encourages parent participation by providing guidance via a code of practice (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2004). Gains made by intervention are often lost unless parents are involved in a follow up process and make gains themselves as they enable their children to succeed (Meijer et al., 2007). But, collaborative partnerships with

parents in these countries is often restricted due to practical constraints such as timetables, working areas (Law et al., 2002) and time constraints (Hutchins, et al., 2010).

2.3.4 INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS

An important development of inclusive education is the role the voices of students play when organising for inclusion (Wertheimer, 1997). Article 12 of the UN convention of rights of children, states that 'respecting them, making it possible for them to express themselves and giving their opinions and views due weight' (UNICEF, 1989) is of absolute importance. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and the UN Standard Rules (1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997), Rule 6, also endorses the view that all disabled individuals must participate in the decision making processes within education.

When students are listened to, they feel that they belong to the school community and are more willing to participate in school life (Finn, 1989 in Gillies and Carrington, 2004). However, accessing students' views is considered a challenge and adults are required to find avenues of communication that will lead to an understanding of students' needs and wishes (Wertheimer, 1997). Spending time with disabled students and observing their responses in different situations can provide insights regarding their desires (ibid).

Therefore it can be concluded that reforms within the school (Schwartz, 2005), changes in teacher views and attitudes (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997), parental involvement (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003) and student participation (Wertheimer, 1997; UNESCO, 1994; UNICEF, 1989) are factors for schools to consider if they wish to become inclusive.

2.4 CHALLENGES TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Just as inclusive education is believed to be the ideal solution to including all children in the education process to ultimately reach the goal of an inclusive society, there are concerns regarding the manner it is viewed, interpreted and practiced in different countries (Pijl and Frissen, 2009; O'Hanlon, 2003; Peters, 2003). Diverse views, interpretations and practices arise due to varied ways of understanding (Zalaieta, 2004) which ultimately affect the way disabled people are viewed and the manner in which services are organised for them (Slee, 2011).

A major concern surrounding inclusive education is the ambiguity attached to the Salamanca statement, for countries to articulate, clear and maintainable policies (Miles and Sengal, 2010). Although, the broad statements are sufficient to create debate and discussions, the lack of specific direction proves a stumbling block to practitioners especially in countries of the South, in the absence of research (ibid).

The development of inclusive practices is also challenged by the label Special Educational Needs (Lynch, 2001 and Ballard, 1995, in Peters 2003). By continuing to see students as "Special" a distinction is made and focus is turned towards the students' deficits and therefore acquiescence to 'collective indifference' (Slee, 2011, p121).

Further, diagnostic terms do not to ease understanding but lead to baseless suppositions and act as 'harmful sorting out devices' detrimental to children's growth and development of communication and education (Rhymes, 2008). Naming difficulties subscribes to the medical model (Slee, 2011) and overlooks difficulties individuals' have to face when societies create or aggravate problems (Martin and Miller, 2003).

Because education is considered more as a 'commodity' (Armstrong and Moore, 2004) schools are pushed to enhance their 'market image' (Bines, 1999, p157). As schools strive to secure their 'market share' (Slee, 2004) by ensuring high academic achievements of their students (Moore and Slee, 2011) they are reluctant to enrol disabled students, as it compromises their performance and public image; thus, defying the concept of inclusive education (Slee, 2011).

Further, some schools include disabled students merely to create an illusion of equality (O'Hanlon, 2003). Such schools allocate a separate area with a special teacher to project an external image, instead of considering ways of including disabled students (Riddell 2007 in Pijl and Frissen, 2009). Alternatively schools enrol children on the condition that parents pay additional fees, to employ a specialist teacher for the child (Slee, 2011).

Teachers, struggle to implement inclusive educational practices because they are explicitly and surreptitiously encouraged by the existing conditions and situations, to become unconcerned of disabled children (Slee, 2011). The allocation of large classes of students, imposing the necessity to teach more content and to increase student performance at competency exams without being provided with additional time for

planning or instruction (Grimmet, 1996), non-provision of professional training opportunities to gain expertise and knowledge to plan and teach a diverse student population (Hamstra, 2004 and Kershner 2007 in Pijl and Frissen, 2009) and being encouraged to refer to experts (Slee, 2011) leaves teachers with little option but to be indifferent and for vulnerable students to fail.

Finally, collaborative teaming with parents, an essential component for successful inclusion (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003), is a complex problem for most schools. Even as educators, researchers and policy makers debate about who ought to be served that often scant attention is paid to the role of parents (Kalyanpur and Harry, 2004 in Hess, Molina and Kozleski, 2006). Further, while some parents are disinterested, schools seem disinclined to accommodate parents who wish to be actively involved (Peters, 2003) or involve parents to fulfil an obligation (Slee, 2011). When schools consider parents as rivals and/or incapable beings (Salisbury and Dunst 1997 in Hess, et al., 2006) they erect a screen between home and school (Mittler, 2000).

These factors endorse the view that although inclusive education is promoted at a global scale, the road to inclusion is fraught with challenges. These challenges need to be addressed for inclusion to be a common practice globally.

2.5 GLOBAL RESPONSES TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The interpretation and implementation of inclusive education varies across the continents (Miles and Singal, 2010; Swain, 2007) with no 'definitive model of inclusion or the inclusive class' (Schwartz, 2005, p23). For "wealthier countries" (Ainscow, 2005, p.2) the concern is of those already in school but who are either segregated due to special provisions or leave school frustrated with the irrelevant curriculum or without any skill to face the world (Ainscow, 2005). For "economically poorer countries" (Ainscow, 2005, p2) the concern is to meet the EFA goal (UNESCO, 2000) and include the many children raised in poverty who will not see a classroom (Howe, Davies and Fox, 2009; Ainscow, 2005). However, the more recent focus of countries of the South, has shifted from EFA to including disabled children in schools (Miles and Singal, 2010).

A perusal of literature across continents presents the following scenario.

2.5.1 EUROPE AND UK

Italy embarked on the legal process (Mittler, 2000) to introduce inclusive education in 1971 and succeeded in shutting down all special schools and including disabled students to local neighbourhood schools by 1975. While there are examples of 'good practice' in the UK (O'Hanlon, 2003) the general trend towards inclusive education is slow due to 'increasing competition and selection in our education system and the widening gap between levels of income' (Armstrong, 2008, p10). Medical assessments are considered necessary for educational placements in France and in the UK (Armstrong, 2003). In Russia although the constitution guarantees education for all children in regular schools, only a small number of disabled students gain admission to regular schools while the majority are excluded from the education system (Perspektiva, 2004).

2.5.2 CANADA AND USA

Inclusive education became official in Canada in 1968 (Peters, 2003). Special schools were shut down in the 1970s with disabled students enrolled in regular schools (Thomazet, 2009). The concept of inclusive education was reinforced in 1985 requiring all provincial schools to provide inclusive education (Peters, 2003). However, the integration model is still favoured in the province of Quebec (Thomazet, 2009). Inclusive education programmes in the USA have grown exponentially since 1975 with multiple efforts directed at including all students in regular classrooms (Peters, 2003).

2.5.3 AFRICAN REGION

Attitudes of the past still hamper the process of full inclusion in South Africa despite drastic changes to its education system since 1994 (Engelbrecht, et al., 2006). In Rwanda and Ethiopia, although policy on special needs education exists, neither country has specific provisions in curriculum or examinations, for disabled students or the manner in which they must be enabled to reach their potential (Lewis, 2009).

2.5.4 SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

An analysis of 17 EFA plans from the South and South East Asian region reveals that inclusive education is not referred to, while special schools and residential facilities are suggested as a way of addressing the needs of disadvantaged students (Ahuja, 2005). In India although individual state legislature contains laws on compulsory education the commitment to implement these laws are absent (Singh, 2006; Timmons and Alur, 2004).

Hence, the numbers of special schools in India have doubled in the recent past (Singal, 2006 in Miles and Singal, 2010).

The lived experiences of disabled children in Hong Kong, China and Indonesia (Heung and Grossman, 2007), is also varied. The enrolment rate of disabled students in China has increased and yet schools are unprepared to ensure learning for all. Hong Kong has embraced the whole school policy for integration and introduced innovative programmes but is challenged by contradictions faced with policies of inclusive education and the need to produce students whose performance at examinations is excellent. In Indonesia the 'child friendly school' concept attempts to address inclusive education through a limited number of schools (ibid).

2.5.5 NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA

Despite recent policy initiatives in New Zealand indicating inclusive education a priority, all educational establishments do not practice inclusive education (Kaur, Boysak, Quinlivan and McPhail, 2008). In Australia, schools especially in the urban areas, cling to the medical model while following the curriculum of traditional schooling (Corbett and Slee, 2000). However, inclusive schooling is expanding at a slow pace in Australia as schools begin to appreciate the benefits that can be derived through student diversity (Carrington and Elkin, 2002).

These examples across continents echo the explanation that inclusive education is implemented at diverse levels, with dissimilar aims and varied motives and reflect a multitude of classifications with provisions located in different environments (Slee, 2011; Peters, 2003). It is also clear that there is a significant gap between the ideal and reality; between countries of the North and countries of the South where the quality of education and its ability to cater to individual needs of disabled students is questionable and within countries of the North and countries of the South (Singh, 2006; Yokotani, 2001).

2.6 THE SRI LANKAN PERSPECTIVE

Statistics reveal that 8% of Sri Lanka's 22million population is disabled and almost half of the disabled population is children (ADB, 2002). Legislation and policy initiatives dealing with disabled students, as discussed in chapter one has been in existence in Sri Lanka for more than 70 years. It is also reported that Sri Lanka is committed to promote inclusive education and is following an agenda for change (World Bank, 2005).

2.6.1 EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

As the national policy suggests 'Children who have more severe degrees of multiple disability and intellectual disability have no opportunities at all. The education system both state and private lacks the expertise and capacity to deal with these children' (National Policy on Disability 2003:17). Other disabled students receive education either in special schools or in government or private schools with or without integrated units (Yasmin, Minto, Khan, and Fernando, 2010; Rieser, 2008).

Less than 1.6% of children with disabilities attended school in 1994 (Lynch, 1994). In 2001, this figure rose to 2.37% (MoHR,ECA; Special Education Unit, 2002) representing 99,024 of whom 50,788 were at primary level (grade 1 -5), 28,235 at secondary (Grade 6 -11) and 1277 at collegiate level (grade 12 -13). The number dropped in 2003 to 1.49% of which over 60% were males (MoHR,ECA; Special Education Unit, 2003). These figures however, are questionable because only four distinct categories of impairments; visual, hearing, intellectual and physical, diagnosed by medical practitioners are considered while students with subtle disorders are ignored (OECD, 2000). However, it points to the fact that a majority of schools, similar to an earlier report from the UK (Armstrong and Barton, 1999) still refuse to acknowledge their moral obligation to support disabled students and ignore the right for all children to receive quality education. The low attendance of disabled students in government schools is attributed to officials discouraging parents from enrolling their children (Stubbs, 2005).

Special schools mostly managed by non-governmental organisations are separate from the regular education system and lack trained staff (Gomesz, 2010). These schools are unregulated and therefore do not adhere to a set of standards as noted in countries in the South (Miles and Singal, 2010). The most recent census reveals the presence of 24 special schools (MoE, 2006) which provide life skills and vocational training (OECD, 2000).

Sri Lanka is considered an early pioneer in integration in the Asian region (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009). Physical and social integration is pursued in select government schools, due to minimal provision of teaching resources (OECD, 2000). In 2005, approximately 23,000 disabled students were studying in special units in government schools (Kulasekera, 2006) which employed a cadre of 1382 trained teachers. Students in these units usually leave school between the ages of 13-14 years (Yasmin et al., 2010).

Students with recognisable impairments, enrolled in schools that do not practice the integration model, learn in the same classrooms as their non-disabled peers (MoE, 2006). Most of these students drop out after primary education as school failures while others, move through primary and secondary grades and leave school at the age of sixteen having failed at the General Certificate of Education, Ordinary Level examination without any skills to face the world (ibid). However, there are a few reported examples of students who have been successfully included (Yasmin et al., 2010).

2.6.2 PREPARING TEACHERS FOR INCLUSION

The National Institute of Education and four universities with faculties of education (Yasmin et al., 2010), 17 colleges of education and 100 teacher training centres affiliated to the colleges (MoE, 2004) form the teacher education network in Sri Lanka. Private teacher training institutions approved by the Tertiary and Vocational Educational Commission are also part of this network (Education Guide Sri Lanka, 2010).

The National Institute of Education, since 1992, conducts an undergraduate programme in special needs education (Yasmin et al., 2010). The National Institute of Education has developed a "Basic teacher training manual", based on the UNESCO teacher resource pack (Ahuja, 2002). This manual was designed through consultation with a select group and tested prior to translating to the dominant languages; Sinhalese and Tamil (ibid). The colleges of education and the government teacher training centres which focus on pre-service training, include the resource pack as a compulsory component within its curriculum (MoE, 2004).

The Ministry of Education has allocated resources to develop teacher competence through continual teacher training programmes; aimed at upgrading teacher competencies every seven years (MoE, 2004). In the last five years primary grade teachers received training to improve their skills to identify impairments and to change their attitudes towards inclusion via a five day programme (Yasmin et al., 2010). School administrators too are invited to one day orientation programmes aimed at creating an understanding regarding implementing inclusive educational practices (ibid). Since 2004, a private tertiary education centre in Colombo is providing teacher training programmes in inclusive education in the English language (Wijemanna, 2008). Despite these advances teachers often do not transfer their learning from training programmes to include disabled

students (Alwis, 2005) in the absence of supervision, which is considered part of the educational culture in Sri Lanka (Gunasekera, 2008).

2.6.3 OTHER INITIATIVES

An array of initiatives is underway to ensure student involvement, parent participation and public support along with a programme of advocacy to accelerate the journey towards full inclusion (Rieser, 2008). Teaching resources are been developed to bring about pedagogic changes necessary to meet the goal of achieving inclusive education (MoE, 2004). Other efforts include updating the curriculum, encouraging child friendly pedagogy, endorsing effective management and restructuring the education system (World Bank, 2005).

2.6.4 SUPPORT FOR THE MEDICAL MODEL

Despite a range of measures to introduce inclusive education, the general view present within south Asian countries that disabled students ought to be educated separately (Ahuja, 2005) either in special schools or in integrated settings still exists in Sri Lanka (MOE, 2000). Several reasons can be cited for the continual support of the medical model of disability.

These include the setting up of a separate entity within the Ministry of Education to deal with special education matters, the focus of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes on special needs education and identification of impairments (Rieser, 2008) and separate training programmes for teachers to be competent to teach in integrated units, the non-engagement of research to inform the formulation of effective programmes for students with disabilities (MOE, 2004) and cultural and religious beliefs which view disability as a curse or punishment for one's sins (Gomesz, 2010). Further, although all children are under the purview of the ministry of social services, the responsibility of children with impairments lies with the social services department while able children are the responsibility of the probation and child care department (Stubbs, 2005). The free school uniforms and books provided to students in public schools are not available for students attending special schools while there is discrimination in the monthly stipend for children in residential institutions; able children are allocated rupees 300 or approximately 3USD and disabled children rupees 50 or approximately 0.5USD (ibid).

Moreover like many countries of the south, the political agenda in Sri Lanka does not make provision for individuals with disabilities a high priority (Albrecht and Bury, 2001). Funding for education is limited, with the budget allocation for 2005 reported to be 3% of national income and considered insufficient when compared with standards in other countries of the south (World Bank, 2005). The low allocation is attributed to defence spending among other factors (ibid). As post war Sri Lanka focuses on national development and economic growth, the 2011 budget allocation to upgrade schools is 2.8% of the gross domestic product and inadequate to meet the needs of all government schools (Nizam, 2011). The low allocation indicates a lack of understanding that educational advances are vital for socio-economic developments (Peters, 2003).

The above discussions indicate that while international documents are ratified and legislation drawn up and administrative measures are launched within limited parameters, lack of commitment and inadequacy of resources, human and material, act as barriers towards achieving inclusive education in Sri Lanka. Individual schools make autonomous decisions in the absence of binding and scrupulously promoted provisions and lack of leadership and direction from the ministry of education, to place inclusive education as a priority (Stubbs, 2005; Yokotani, 2001). Hence, in reality the true experience of inclusion has yet to be felt by the vast majority of disabled children and their families in Sri Lanka; for them the experience of inclusion is a different one (Yokotani, 2001).

So far, the review focused on the global movement towards inclusive education, factors necessary to develop inclusive schools, challenges to inclusive education, global reports on implementing inclusive education across continents and the Sri Lankan perspective. Attention is now drawn to the second broad area that the research is concerned with; speech, language and communication difficulties of school aged children.

2.7 SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES

Children are considered to have speech, language and communication difficulties, when there is a mismatch between age appropriate developmental expectations and development of their ability to communicate (Beitchman and Brownlie, 2010). Inclusive education has brought in a significant number of such students into educational settings (Wellington and Wellington, 2002).

Speech, language and /or communication difficulties manifests as a delay or a disorder (RCSLT, 2009; Martin and Miller, 2003). The development of speech and language according to the expected development pattern at a reduced speed is considered a delay while the distorted development of speech and/or language due to physiological or cognitive deficits is deemed a disorder (ibid). These difficulties arise due to three causes; a primary impairment in the absence of neuro-developmental problems or social causes or a secondary condition associated with another primary disorder or associated with socio-economic disadvantage (Lindsay, et al., 2010; Steppling, Quattlebaum and Brady, 2007; Gascoigne, 2006). Speech, language and communication difficulties refer to a broad range of problems. These include dysfluency of speech, articulation and phonological difficulties, voice disorders, inability to express thoughts effectively when speaking, deficits in understanding verbal, non-verbal and graphic symbol systems and concepts and difficulties encountered when using language in social situations (Gillam, Marquardt and Martin, 2011; Bercow, 2008; Steppling et al., 2007; Gascoigne, 2006; Cross, 2004; ASHA, 1993).

2.7.1 TERMINOLOGY

Attempts to name speech, language and communication difficulties, either by looking at the problem or the underlying causes, have resulted in different diagnostic terms been more acceptable at varied times, in different countries (Martin and Miller, 2003). The diagnostic terms are approved by professional bodies such as the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in the UK (RCSLT, 2009), the Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists (IASLT, 2007), the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA, 1993), the American Psychological Association (APA, 2000), several authors (Bercow, 2008; Haynes, Moran and Pindzola, 2006; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2000) and organizations (ICD-10; WHO, 2007).

Currently the term, Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) is advocated in the UK (Bercow, 2008; RCSLT, 2009). The Bercow Report definition adopted throughout the research as discussed in the preamble refers to difficulties with "fluency, forming sounds and words, formulating sentences, understanding what others say, and using language socially" (Bercow, 2008 p13). Some other terms that have been in use include, Speech and Language Impairments (SLI; RCSLT, 2009), Specific Speech and Language Difficulties (SSLD; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2000), Specific Speech and Language Impairments (IASLT, 2007), Communication Disorders (CD; Haynes, et al.,

2006; DSM – IV – TR 2000; APA, 2000; ASHA, 1993) and Specific developmental disorders of speech and language (ICD-10; WHO, 2007).

Hence, it is clear that a globally accepted, definite diagnostic term does not exist. Therefore a description of individuals' abilities in relation to speech, language and communication, in different contexts is provided to minimise misunderstanding (Martin and Miller, 2003).

2.7.2 PREVALENCE

A recent report suggests the presence of at least two or three students with the label of SLCN in every primary classroom in the UK (Lee, 2008 in McCartney and Ellis, 2010). A 2007 survey (RCSLT, 2009) in the UK indicates a figure of 23.8% in primary schools and 6.9% in secondary schools while in 2006 the figure was estimated at 6-8% of children aged 0-11years (Gascoigne, 2006). Early studies in the UK (Silva, et al., 1983, Bax, et al., 1983 and Crystal, 1984 in Webster and McConnel, 1987) indicate figures of approximately 5-10% of preschool and school aged children while another study (Law, Boyle, Harris, Harkness and Nye, 2000) puts the figure at 6%.

According to an American survey (McLeod and Threats, 2008) approximately 22% of school aged children with speech, language and communication as a primary impairment received services in 2004 while in Australia (McLeod and McKinnon, 2007) 13% of school aged children were identified in 2007. A study (CERI, 2004) conducted across several countries in 2004, in schools, reported figures of 1.5% in Canada, 3.12% in Finland and 0.01% in Turkey. However, it is cautioned that variations in terminology, definitions, assessment tools and procedures and complexities involved in interpreting prevalence data, presents distortions to statistics globally (Lindsay et al., 2010; Martin and Miller, 2003).

The literature search did not uncover statistics from the Asian and African continents. The lack of consensus to formulate a suitable definition as discussed by researchers who have conducted studies within this region (Miles and Singal, 2010) can be attributed as a reason for the paucity of data.

2.8 CHALLENGES STUDENTS WITH THE LABEL OF SLCN FACE IN SCHOOLS

Communication is at the heart of education (Dimova and Loughran, 2009) and classrooms are not individual enterprises where each student works alone (Martin and Miller, 2003). Interactions between teacher and students and amongst students are inevitable in any classroom (Nind, Kellet and Hopkins, 2001).

Communication, a seemingly easy and natural process for most students, challenges students with the label of SLCN (Beitchman and Brownlie, 2010). When these students are unable to meet the communication expectations of their teachers and peers and if their teachers fail to consider their presence and alter communication practices (Nind et al., 2001), there can be immediate and long lasting effects on the "potential development of a complete, healthy and confident" student (Lees and Urwin, 1995, p9). Lowered self-esteem, learning difficulties, emotional and behaviour problems, unsatisfactory social relationships and being subjected to bullying are areas reported to be most affected (Gascoigne, 2006).

2.8.1 LOWERED SELF-ESTEEM

When teachers have not attended professional development programmes they fail to recognize students with the label of SLCN, misconstrue the students' struggle to interpret the rules of communication inherent in formal classrooms and to respond appropriately and label the student behaviours as learning or behaviour problems (Kyriacou, 1998). Some teachers are noted to bring attention to student failures publicly (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2000). Labelling and overt declarations highlighting deficiencies lower students' self-esteem (ibid).

There is also a general consensus that people in western societies measure success, maturity, intelligence and /or social competency based on an individual's verbal skills (Rice, 1993, in Reed and Spicer, 2003; Bray, 2006). Thus, when teachers hear 'non standard speech' their expectations of students decrease (Beazley 2000). When students perceive that their teachers' expectations are low their self-esteem lowers and their behaviour or responses reflect the negative expectations (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001).

2.8.2 LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Studies from 1980s onwards (Wiig and Semel, 1984, in Patterson and Wright 1990; Crystal and Varley, 1995; Rose, 2006; Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007; McCormack, McLeod, McAllister and Harrison, 2009; Lindsay et al., 2010) indicate that students with the label of SLCN have problems with literacy, arithmetic and the manner in which they approach learning (McCormack et al., 2009).

Different studies cite a range of reasons. Lowered self-esteem is linked to low attainment in literacy during the school years (Lindsay et al. 2009 in McCartney and Ellis, 2010). The initial level of severity of speech, language and communication difficulties also impacts learning (Hasketh, 2004, in Cross, 2004).

Language is acquired and literacy is taught (Martin and Miller, 1999). Therefore when students with language impairments are unsupported in classrooms they demonstrate learning difficulties (Catts, et al., 2002 & Young et al., 2002, in Steppling, et al., 2007). Further, students with speech impairments risk developing expressive and receptive language difficulties in later childhood (Aram & nation, 1980 & Stern et al., 1995 in Cross, 2004) while for some the problems continue to adolescence (Conti-Ramsden, Botting, Simkin and Knox, 2001) and adult life (Clegg, 2006).

2.8.3 EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Several factors lead to students with the label of SLCN experiencing emotional and behavioural problems. Firstly, low self-esteem makes students with the label of SLCN more vulnerable to emotional and behaviour problems than their typically developing peers (Gerharz, et al., 2003 and Law and Garrett, 2004 in Markham, Laar, Gibbard and Dean, 2009; Botting and Conti-Ramsden, 2008; Stevenson, 1990 in Miller and Roux, 1997) whose patterns of growth and change follow a globally accepted pre-set pattern (Herbert, 2003).

Secondly, approximately 36% of these students are at greater risk of being bullied as compared to 12% of their peers who do not display speech, language and communication difficulties (Conti-Ramsden and Botting, 2004). Children who are bullied suffer from emotional problems (Kidscape, 1999).

Hence, students with the label of SLCN may develop socially deviant behaviours including tantrums, behaviour and attention problems (Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007; Redmond and Rice, 1998, in Farmer, 2006; Martin and Miller, 2003; Beitchman, et al., 2001; Baker and Cantwell, 1987, in Ripley, Barrett and Fleming, 2001). Others withdraw 'physically, mentally or emotionally' (Patterson and Wright, 1990, p91), keeping their problems close to their hearts (Fujiki, et al., 1996b in Farmer 2006; Redmond and Rice, 1998 in Farmer, 2006).

2.8.4 UNSATISFACTORY SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Teacher attitudes and adult-child communication are factors for success or failure at school, for any child (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001). When teachers are unaware of the best ways to include students with the label of SLCN, they pursue unfavourable communication practices. These include initiating communication and driving it more with instructions believing that it will help children learn (Reed and Spicer, 2003), carefully organizing questions (Moore and Sixsmith, 2000), asking 'lower order' questions, listening with one ear, completing the child's thoughts, being impatient at slow responses (Hargie, 1983) and providing few opportunities for students to engage in active, meaningful conversation (Wallach & Miller 1988, in Reed and Spicer, 2003).

Peers, influenced by such communication behaviours of their teachers (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001) may opt to dominate the communication, prevent these students from speaking, avoid communicating with them (Lewis, 1990 in Martin and Miller, 2003) or resort to name calling (Martin and Miller, 2003). Students with the label of SLCN may elect to avoid or minimize close contact with their peers as they become extremely frustrated with the listeners or themselves (Martin and Miller, 2003) due to breakdowns in communication and the need to constantly negotiate the right to communicate, to be heard and to be accepted (Bray, 2006).

Within such situations these students tune off and avoid taking part in classroom interactions (Charles, 2004), withdraw from engaging in group play (Fujiki, et al., 2001, in Farmer 2006; Charles, 2004) or refrain from working in cooperative group projects and participating in varied aspects of school life (Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007). Such voluntary withdrawal prevents students with the label of SLCN from forming meaningful social relationships (McCormack et al., 2009; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006).

However, some disabled students feel a compulsion to forge their own identities to gain peer acceptance (Slee, 2011). Peers may also exhibit remarkable tolerance and acceptance by including students with communication and social difficulties (Charles, 2004).

2.9 SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH THE LABEL OF SLCN IN SCHOOLS

The above discussion endorses the view that students with the label of SLCN are vulnerable within school environments. Hence, schools are responsible to respect these students and make effective provision of services to increase their participation in classrooms (Korth, Sharp and Culatta, 2010; McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Jackson, Pretti-Frontczak, Harjusola-Webb, Grisham-Brown, and Romani, 2009; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Rizman, Sangar and Coufal, 2006; Wegner, Grosche and Edmister, 2003; Law et al., 2002). The global move towards inclusive education has placed this responsibility on speech and language therapists and teachers (Korth et al., 2010; McCartney, Ellis, Boyle, Turnbull, and Kerr, 2010; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Rizman, et al., 2006).

Literature (Lindsay et al., 2010; McLeod and McKinnon, 2010) reveals examples of collaborative practice between health and education in different countries. In the UK students with impairments receive services at school and from the health system, while government policy in the USA dictates that students with impairments are supported in school by teachers and specialists such as Speech and Language Pathologists (McLeod and McKinnon, 2010). In Scotland, although commissioning is not practiced, legislation demands that authorities collaborate to provide services (Lindsay et al., 2010). In Australia, different states adopt different models of service with the state of New South Wales relying on teachers to provide support within schools, while encouraging individuals to seek professional help from outside the sphere of education (McLeod and McKinnon, 2010). Health and education services for children with impairments including those with the label of SLCN in Sri Lanka remain separate with hardly any partnership between the two sectors due to unwillingness of professionals to collaborate (Kulasekera, 2006).

The discussion that follows considers the distinctive roles both groups of professionals play in the lives of these students.

2.10 THE ROLE OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Speech and language therapists within educational settings, make decisions regarding assessment, the different settings for intervention and the composition of different collaborative teams to support students with the label of SLCN (RCSLT, 2009; Jackson et al., 2009; ASHA, 2004 in Steppling et al., 2007). The responsibilities of speech and language therapists include evaluating student progress, providing professional advice to school management, educating and training teachers and/or newly qualified therapists and dismissing student services when the difficulty is cleared and when students are able to perform according to grade expectations or when the student is making no further progress (ibid).

Different modes of speech and language therapy services along different parameters are pursued in school settings (RCSLT, 2009; Wegner et al., 2003). These include direct intervention by speech and language therapists or indirect intervention through individuals who work closely with the students (RCSLT, 2009). Such interventions occur within or outside the classroom, intensively or at regular intervals, for limited or extended periods of time and in groups or individually (Law et al., 2002). Hence, students with the label of SLCN receive support through the pull out, classroom based and/or consultative models (Wegner et al., 2003). The choice of a single or combined model, in the UK, depends on the students' Individual Educational Plans, drawn up after considering the level of support students need (Law et al., 2002).

2.10.1 DIRECT INTERVENTION THROUGH THE 'PULL OUT' MODEL

Direct intervention is associated with individual or small group pullout treatment sessions based on the traditional model of service delivery practiced by speech and language therapists in clinical settings (Law et al., 2002). The delivery models include multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary teams. In multidisciplinary teams, teachers, parents and speech and language therapists work autonomously (RCSLT, 2009). In interdisciplinary teams the members meet to discuss the case but work independently with each student (ibid).

The pullout model does not encourage collaboration between teachers and speech and language therapists, as therapists seek to achieve personalized goals for students in controlled environments independently (Korth, et al., 2010). Hence, speech and language

therapists interact directly with the students to meet individualised goals and respond directly to adults queries and provide solutions to problems (Dinnebeil, Pretti-Frontczak, and McInerney, 2009).

According to an ASHA survey in 2008, almost 55% of schools-based services for students with speech and language impairments in America were conducted using the pullout model (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009). Other recent studies (McCartney, Boyle, Ellis, Bannatyne and Turnbull, 2011; McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Law et al., 2002) indicate that direct therapy remains crucial for students with severe and persistent language, literacy and communication problems and for early childhood programmes (Case-Smith. and Holland, 2009).

Doubts concerning the efficacy of direct intervention are voiced, because students designated for intervention in pullout rooms struggle to generalize their skills (Fey, 1988 in Korth et al., 2010). Further, the 'pull out' model has no place in the move towards inclusive education (Ainscow, 1997 in Hartas, 2004). Schools are also finding it more difficult to organise direct intervention (McCartney et al., 2009 in McCartney, et al., 2011) and are therefore developing more indirect models (Bercow, 2008).

2.10.2 INDIRECT INTERVENTION THROUGH THE CLASSROOM BASED MODEL

To overcome the controversies surrounding direct intervention, therapists are advised to link intervention with the curriculum activities of the school and maintain a close collaborative relationship with the teachers (Martin and Miller, 2003). This model of indirect intervention is described as a 'holistic and ecological model' (Law et al., 2002).

Studies in the 90's discuss one such indirect method of intervention in schools; the rotational model of speech and language therapy services (Johnson and Thomas, 1995, Roux, 1996, Andrews 1997, New 1998 and Topping et al., 1998 in Wren, Roulstone, Parkhouse and Hall, 2001). This model outlines a three phase approach to be implemented in a single school year; the first term for assessing students and training school personnel, the second term for provision of therapy in groups with teachers providing assistance and the third term when the school staff conducts therapy with occasional visits from the speech and language therapists (ibid).

A more recent trend is the trans-disciplinary or collaborative team approach where team effort and joint responsibility is given priority (ASHA, 1991) to provide students with the label of SLCN 'a positive, integrated, streamlined experience' (Gascoigne, 2006, p16). This approach encourages professionals from different disciplines to work together to meet student needs with less emphasis on professional boundaries and more on providing multiple synchronized interventions to promote 'generalization of skills across academic contexts' (Thomas, et al., 2001 in Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007 p526).

Because collaborative service delivery is effective to improve student performance and implement best practice (Korth et al., 2010; Hadley, et al., 2000 and Throneburg, et al., 2000, in Campbell and Skaraku-Doyle, 2007) school management can develop collaborative teams to meet the needs of students with impairments in their schools (Friend & Bursuck, 2002, Friend and Cook, 2003 and Idol, 2006 in Rizman, et al., 2006; Thomazet, 2009). Collaborative teaming is also a platform for teachers to acquire knowledge and be more informed by different professionals (Hillier, Civetta and Pridham, 2010; Coufal, 2002, in Korth et al., 2010; Meijer, et al., 2007; Rizman, et al., 2006). When teachers are willing to collaborate it discourages them from feeling threatened that their domains are being trespassed or their skills questioned (Haynes et al., 2006).

Within the indirect model therapists are responsible to monitor progress and validate effectiveness of intervention (Cirrin and Gillam, 2008) by documenting students' response to intervention (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009) either through weekly follow-up, the use of social influence and/or performance feedback (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009). The formative and summative data that becomes accessible through such progress monitoring is useful for decision making and program planning (Jackson et al., 2009).

2.10.3 INDIRECT INTERVENTION THROUGH THE CONSULTANCY MODEL

A third model of intervention evident in literature, the consultancy model is reported as a useful and practical tool for schools (Haynes et al., 2006, p27). This model is a relatively new phenomenon globally, in the field of speech and language therapy services (Wegner et al., 2003). It is supported in the UK (DfEE, 2000, in Law et al., 2002), America (ASHA 1996 in Wegner et al., 2003) New Zealand and Canada (Fergussen and Brynelsen, 1991).

Consultancy in speech and language therapy is borrowed from practices adopted by educational psychologists who moved from isolated clinical settings into schools and communities to work in closer proximity to the children's environment (Law et al., 2002). The model was developed in response to inclusive education, by acknowledging the importance of the social and academic environment to deliver intervention (Mercow, et al., 2010; Law et al., 2002).

The consultancy model presumes that speech and language therapists are competent to function as 'consultants' providing expert advice to teachers and childcare professionals regarding language intervention (Hartas, 2004). Individuals are deemed consultants due to the specialized nature of the tasks carried out or the level of expertise they possess (Law et al., 2002). The consultants' role within education is to create discussion forums instead of giving advice as is often witnessed in the business industry (Mittler, 2000), and to ask questions that invite perspectives and experiences to empower groups to find their own answers (Hanko, 1999). Such an approach is expected to support quality inclusive experiences for students with impairments (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009).

Speech and language therapists, in countries of the North take on the role of consultants in the collaborative teaming model and liaise with teaching staff, teaching assistants, speech therapy assistants and parents, to provide services for students with the label of SLCN within inclusive educational settings (Haynes et al., 2006; Wegner et al., 2003; Law et al., 2002). Pre-requisites for successful consultation are identified as training staff, especially assistants, organizing sufficient time to consult with staff, understanding and knowledge of classroom environment and curriculum, receiving support from parents and having a body of staff to offer consultation (Lindsay et al., 2002 in Mercow et al., 2010).

Consultant speech and language therapists spend much time and effort training and educating adults (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009; Gascoigne, 2006; Keltchtermans, 2004). Systematic training processes focus on providing handouts, modeling, coaching and scaffolding teachers to use equipment and therapy tools, providing strategies that easily fit into the classroom routines and withdrawing support as teachers become more confident (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009; Hyter and Hartas, 1999, in Law et al., 2001). Further, through training programs consultant therapists enable teachers to understand behaviours students with the label of SLCN display and the underlying reasons and assist teachers to adopt new ways of making students successful (Case-Smith and Holland,

2009). Considering the social model of disability, training programmes, as discussed under the topic of inclusive education, must be designed not merely to teach pathology of speech and language impairments and therapeutic methods (Moore and Slee, 2011) but to invite teachers as partners to consider the barriers students with the label of SLCN face within school settings and ways of removing these barriers to provide inclusive educational experiences for the students (ibid).

Students with the label of SLCN benefit when speech and language therapists work through well trained people within the students' environments (Mercow, Beckwith and Klee, 2010; Gardner, 2006). This is found to be true in school environments when informed and trained teachers provide authentic contexts within daily routines to address specific concepts and skills and practice newly learned communication skills (Jackson, et al., 2009; Steppling et al., 2007; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Haynes et al., 2006) and to transfer direct learning from therapy (Beilinson and Olswang, 2008, in Cirrin and Gillam, 2008; Martin and Miller, 2003). In countries where this model is followed, trained 'assistants' work under the direction of consultant therapists (Boyle, McCartney, O'Hare and Forbes, 2009). The role of assistants is endorsed by professional organisations including ASHA (2007), Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CALSPA, 2007), RCSLT (2006) and Speech Pathology Association of Australia (SPAA, 2001) to enhance frequency of support and effectively use limited resources (Boyle et al., 2009).

Within the consultancy model when teachers and speech and language therapists share a mutual understanding and respect regarding each other's roles and responsibilities the student outcomes become successful (Daines et al., 1996 in Wren et al., 2001). When consultants are mindful of teacher concerns regarding students and classroom contexts when designing support for students with the label of SLCN and are flexible (Haynes et al., 2006) they are able to cultivate a productive relationship (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009) and friendly partnership with teaching staff (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009). However, the consultancy model requires that speech and language therapists redefine their traditional roles as they are called to work in different ways on new and unfamiliar turf (Jackson et al., 2009; Law et al., 2002). Yet, the term consultancy is unclear and requires further investigation and debate to produce a workable definition (Gascoigne, 2006).

Concerns are voiced that although speech and language therapists and teachers work to achieve common goals, within the consultancy model in inclusive education, therapists are afforded the elevated status of being 'highly experienced' individuals who provide expert advice to teachers (Limbrick 2000, p20). Further, when methods are demonstrated by consultants and effectiveness is acknowledged, because of the perceived disparity of expertise, teachers may doubt their ability to implement ideas (Korth et al., 2010). The professional alienation may be due to the tensions that exist between education and speech and language therapy services; the developmental model versus the 'medical' or 'deficit' model (Hartas, 2004). Therefore the consultancy model if not carefully managed can align itself with the medical approach (Law et al., 2002) and create unequal partnerships, detrimental to students with the label of SLCN (Hartas, 2004).

The reciprocal consultation model may be pursued to diffuse the tensions discussed (Hartas, 2004). This model acknowledges the teachers and the consultant as experts within their professional boundaries and the roles of advisor and intervention agent is shared and interchanged (ibid). The reciprocal consultation model encourages 'cross-fertilization' (Watts, Hawthorn, Hoffbrand, Jackson and Spurling, 1997) or the opportunity for both professional groups to learn, grow and develop while sharing their expertise with one another. However, it is unsuitable when working with non-professionals such as untrained teachers who lack expertise and are thus unable to make positive contributions to the partnership (Hartas, 2004). In such instances individuals are expected to co-operate with one another to meet common goals (Watts, et al., 1997).

School based consultant speech and language therapists face a number of challenges including a high caseload and increased administrative functions, documentation processes and team meetings (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009; Harris, Prater, Dyches and Heath, 2009). These challenges may result in brief observations, the inability to follow up on cases and to commit for meetings (Haynes et al., 2006). Further, the consultants' lack of insider knowledge may result in inappropriate suggestions although it may have worked in another context (Corrie, 2002) thus rendering the solutions ineffective. The absence of a clear view regarding roles and responsibilities of adults concerned can also cause problems within the consultancy approach (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009).

From a country perspective, the consultancy model is problematic in the UK, due to the perception that 'experts' are found in the health service and not within the sphere of

education (Law et al., 2002). Collaboration between health and education in the UK is also far from satisfactory (Lindsay et al., 2010) while instances of good practice are visible (Bercow, 2008). Although consultancy is not seen as a universal remedy for the provision of speech and language therapy services in schools there is evidence of the presence of positive aspects that can be explored (Law et al., 2002). The limited data currently available is insufficient to support or dispute the effectiveness of the different models (Sloper, 2004 and Abbot, et al., 2005, in Hillier, et al., 2010). Hence, considering the context and student needs and formulating the best services is prudent to opting for a single format (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009).

2.11 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN ORGANISING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

With the advent of inclusive education teachers ought to possess the knowledge and skills to identify and include students with the label of SLCN into classrooms (Rizman, et al., 2006; Patterson and Wright, 1990). Successful inclusion depends on teachers' knowledge of the manner in which speech and language develops in children (Sadler, 2005) and the link between speech, language and communication difficulties and learning (Martin and Miller, 2003).

When teachers consider the physical, social and temporal factors they support students connect with the learning environment (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009). Maintaining a classroom environment that encourages communication is ideal to motivate and engage students with the label of SLCN (McCartney and Ellis, 2010). Hence, single seating or seating a student close to the teacher, which indicates a ban on speaking, is discouraged (Lewis and Doorlag, 1999).

Group arrangements which consist of peers capable of supporting and responding to the needs of others must be considered (McCartney and Ellis, 2010) because when peers provide 'models and prompts', students with the label of SLCN are more confident to express their wishes and mingle socially (Jackson et al., 2009). Further, by grouping peers who are able to provide good speech models through well thought out seating arrangements and supplying material that encourages interaction between students (Kemple et al., 2002), teachers provide opportunities for enhanced learning, peer communication and communal fellowship, while nurturing friendships amongst all students (Jackson et al., 2009; Tauber, and Mester, 2007; Lewis and Doorlag, 1999).

Such opportunities also enable students with the label of SLCN to transfer communication skills acquired in therapy to classroom settings (ICIDH-2, 2001).

Further, teachers who make environmental modifications such as reducing noise levels and altering classroom routines, help some students while also minimising the disturbance to other students (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009). By creating effective visual and listening conditions teachers motivate students with the label of SLCN to engage in learning activities (McCartney and Ellis, 2010).

Teachers and school based speech and language therapists collaborate to organize the curriculum and materials and provide structure to activities to help these students to access the curriculum (Korth et al., 2010; Martin and Miller, 2003; Law et al., 2002). Collaboration can be for large-group instruction (Throneburg et al., 2000 in Cirrin and Gillam, 2008) and to introduce specific skill improvement programmes such as 'interactive conversational reading' (Crowe, 2003 in Cirrin and Gillam, 2008), 'context and definition methods' to enhance vocabulary knowledge and develop reading comprehension (Nash and Snowling, 2006) and computer based programmes (Martin and Miller, 2003). Speech and language therapists also help teachers design lesson plans (ibid) by considering student interests and learning styles and including hands-on activities and visuals to minimise the need for students to focus on verbal explanations (Korth et al., 2010). Therapists further encourage teachers to use familiar words when teaching new concepts while stressing on target concepts or words (Vaughn and Bos, 2009). Other suggestions include integrated service delivery methods, where therapy is conducted in classrooms, with therapists involved in classroom routines including circle time and modeling for the teachers to help them implement the strategies when therapists are absent (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009).

The indirect method of service delivery through clever organization of cooperative groups, pair activities and peer-mediated interventions (Charles, 2004; Kemple, et al., 2002) is found to help peers learn to accept differences with tolerance, and support students with the label of SLCN (Kiloran, Tymon and Frempong, 2007). Organised collaborative activities including paired reading schemes (Martin and Miller, 2003) help develop altruistic behaviours in non-disabled students and prevent them from engaging in bullying, ridiculing and making fun (Fujiki, et al., 1999a, Guralnick, et al., 1996, Howlin & Ruter, 1987 and McCabe & Meller, 2004 in Farmer, 2006).

Further, cooperative grouping is suitable to highlight abilities of students with the label of SLCN and thereby increase their self-esteem (Martin and Miller, 2003). The organisation of collaborative tasks encourages 'intrinsic motivation and promote self-efficacy and persistence' (Guthrie and Humenick, 2004 in McCartney and Ellis, 2010, p2).

2.12 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN ORGANISING EFFECTIVE ADULT (TEACHER) - CHILD (STUDENT) COMMUNICATION

Classrooms are dynamic entities where communication takes place continuously (Wood, 2008). Adult communication within classrooms is goal oriented (Farrell, 2006) and focused at meeting pedagogic goals (Walsh, 2006) or directed at classroom management (Nayak, 2004). Although all classroom interactions are not directed at teaching and learning, good teaching involves teachers engaging in adult-child communication; verbal and non-verbal, which is clearly understood by all learners (Clifton, 2004) and encourages students to engage in unprompted communication (Wheldall 1985 and Dolley and Wheldall 1987 in Saddler and Mogford-Bevan, 1997).

When examining why teachers and students talk, what they utter and how they speak it is apparent that adult-child communication is influenced by different factors. The moral standards of a culture or subculture (Newman and Newman, 2009) and patterns of communication adopted by individual teachers (Zhang, 2008) are two key factors that determine adult-child communication routines within classrooms. These two factors are discussed prior to considering ways in which teachers may alter communication to include students with the label of SLCN. This decision is taken by considering the context of the research and the types of communication practices witnessed in the classrooms.

2.13 CULTURAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ADULT –CHILD COMMUNICATION

Culture is an important aspect of human subsistence which controls and directs individuals' thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Hollins, 2008). A number of elements of cultural practice are recognised within an analysis of pedagogic discourse (Black, 2004). These include the purpose of the lesson within the classroom and the broader arena of the society, the power relationships that are attached to teachers and learners and the

multifaceted 'relationship between external communities of practice with that of pedagogic discourse' (Black, 2004, p349).

The cultural roots of teachers influence the manner in which they interact with their students (Kogut and Silver, 2009). In Asian cultures the value of education is drawn from the Confucian heritage (Abboud and Kim, 2005). Teachers are subjected to supervision by inspectors (Barnett and Hodson, 2001) as they execute suggestions developed by more knowledgeable curriculum developers (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008); a feature noted in the 1970's in countries of the North (Barnett and Hodson, 2001).

Students in Asian classrooms, listen with respect to the authoritative voices of their teachers and refrain from asking questions or presenting opposing views (Zhang, 2008; Xiao-yan, 2006; Alwis, 2005) because they revere and worship their teachers as experts (Nystrand, 2006; Rajput and Walia, 2002). This is in contrast to classrooms of the North where adult-child communication is intended to create a rapport between teacher and students (Browne, 2009) as it encourages students to use talk to learn and understand (Walsh, 2006).

Hence, as studies suggest, in Asian classrooms, the focus of this research, the teachers' voices dominate.

2.14 TYPES OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE AND PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

Two types of classroom discourse have been identified; traditional and non-traditional (Cazden, 2001) also referred to as transmissive and exploratory (Moore, 2000) or conservative and progressive (Kohn, 1999) styles of communication. Each type of classroom discourse contributes towards different levels of learning (Zhang, 2008). Teacher choice of discourse is dependent on institutional and personal preference (Zhang, 2008), age of students, the experience teachers possess, the subjects they teach and the purpose of lessons (Clifton, 2006).

2.14.1 THE TRADITIONAL STYLE OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

Often teachers who themselves learn in classrooms that practice the traditional style of communication, continue to practice the same within their classrooms (Morocco, 2001). When studying classrooms across the globe whether they be primary or secondary

classrooms (Browne, 2009; Sahlberg and Boce, 2008; Nystrand, 2006; White, 2002; Cazden, 2001; Yokotani, 2001; Moore, 2000; Kyriacou, 1998) or adult learning in college or university programmes (Innamullah, Naseer ud din and Hussain, 2008) or classrooms that teach English as a second language (Zhang, 2008; Markee, 2005; Clifton, 2006) or inclusive classrooms (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001;Morocco, 2001), it is clear that teachers who engage in the traditional style of communication take centre stage and operate on the belief that they are the experts, while their students are passive recipients (Gillies and Khan, 2008). The essence of traditional classrooms is explained thus;

> *"To sit in a class where the teacher stuffs our minds with information, organizes it with finality, insists on having the answers while utterly being uninterested in our views, and forces us to a grim competition for grades- to sit in such a class is to experience a lack of space for learning. (Palmer, 1983, p70)*

When Freire (1970 in Yokotani, 2001) denounced passive learning, describing it as repression, he may have been referring to such situations.

Quantitative measurements in classrooms that practice the traditional style of discourse, beginning from the 1970's, give a varied picture. Several studies (Nystrand, 2006; Sharan and Sharan, 1992; Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shachar, 1990) support the Flanders (1963) two-thirds law that states that two thirds of classroom time is devoted to talking, while two-thirds of that time is dominated by teacher talk and two thirds of that talk is used for "direct" teaching including lecturing, giving directions and criticizing students. This trend is reported recently from upper secondary classrooms in Albania (Sahlberg and Boce, 2008), tertiary classrooms in Pakistan (Inamullah, et al., 2008) and primary classrooms in Singapore (Kogut and Silver, 2009). A study in a secondary classroom in Sri Lanka, highlighted that classroom interactions were solely teacher talk, with student - teacher or student - student interaction discouraged (Alwis, 2005). In a study of traditional classrooms in Europe (MacBeath, Schratz, Meuret and Jakobsen, 2000) 28 minutes within a 51 minute lesson or 55% of lesson time was identified as "good learning time"; the effective time spent on teaching and learning and excluding time spent on behaviour management.

Teachers who show preference for the traditional style of communication follow particular practices in their classrooms. These include exerting control through questions, following distinctive patterns of communication and preserving silence. Each of these topics is discussed in detail below.

Exerting control through questions

Teachers in traditional classrooms, control the direction of student talk by initiating conversations through questions and accepting responses that fit closely to their expectations while disallowing answers that do not match teacher expectation (Nystrand, 2006; Markee, 2005; Kyriacou, 1998). These teachers expect their students to listen, absorb and regurgitate by answering structured questions with short replies as noted in studies in Albania and Mexico (Sahlberg and Boce, 2008; Tatto, 1999, in Avalos, 2004). These and other studies (Gillies and Khan, 2008) reveal that the questions do not challenge thinking nor require rationalization of responses. They are used to check on teaching effectiveness through students' ability to recall facts and also to help teachers assess difficulties the students face (Tiffin and Rajasingham, 1995; Hargie, 1983). When the expected answers are not forthcoming in the first instance, teachers supply answers, thereby diminishing students' responses and lowering their self-esteem (Lai, 1994).

Following the teacher Initiation – students Response – teacher Evaluation (IRE) pattern of communication

When teachers focus on initiating conversation through questions to receive responses from their students and then proceed to evaluate the responses as discussed above they are subscribing to the teacher Initiation – students Response – teacher Evaluation (IRE) pattern of communication (Cazden, 1988 and Mehan, 1979 in Mariage 1995). As studies in the 90's suggest, the IRE structure of teaching is noted during approximately 70% of all teaching in secondary, some primary classrooms and early year's settings (Wells, 1999, Nystrand 1997, Wood 1992 and Lemke 1990 in Zhang 2008; Alexander 2000). This method is considered problematic because teachers ask questions for which the answers are known beforehand, the students are involved in a process of guessing the answer the teacher wishes to hear and the responses are often brief (Baxter, Woodward, Voorhies and Wong, 2002). However, in some cultures, such as in China, the closed questions in the IRE pattern is preferred over open ended questions because teachers work with a curriculum prepared by a central authority, are expected to complete a wide range of tasks and continuously prepare students for formal examinations (Zhang 2008).

Following the teacher Initiated Question- student-response-Teacher Feedback (IRF) pattern of communication

A second pattern of classroom discourse, the teacher Initiated Question- student-response-Teacher Feedback (IRF) pattern (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975 in Saddler and

Mogford-Bevan, 1997) is also witnessed in classrooms where teachers opt for the traditional form of communication. Although similar to the IRE, the relationship between the teacher and students is different within the IRF organization as teachers engage in 'cued elicitations' and give broad hints through vocabulary and non-verbal means including intonation and gesture, to receive the information they want (ibid). Teachers who engage in the IRF pattern of communication do not play a dominant role continuously but use students' responses to shape the direction of a conversation, while teacher feedback gives students an opportunity to grow as learners and feel valued (Farrell, 2006). The feedback could be a comment, praise or even silence (Richards and Lockhart, 2000 in Xiao-yan, 2006). However, questions posed by teachers can be artificial and used only to break the monotony of the lesson (Cazden, 2001) while students are denied the responsibility of steering the direction of the lesson (Clifton, 2006).

Despite criticism regarding the limitations these styles of discourse have on learning, there is global evidence that the IRE/F patterns of discourse continue to be the dominant style of discourse in countries in the north and south (Radford, Ireson and Mahon, 2006).

Preserving silence

Teachers elect for the traditional discourse style with a view to preserving silence (Silver and Smith, 1996). When teachers opt for the traditional style of communication, students are seated separately at individual desks and discouraged from interacting with peers during lessons (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001). Active interactions are discouraged because teachers equate silence to conscious learning (Cullinan, 1993). Teachers demand silence to reduce time spent on minimising noise levels when dealing with overcrowded classrooms single handed, because teachers genuinely wish to increase time spent on teaching and to prevent others from judging them as ineffective disciplinarians (Edwards and Westgate, 1994).

When students dare to challenge the rule of silence teachers become anxious, label students 'difficult' or 'undisciplined' and proceed to discipline the students via punishment with the clear message that complete obedience is compulsory (Browne, 2009). This practice lowers the self-esteem of pupils (Kyriacou, 1998) as they are given the impression of being capable only of 'receiving, filing and storing deposits of knowledge' (Freire, 1972, p58).

2.14.2 THE NON-TRADITIONAL STYLE OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

The non-traditional style of communication considers the teacher as a facilitator (Clifton, 2006) and encourages collaborative patterns of discourse between teacher and students (Radford et al., 2006). Within such classrooms student talk is used as a tool for learning (Cazden, 2001) and focus is turned to students-organized interaction (Nayak, 2004) or dialogically-organised instruction (Zhang, 2008).

Views that influenced classroom communication

Developments in the 20th century, in the spheres of philosophy, psychology and psycholinguistics impacted the way people viewed classrooms and adult-child communication (Alexander, 2006 in Browne, 2009; Niemi, 2002; Kohn, 1999). John Dewey a philosopher who considered democracy as a way of life, Jean Piaget a psychologist who was interested in studying the manner in which children learned and the work of Vygotsky (1978) are attributed with shaping thinking that led to the move towards exploratory, progressive (Kohn, 1999) or dialogic classrooms (Alexander, 2006 in Browne, 2009).

Vygotsky (1978) believed that when learners are given the opportunity to display their views and present arguments to others and to themselves, it helps expand understanding and assimilate learning, and therefore enables cognitive growth (Nystrand, 2006). The teachers' role is to identify, create and sustain the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD). ZPD is the gap between students' current capabilities and that which can be achieved with assistance, to enable advancement in language and articulation of ideas, (Tiffin and Rajasingham, 1995). The teachers' task is to scaffold instructional activities and classroom discourse (Nystrand, 2006) for students to discover principles by themselves, through dynamic dialogue that act as an intermediary force (Cazden, 2001). Scaffolding or organising of learning by giving students the space and support necessary to interact and express views and opinions enables students to develop over a period of time (Walsh, 2006).

When studying the interest in using student talk to engage learners, it is apparent that policy guidelines in different countries have been instrumental in bringing about change. In the UK the Bullock Report '*A Language for Life*' (1975), is considered an influential document that succeeded in changing the lives of teachers with its emphasis on teacher accountability to ensure development of students' language skills including speaking,

listening, reading and writing (Moore, 2000). Further the National Literacy (1998) and Numeracy strategies (1999) in the UK are also considered as important policy that led to interactive teaching with students playing an active role through answering questions, discussions, explanations and demonstrations (Black, 2004). A similar reawakening was reported in USA through the English language arts curriculum and (Nystrand, 2006) the 'Principles and Standards for School Mathematics' (Baxter, et al., 2002). In Sri Lanka, the Secondary School Reforms approved by the Presidential Task Force (1997) is also based on providing more opportunities for activity based learning that involves students' interaction (Ginige, 2002).

Communication patterns in non-traditional classrooms
Students in classrooms that practice the non-traditional style of communication are encouraged to challenge the views of others through active participation in oral work (Kyriacou, 1998). Within such classrooms students are given the opportunity to think independently and move beyond providing right and wrong answers (Barnes, 1976 in Nystrand 2006) by actively participating in social exchanges (Berry 2006) that provide opportunities to experiment with ideas, explain it to others, receive feedback and organise data in varied ways (Barnes, 1992). As students are given greater autonomy to choose what they say, when to say and whom to say and they are not restricted to a fixed pattern of communication (Clifton, 2006) they create their own knowledge, take ownership of the learning process (Jackson, et al., 2009; Rymes 2008) and become confident, dynamic and autonomous learners (Moore, 2000).

When the non-traditional style of communication is opted for, adult-child communication maybe balanced or even tipped towards a greater share of communication from students, as teachers talk *with* their students rather than *to* their students (Freire, 1998). The teachers' role is to develop teaching plans to include activities that encourage student communication taking into account the diverse abilities of the student population including those with disabilities (Berry, 2006). Further, teachers focus on translating subject matter to a format appropriate to students current understanding by organizing the curriculum in a spiral manner, so that students continually build upon what they have already learned by actively communicating with the adult to 'clarify…reflect on and rationalize what has been learned" (Walsh, 2006, p33).

Maintaining the non-traditional style of communication within classrooms where students with learning difficulties are present, is challenging for teachers, because these students often shy away from getting involved in classroom discussions (Berry, 2006), they are incapable of expressing their views or the teachers are unable to comprehend the students' contributions (Ball 1993, in Baxter, et al., 2002). Further, engaging in an exploratory style of communication also demands much time for it to be productive (Moore, 2000), while only a few students might be actively involved in the process at any given time (Baxter, et al., 2002). In recognition of the time involvement, there has been a shift from focusing on mastering a broad area of content to understanding concepts and the manner in which investigation takes place within different disciplines (Kendall and Marzano, 1996 in Morocco, 2001).

Teachers of disciplines including literature and social studies (Heath, 1978, Levy et al., 1990, Zahorik, 1990, in Reed and Spicer, 2003) and teachers with less experience (Reed and Spicer, 2003) engage in the non-traditional style of communication. However, this style of communication might not be ideal for classrooms with large numbers of students (McHoul, 1978 in Clifton, 2006) or when the lesson duration is short and a vast amount of content has to be covered (Kendall and Marzano, 1996 in Morocco, 2001).

Whilst each style of communication is suited for different classroom goals most teachers select a combination of approaches, in part, due to the need to maintain discipline in classrooms (Moore, 2000).

2.15 SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH ADULT-CHILD COMMUNICATION

Often when students with the label of SLCN are present in classrooms in countries of the North, they are supported by speech and language therapists or therapy assistants and teaching assistants, to help them to adjust their communication and to prevent breakdowns in communication (Korth, Sharp and Culatta, 2010; Jackson, et al., 2009; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Rizman, et al., 2006; Wegner, Grosche and Edmister, 2003). However, for teacher and student communication in classrooms to be productive teachers too must be mindful of the adult-child communication styles that they adopt (McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Mirenda and Donnellan 1986, in Nind, et al., 2001) by recognising that the responsibility for communication lies in the hands of both partners (Nind, et al., 2001).

Emphasis is placed on the teachers' role in communication, because teachers who adapt verbal communication facilitate learning and communication for students with the label of SLCN (Martin and Miller, 1999). Further, adult-child communication has the power to alter the manner in which students are accepted by their peers, which also affects their learning (Black, 2004). Adult-child communication practices that project a positive attitude boost students egos, raise self-esteem, encourage learning, foster social relationships (Rhymes 2008; Hassan, 2007; Nayak, 2004; Fleming, Miller and Wright, 1997; Pignatelli, 1993) and engage all learners, especially those who are inattentive and cannot respond with ease (Montague and Rinaldi, 2001 in Berry, 2006).

Since communication consists of verbal and nonverbal elements teachers are required to be mindful of both these elements when communicating with their students (Rhymes 2008; Hassan, 2007; Nayak, 2004; Fleming, et al., 1997; Pignatelli, 1993).

2.15.1 CONSIDERING NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal language amounts to almost 85% of human communication (Mathieson and Price, 2003) and reflects the psychological state of individuals (Negi, 2009) through paralanguage, voice tone, eye contact, facial expression, gesture and body movement (Lieu, 2001). Teachers are expected to take note of their nonverbal language because when students are unable to comprehend vocal expressions, they often resort to decoding body language and voice tone (Churches, 2010). By employing nonverbal communication strategies including approaching the students, standing close to them, maintaining eye contact, varying voice intonation and using gesture teachers encourage students who are at-risk of failure (Boyd, 2000 in Negi, 2009).

A study in Nepal reports that students are motivated when teachers smile and joke, walk around the classroom and maintain eye contact while unhappy when teachers stare coldly and single out students with a pointed finger (Negi, 2009). A study in Pakistan reveals that nonverbal language that expresses kindness, respect and caring and a willingness to listen to students has the power to influence students' disposition and outlook towards learning and school (Hassan, 2007). Making good eye contact and reducing movement in the classroom also increases student engagement (McCartney and Ellis, 2010).

2.15.2 CONSIDERING VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Teachers are expected to make concessions in their verbal communication by considering student's needs and preferences (Jackson, et al., 2009). Effective communication strategies include slowing the pace of speaking, simplifying vocabulary, speaking while not working on the board, using differentiation to elicit responses, refraining from hurrying students with the label of SLCN (McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Rhymes, 2008) and modifying instructional discourse style to promote student participation (Coufal, 1990 in Ritzman et al., 2006). The use of short expressions, speaking the students' names to gain attention, building class rules that help with listening, utilizing visual cues with oral presentations, modeling grammatically correct utterances for students and extending responses to embrace further relevant information is also suggested (Martin and Miller, 2003). Further, teachers can consider the quantity of information they ought to give, to encourage students to receive, explore and question the information (Moore, 2000) in a productive manner.

Teachers can also be firm (Black, 2004) and use controlled communication styles such as the IRF pattern of communication which, although limits authentic communication, can benefit students with the label of SLCN (Berry, 2006; Cazden, 2001). Occasionally employing low control moves such as phatics to keep students talking (Sadler and Mogford-Bevan, 1997) and making use of the "under life" or talk that occurs between peers even as the teacher is engaged in discourse with the students (Goffman, 1961 in Rhymes 2008) is also encouraged.

Students with the label of SLCN benefit from adult-child communication encounters that are emotionally satisfying (Rose, 2000). Hence, when teachers acknowledge that emotions are at the core of communication (Day, 2002) and recognize their own emotions, become aware of its impact on voice tone, body language and content and choose to be in control by employing different strategies to diffuse negative emotions, they create positive environments (Churches, 2010). Students are emotionally gratified, when teachers provide appropriate and helpful feedback and encourage them to become active participants (Nayak, 2004) by providing opportunities to express opinions and exchange ideas (Nystrand, 1997).

Transforming communication practices, a personal endeavour, is problematic for teachers, even when governments endorse inclusive education (Zelaieta, 2004).

Amending practice however, becomes easier, when teachers engage in a reflective practice (Dimova and Loughran, 2009; Hussein, 2006; Black, 2004; Montague and Rinaldi, 2001).

2.16 REFLECTION FOR CHANGE

Reflection is commended as a highly suitable method to influence change (Dimova and Loughran, 2009; Black, 2004; Montague and Rinaldi, 2001), to illuminate ideals and renew the purpose of individuals' professional lives (Hartog, 2005). Since introduced by Dewey in the early 20th century (Hussein, 2006; Harrison, 2008) the concept of reflection, has influenced teacher training programmes and subsequently the teaching-learning process especially in countries of the North (Marcos, Miguel and Tillema, 2009). However, the concept of reflective practice is unheard of in countries such as Pakistan (Rarieya, 2005) and South Africa (Reed, Davis and Nyabanyaba, 2002).

Reflection is the conscious and systematic self-examination processes that people get involved in, to enhance practice (Dimova and Loughran, 2009), understand work place settings and gain insights to improve future practice (Marcos et al., 2009). It helps individuals to move away from being 'objects whose role is to implement existing theory' (Day, 2002, p57) to generators of knowledge with a better understanding of self (Bolton, 2005; Petty, 2004; Day, 2002). Hence, reflection is considered as a 'state of mind and an on-going type of behaviour' (Harrison, 2008, p8) that focuses on both the outcomes and the process (Marcos et al., 2009).

People can engage in reflection as an individual (Marcos et al., 2009) or collaborative activity (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008; Collins and Simco, 2006). The outcome of collaborative reflection is dependent on the relationships established between the participants (Collins and Simco, 2006).

Within school settings reflection begins only when teachers believe that their behaviours can be subjected to change (Mathieson and Price, 2003), they are prepared to think about their acts and reasons for choice (Hussein, 2006), willing to take responsibility for their actions, open to suggestions and are captivated by the thinking process (Dimova and Loughran, 2009). However, for reflection to be an accepted practice in schools, school management must recognise its potential and encourage teachers by allocating time for reflection (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008).

Four types of reflection are identified (Ghaye & Lillyman, 2006 in Dimova and Loughran, 2009; Hussein, 2006). These include reflection in-action; immediate thinking followed by action, reflection on-practice; post event thinking, reflection for-action; for a specific future event and reflection with-action; plan for future action (ibid).

Reflection on-practice which is the common practice and happens after the teacher leaves the classroom, can also take place through reflective conversations with critical friends (Hussein, 2006; Clifton, 2004) or with the engagement of a reflective coach or peers to support the dialogue through questions, sharing of experiences and ideas, while enabling reflection (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008). Reflective conversations are effective in oral cultures that prefer discussions to writing and when teachers trust one another, are willing to be open, share unconditionally and live and learn through situations (Smyth and Cherry, 2005). Reflective conversations can be encouraged as a means of developing teacher practice in contexts where teacher training is inadequate and a significant number of teachers are untrained and are expected to follow curriculums designed by educational authorities rather than work reflexively (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008). However, reflective conversations alone are inadequate to bring about change in classroom practice (Dean, 2000 in Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008) unless accompanied with action research cycles.

Teachers who engage in reflection considering it an activity that enhances personal learning instead of mechanical practice (Hussein, 2006); become confident as they cultivate an optimistic attitude towards change (Pijl and Frissen, 2009). They also become innovative thinkers (Reason & Bradbury, 2008), unafraid to break away from influences of culture, tradition and experience, to investigate reality via a systematic and critical process (Somekh, 1990 in Tickle 1994). Further reflection helps individuals become more knowledgeable, responsive and enlightened in their thinking (Johansson and Kroksmark, 2004). Therefore engaging in reflection ultimately influences self-image (Polanyi, 1958 in McNiff & Whitehead, 2002).

Despite benefits outlined some teachers are reluctant to engage in 'systematically reflective' processes partially because reflection is a complex process and the insights gained can be uncomfortable (Bolton, 2005) and a humbling experience for teachers because of their belief in what they know (Miller, 2004). Teachers are also exceptionally busy people and unable to commit time for reflection while changes resulting from the

process are often slow to witness (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008). Further, teachers shy away from reflection because questioning personal work ethics and the working setting can lead to reduced self-esteem, especially if reflection is unsupported by the organisation (Day, 2002).

When teachers move away from spending time thinking about their lessons, pondering on goals achieved, making changes and highlighting the positive aspects that need to be repeated, the quality and effectiveness of their work suffers (Petty, 2004). Further teachers who do not reflect will become stagnant because as Dewey claimed 'experience plus reflection equals growth' (Hussein, 2006).

2.17 CONCLUSION

This chapter reflects the themes with which I engage throughout the research process. The literature review begins with a discussion of the global movement towards inclusive education. Early historical accounts reveal that disabled individuals were subjected to discrimination, isolation, exclusion and even destruction across cultures for thousands of years (Braddock and Parish, 2001). The advent of the enlightenment movement in France (Braddock and Parish, 2001) encouraged the development of institutions in Britain and Europe, to provide 'special education' in residential facilities by focusing on the deficits of individuals (Winzer, 1993). The deficit view gave rise to the 'medical model' (Peters, 2003) that focuses on the pathological deficits present in some students (Corker and French, 1999). At the start of the 20th century, the residential facilities were criticised as dumping grounds (Singh, 2006) and shut down (Barton, 1999). This led to the establishment of special day schools, outside the general education system (Singh, 2006).

As societies began to enjoy social and economic progress and researchers and international agencies advocated for better conditions for disabled individuals, a social model of thinking emerged (UPIAS, 1976 and Oliver, 1996 and 2009 in Moore, 2011; Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Mittler, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). This model advocates that education for students with and without disabilities ought to be in the single setting of inclusive oriented schools (UNESCO, 2001). The concept of integration (Thomazet, 2009) surfaced as a result of this thinking. Integration was based on the 'Readiness model' (Lipsky and Gartner 1997 in Ripley, Barret and Fleming 2001) which expected disabled students to fit into existing school systems (Zalaieta, 2004). Hence,

integration subscribed to the medical perspective (Armstrong, 2008) and created another way of isolating and excluding disabled students (Slee, 2011).

Currently, a global call for inclusion and inclusive education is promoted by organisations, researchers and activists (Clark et al., 1999 and Tossebro and Haug, 1998 in Thomazet, 2009) who continue to advocate for the rights of disabled persons. Inclusive education advocates transformation in the school culture, ethos, policy and practices, systems, communication, pedagogy, physical structures, specialised aids and services and staff perceptions and attitudes (Thomazet, 2009; Schwartz, 2005; Sadler, 2005; Rieser, 2008; Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009; Lindsay and Dockrell, 2002). Transformation of teaching staff can be achieved through consistent teacher training programmes (Fielding, 2006) and the provision of opportunities to change attitudes (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2002), and discuss and debate current practices (Moore and Slee, 2011). Further, collaborating with parents (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003) and involvement of students (UN Standard Rules (1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997; UNESCO, 1994; UNICEF, 1989) is of absolute importance for the success of inclusive education.

When considering global examples of inclusive education it is apparent that individual countries across continents face many challenges. These include varied interpretations (Zalaieta, 2004), ambiguity of the Salamanca statement (Miles and Singal, 2010), continued use of 'special' when referring to disabled students (Peters, 2003), use of diagnostic terms (Rhymes, 2008), viewing education as a commodity (Armstrong and Moore, 2004), the superficial inclusion of students to preserve the social image (O'Hanlon, 2003) and problems encountered when collaborating with parents (Mittler, 2000).

Sri Lanka, boasts of legislation and policy which advocates inclusive education (World Bank, 2005). However, examples of segregation, integration and inclusion are visible (Yasmin et al., 2010; Reiser, 2008). More than 50 percent of disabled children do not receive education because neither the government, private or special schools are fully equipped to provide the necessary services (National Policy on Disability, 2003). Efforts to improve provisions are noted in enhanced teacher and administrator training opportunities (Yasmin et al., 2010), involvement of parents and the general public in the government's efforts towards inclusion (Rieser, 2008), developing teacher resources (MoE 2004) and updating the primary curriculum ((World Bank, 2005). Despite these

efforts a preference for the medical model similar to other south Asian countries (Ahuja, 2005) which encourages special schools and integrated units, continues to hamper progress of the journey towards inclusive education (MoE, 2004) in Sri Lanka.

With the advent of inclusive education the number of students with the label of SLCN, has increased within regular classrooms the world over (Wellington and Wellington, 2002). Several models of speech and language therapy services including direct intervention or the pull out model and indirect intervention or collaborative teaming are practiced in different educational settings (RCSLT, 2009).

The direct or by pull out model which is practiced when multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary teams (RCSLT, 2009) are advocated, is deemed necessary for the provision of therapy for students with persistent and severe language, literacy and communication problems and for early childhood programmes (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009). The indirect model requires therapists to be part of a trans-disciplinary or collaborative team (ASHA, 1991) and work towards a common goal with teachers, parents and other professionals (Thomas, et al., 2001 in Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007). Within collaborative teams' speech and language therapists sometimes take the role of consultants (Wegner et al., 2003). Since, the elevated status of a consultant can cause problems, a reciprocal consultancy model which acknowledges teachers and speech and language therapists as experts in their own fields may be opted for (Hartas, 2004).

Teachers are crucial to organise classroom environments for students with the label of SLCN. Teachers are expected to consider the learning environment (Diennebeil, et al., 2009), curriculum and pedagogical adaptations (Korth et al., 2010; Martin and Miller, 2003; Law et al., 2002), opportunities for these students to practice skills acquired in therapy (Jackson et al., 2009; Steppling et al., 2007) and organise learning, to foster social relationships (Charles, 2004; Kemple et al., 2002).

Since communication plays a key role in the process of including students with the label of SLCN, teachers are also expected to consider the cultural expectations, types of classroom discourse and patterns of communication they practice. Two types of classroom discourse have been highlighted; traditional and non-traditional (Cazden, 2001). Within traditional classroom discourse, the IRE (Cazden, 1988 and Mehan, 1979 in Mariage 1995) and IRF (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975 in Saddler and Mogford-Bevan,

1997) patterns of communication dominate. Further teachers in traditional classrooms exert control through questions (Nystrand, 2006; Markee, 2005; Kyriacou, 1998) and work to preserve silence (Silver and Smith, 1996) equating it to conscious learning (Cullinan, 1993). When teachers practice the non-traditional form of discourse they become facilitators (Clifton, 2006) and encourage students to challenge views (Kyriacou, 1998), actively articulate their views (Berry 2006) and create their own knowledge (Jackson, et al., 2009; Rhymes 2008).

No matter the type of classroom discourse teachers must consider the presence of students with the label of SLCN and make adjustments to the verbal (Jackson, et al., 2009) and non-verbal (Churches, 2010) elements of adult-child communication routines they engage in when addressing these students. Several researchers offer suggestions to modify non-verbal (McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Boyd, 2000 in Negi, 2009; Negi, 2009; Hassan, 2007) and verbal communication (McCartney and Ellis, 2010; Rhymes, 2008; Berry, 2006; Coufal, 1990 in Ritzman et al., 2006; Black, 2004; Martin and Miller, 2003; Cazden, 2001; Moore, 2000).

Engaging in reflection is one method of influencing teachers to alter practice (Black, 2004). Reflective conversations are apt in oral cultures where writing is an unfamiliar practice (Smyth and Cherry, 2005) and in countries where teacher training is inadequate (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008).

Having established the theoretical framework around which the research will revolve the next chapter discusses the research methodology and methods of data collection and analysis, selected to guide the research.

CHAPTER 3
SELECTING A METHODOLOGY AND METHODS
3.1 INTRODUCTION
In this chapter, I describe the research methodology, data collection instruments and methods of analysis that I selected to research my practice. Methodology is described as the key path to reach identified goals (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). The search for a methodology begins by discussing the three main paradigms present in social research; the positivistic view, the interpretive view and the critical theoretical view (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007; Kember, 2000).

Thereafter I select action research as my preferred methodology and engage in a systematic study of the theoretical frameworks that surround it. Next, I discuss the advantages and disadvantages identified in literature. By pondering on the cyclical nature of action research, I proceed to design my action research model to guide the research process.

Although action research does not advocate any specific methods of data collection or analysis (Burns, 2010) I consider the aims of the research, type of data that needs to be collected to answer the research question and the context of the research and select interviews and observations to collect data. Upon contemplating the type of data that will be gathered, I opt for a mixed methods approach to analysis (Burns, 2010; Axinn and Pearce 2006; Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006).

The chapter concludes with a discussion on critical reflection an important phase in the action research process (Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Kember, 2000).

3.2 EXPLORING METHODOLOGIES
The choice of research methodology within educational settings is of significance in present times, because the concept and meaning of school systems are changing rapidly due to human migration and the presence of a diverse population of students including students with disabilities and marginalised children (O'Hanlon, 2003). Research in educational settings described as social research, is said to embrace three main paradigms; the positivistic view, the interpretive view and the critical theoretical view (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007; Kember, 2000).

The paradigm rooted in the physical sciences is referred to as the positivistic approach (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorenson, 2009). This approach involves quantitative sampling of a large number of participants and testing against existing scientific theories (Neuman, 2006). The positivistic approach is therefore considered a systematic, scientific approach with clearly defined stages that follow a linear sequence (Kember, 2000). Because this approach discounts humans to a set of numbers by focusing on theoretical views it is argued that its concerns are removed from the day to day lives of people (Neuman, 2006).

The interpretive view is one of social inquiry (Kember, 2000). Those who advocate for this view argue that interpreting events and actions and understanding deeper meanings requires a naturalistic approach based on qualitative data which places the individuals at the core of the research (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995). Interpretive researchers often use participant observation and field research and therefore spend much time with the research subjects (Neuman, 2006). Case studies and ethnography are categorised as naturalistic approaches (Ary, et al., 2009). Case studies are directed at studying a single unit while ethnography provides detailed and accurate description of human behaviour in naturalistic settings without any explanations from the researcher (Ary, et al., 2009).

Critical social research is conducted for the purpose of studying the social world and bringing change (Neuman, 2006). The critical theoretical view involves the action research methodology (Kember, 2000). Action research is a methodology which enables individuals to seek answers to questions in everyday situations; personal, work or communities (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) by pursuing the dual processes of research and action (Armstrong and Moore, 2004).

None of the three paradigms are classified as superior to another (Kember, 2000). Yet, researchers are cautioned to ponder on several factors prior to selecting a methodology (Smith, Todd and Waldman, 2009). These include the ability of the methodology to reflect personal knowledge and preferences, aptness to answer the research question and relevance to the topic, time and resource availability (Smith, et al., 2009).

3.3 SELECTING A METHODOLOGY

The research is a progression of my ethical commitment to bring social justice for students with the label of SLCN. By studying current behaviours surrounding adult-child

communication I seek to inspire teachers to transform their communication practices to include students with the label of SLCN. Hence, my interest is not merely to produce a thesis (Kember, 2000) but to bridge the gap between the academic world of research and actual practice (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). Further, I wish to engage research participants in a democratic research process that will ultimately empower and liberate them (Armstrong and Moore, 2004).

Neither the positivistic view which tests against existing scientific theories (Neuman, 2006) nor the interpretive view which involves interpreting events and actions and understanding deeper meanings (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995) is suitable to fulfil my goals. However, the critical theoretical view, in particular the action research methodology (Kember, 2000), reported as useful to study the social world to bring social change (Neuman, 2006) using a blend of research and action (Armstrong and Moore, 2004), is ideal to fulfil my aspirations. The choice was further enhanced due to my prior association with action research as a Master's student (Wickremesooriya, 2004).

3.4 THE ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Action research embraces the dual aspects of action and research and effectively eliminates the boundary line between these two activities (Neuman, 2006). The dual processes; research conducted in varied contexts to understand and improve knowledge, and action directed at changing situations (Dick, 2002), which occur simultaneously dismantle borders between 'action and knowledge-generation' (Somekh and Zeichner, 2009). Hence, the suggestion by some authors (Armstrong and Moore, 2004) to reverse the popular phrase and use the term 'research action'.

Within action research the researcher is an insider, as opposed to other research methodologies where researchers are outsiders studying a situation (Smith, Todd and Waldman, 2009). The action researcher is therefore the practitioner and the practitioner is a researcher (Armstrong and Moore, 2004) whose 'learning influences the action and action influences the learning' (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, p89). The amalgamation of action and research ensures that 'theory turns into practice and practice becomes theory' (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, p89). These unique factors distinguish action research from other research methodologies and makes it attractive for academics, researchers, health professionals, educators, industrialists (Grant, 2007; Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2001) and community developers on a global scale (Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

3.5 THE CYCLICAL PROCESS OF ACTION RESEARCH

The dual processes of action and research are achieved through a spiral of cycles (Smith, et al., 2009). Several models describing the cyclical process have been proposed since it was first developed by John Collier and Kurt Lewin (Ferrence, 2000). Lewin's model comprised of fact-finding, planning, action and evaluation (Somekh and Zeichner, 2009). This model was subsequently referred to as an action-reflection cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting that continues to the next cycle in the spiral, indicating change/s in thinking that results in learning (Richie et al., 2002 in Costello, 2003).

Kemmis based his ideas on Lewin's model and together with Wilf Carr (1986) advocated the use of the term, 'educational action research' (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Kemmis & McTaggart's (1988) 'socially critical model' also consist of a similar spiral of functions (McWilliam, 2004). John Elliott (1991) who advocated Lewin's concept of action research cycles placed emphasis on the process rather than the goal and considered fact finding and analysis to be a continuous activity that occurs throughout the cycle enabling the researcher to deviate from the initial idea and expand in many directions (Cohen et al., 2007). Zuber-Skerritt (1996b in Cohen et al., 2007) suggests a four step process for organizational change; 1) planning, (2) implementing the plan, (3) observing, evaluating and self-evaluating and (4) self-critical reflection, by using the force field model of Lewin (1952) and task alignment model of Beer et al., (1990). Cohen, et al., (2007) also describes a process that consists of eight stages.

McNiff & Whitehead (2002) expand the basic process, from the traditional view previously held by them, to an eight step process, because they claim that the steps need not be sequential or rational. They named the procedure as a generative transformational evolutionary process by arguing that there is a constant evolving of 'a state of balance within disequilibrium" (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002, p57). These authors thus challenge Lewin's linear model, which they claim do not address deviations and is therefore unrealistic in dynamic situations (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). The same caution regarding the linear design of stages is articulated by other authors (Grant, 2007; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Kember, 2000; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998) who explain that stages imply a sequential process which is misleading because action research is a 'continuous, overlapping process of reflection, consultation, planning and change' (Armstrong and Moore, 2004, p14).

No matter which definition or model is considered, five basic processes which bridge the gap between theory and practice, while emphasizing on the value of the empirical basis to gain information and stressing on the practical aspect to develop insights, ought to be considered (Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2001). These include identifying a problem, collecting and organizing data, interpreting data, formulating a plan and reflecting on the outcomes (ibid).

3.6 ADVANTAGES OF THE ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Action research is considered a unique research methodology that is favoured by researchers in many disciplines (Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Grant, 2007; Winter & Munn-Giddings, 2001). Literature highlights a range of advantages that makes action research an attractive methodological choice. The most distinctive advantages of action research are discussed below.

It is a flexible process

Action research is considered a flexible approach to research and professional development (Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006). It begins with small ideas and few participants and cycles and grows as the research evolves (Cohen et al., 2007) even to include multiple spirals (Kember, 2000). The 'elastic quality' (Grant, 2007) of action research witnessed through the action cycles (Armstrong and Moore, 2004), encourages researchers to 'adapt, change and redesign as the research proceeds' (Grant, 2007, p266). Hence, within action research preliminary views become obsolete due to learning from new experiences (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998) and a change of direction may be required to deal with unexpected issues that arise (Kember, 2000). Maintaining a flexible process however, demands that action researchers become creative thinkers open to innovation and capable problem solvers (Pine, 1981 in Hewitt and Little, 2005).

It empowers people

Action research which emerged from the political ideal of democracy seeks to empower and liberate people (Neuman, 2006; Armstrong and Moore, 2004) by magnifying issues of people excluded from society and giving them opportunities to articulate their views (McWilliam, 2004). Action researchers therefore, view all participants as 'thinking' people capable of 'constructing and using their knowledge' to liberate themselves (Freire, 1970 and Reason 2006 in Reason and Bradbury, 2008, p9). Because action researchers initiate and maintain 'social transformation' by empowering themselves (Somekh and

Zeichner, 2009) and gaining human emancipation (Stenhouse, 1979, in Day, 1999) or empowerment (McWilliam, 2004) for others they are viewed as activists (Tickle, 2001).

For action research to be considered emancipatory within educational settings, all individuals who will be affected by change must be involved in choosing, planning, acting and monitoring the transformation process while student voices are given top priority (Armstrong and Moore, 2004). Yet, emancipation at such a high level demands highly democratic practices that may be absent in reality (ibid).

It is participatory, democratic process

The aim of action research is 'not to do things to people, but to build a shared and democratic approach to transformation involving everyone' (Armstrong and Moore, 2004, p5) thereby effectively diminishing the distance between those who decide and those who execute plans (Dick, 2002). Thus, within action research participants choose a particular aspect of the social world, systems and conditions that hamper desired improvement (Zuber–Skerrit, 1996 in Cohen et al., 2007), that they wish to transform and, rather than wait for others to solve their problems (Miles and Huberman, 1994), they act together to generate new knowledge and usher in change (Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006, Ladkin, 2006). Hence, research participants become agents to change within their environments (Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Ferrence, 2000) while developing existing skills, acquiring new skills, creating new knowledge as they question present thinking (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) and gaining a broader perspective of problems (Dick, 2002).

It improves communication and networking

When action researchers conduct research about their practice in collaboration with others, the research participants become their critical learning partners (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002) or critical friends (Armstrong and Moore, 2004). Collaboration improves communication and networking, as interactions take place at multiple levels between different individuals (Grant, 2007) who discuss their personal views and listen to others (Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Ferrence, 2000). Hence, action research leads to the development of individuals through dialogue (Reason and Bradbury, 2008).

3.7 DISADVANTAGES OF THE ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since its emergence as a research method action research has received some criticism regarding its status as a research methodology (Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006). Concerns often articulated in literature are discussed below.

Its popularity restricted to education

Despite the advantages discussed above and it's growing acceptance as a research method some researchers articulate the concern that action research remains popular only within the domain of education (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002).

Considered unscientific

Action research is criticized by traditional researchers as unscientific and hence, is not considered by them as 'proper research' (Cohen, et. al., 2007; Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006). The 'anti-objectivism' of action research (McWilliam, 2004) and the non-linear nature of action research (Grant, 2007) is considered by such researchers as a travesty of science.

Ineffective reflection

Although one of the key phases in action research involves reflection the degree or nature of reflection differs from individual to individual (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Researchers it is argued may focus more on the action component which encourages physical activity and neglect the reflection phase (Grant, 2007).

Resistance from participants

Threefold aspects of resistance have been identified within educational settings. Firstly, limitations placed on access to information in settings such as schools, where bureaucratic, formal and hierarchical practices exist (Cohen, et. al., 2007). Secondly, 'resistance, passivity, non-compliance, [and] hostility' from research participants may be encountered as they are invited to be active participants to the research process (Armstrong and Moore, 2004, p3). Thirdly, resistance to change within schools as a consequence of action research, from the head teachers and teachers may be witnessed (Whitehouse, 1986, in Cohen, et. al, 2007).

Other concerns

Other concerns include validity, reliability and generalisability (Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006), the vast amount of qualitative and quantitative data that may become difficult to analyse and synthesize (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995), the time consuming nature of the dual processes (Grant, 2007; Burns, 1999 in Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006), insider research that may be biased even though the researcher maybe more sensitive to the dynamics of the organization (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995) and sometimes the absence of expected outcomes (Grant, 2007).

3.8 MY ACTION RESEARCH MODEL

Having identified action research as my methodology and failing to locate a model that suits the context and goals of this research, I proceeded to design a cyclical model. Two action cycles; C1 and C2, considered as a minimum required to witness a perspective transformation (Kember, 2000) are selected. Each action cycle is designed to consist of four phases including critical reflection, planning, action and monitoring and evaluation (Figure 3.1).
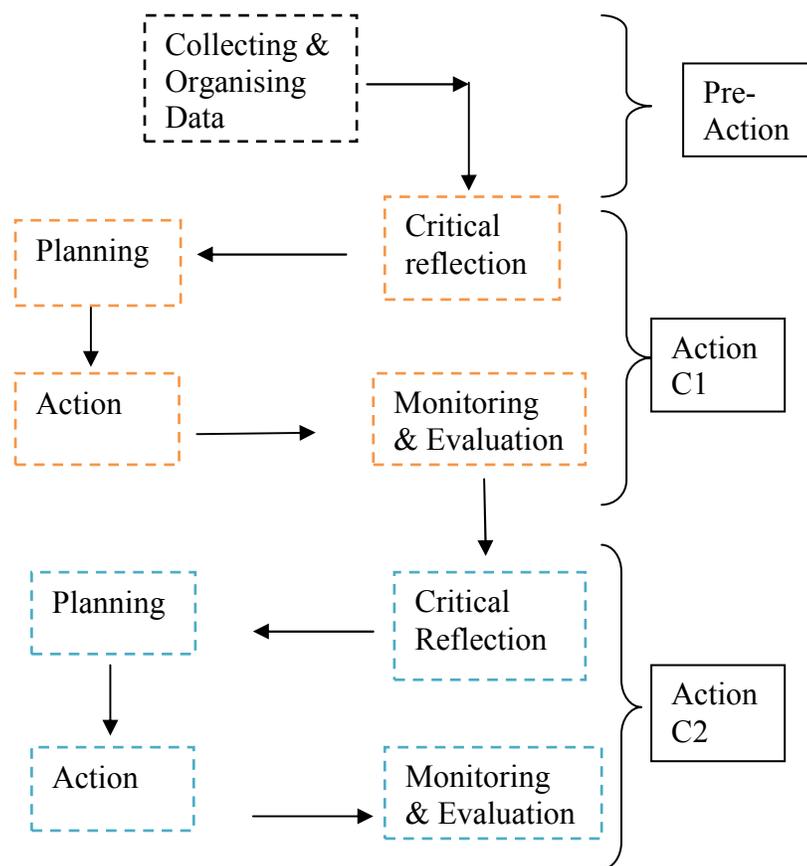
Figure 3.1: My action research model consisting of a Pre-action stage and two action cycles (C1 & C2)

The monitoring and evaluation phase is executed through data collection and analysis. Critical reflection involves looking at the data in collaboration with the research participants and raising questions. Planning, a collaborative venture, involves considering theoretical perspectives and practical experiences to develop ideas and draw up plans. Action involves implementing plans.

A pre-action stage of collecting and organising data is conducted to present the current situation. This stage includes getting ready for action research and collecting and organising data to aid the critical reflection phase in actionC1. It is not considered as an action research cycle since it consists of a single phase in my action research model.

On identifying the preferred methodology and designing my action research model I set out to select the data collection instruments that will supply the raw information for subsequent analysis, reflection and planning.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

Data, considered as the ingredients of research can be quantitative or qualitative (Walliman, 2004). Prior to collecting data researchers decide on the type of data they wish to collect, the manner in which they would collect the data, persons responsible to collect and the duration for collection (Hart, 2005). Thereafter researchers are free to select from a range of data collection instruments (Axinn and Pearce, 2006).

Researchers elect for either interactive data collection techniques, with active participation of the researcher or non-interactive data collection techniques, without researcher participation (Wiersma and Jurs, 2009). Data collected are numeral or quantitative and/or qualitative consisting of words, pictures and other non-numeral forms (Dey, 1993). Researchers gain approval to access qualitative information (Wiersma and Jurs, 2009). Data collection instruments commonly selected when conducting research in the educational arena include tests, interviews, observations, questionnaires, existing data (Johnson and Christenson, 2012) and field notes (Rymes, 2008; Koshy, 2005).

Standardised tests which are already available or tests devised to measure a specific phenomenon are used in quantitative research (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). In interviews the interviewer asks questions and the interviewees provide oral information,

while in questionnaires participants fill information independently in writing or via the internet (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). Observations are conducted to collect real time information of a single person or a group (Fawcett, 2005). Documents or existing data which include personal or official documents, physical and archived data (ibid), tell a different type of story (Koshy, 2005) by providing other proof during the research process (Corrie, 2002). Field notes are notes written during or immediately after observations or interviews which the researcher feels may add to the understanding of the context or behaviours (Rymes, 2008; Koshy, 2005). Documents and field notes become secondary data when used to substantiate data collected through other means (Johnson and Christenson, 2012).

Literature suggests data collection through multiple methods and sources or 'Triangulation of data' (Ary, et al., 2009; Axinn and Pearce, 2006; Ferrence, 2000) to gain new insights regarding the topic under consideration. Triangulation involves 'data triangulation' concerning time, space and people; 'methodological triangulation' that uses the same method at different times; 'investigator triangulation' where many people study the same phenomenon and 'theory triangulation' where different theories are used within the same situation (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). Although triangulation brings an overload of data, it is preferred to too little data because, it enables a better understanding of the issues studied (Kember, 2000), provides evidence from multiple perspectives (MacIntyre, 2000), enhances credibility (Kember, 2000) and enables wider verification (O'Hanlon, 2003).

3.10 CHOOSING METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The research is intended to study and alter adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN. Hence, I opted to collect classroom data via observations, which is described as an effective method to study classroom talk (Ary, et al., 2009). Further, I opted to be a completely detached passive observer (Hatch 2002; Kember, 2000) to avoid distorting the natural flow of adult-child communication.

Interviews were selected to gather data from teachers, parents and students regarding their views on existing practices in adult-child communication. The semi-structured interview format is preferred since it gives the researcher freedom to ask for explanations while keeping to a predetermined set of questions that helps keep focus of the research (Kember, 2000). Interviews are elected as opposed to questionnaires because a small

number of participants are involved, none of the participants have previously participated in research activity and interviews provide more authentic information due to personal contact between interviewer and interviewees (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007). Each data collection instrument is discussed in detail below.

3.11 INTERVIEWS

Interviews are described as 'social, interpersonal encounter[s]' between two or more people for the purpose of gathering data (Cohen et al., 2007). The interview method veers from regarding humans as manipulative beings, to viewing them as individuals whose knowledge arising from lived experiences and their interpretations of the experiences can make significant contributions towards a data base (Ammon, 2006). Interviews could be individual or group, face-to-face, telephone or through emails (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Interviewers are uniquely placed to reach out to interviewees by personalizing the involvement, and encouraging interviewees to voice their thoughts, experiences, aspirations, attitudes, feelings and opinions on a given theme to obtain information that few other data collection methods can achieve (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007). Hence, researchers select interviewees with varied views regarding the research topic (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews identified as the preferred interview method for this research consist of a predetermined set of questions which are amended according to the type of responses given by the interviewees (Kember, 2000). The interviewer in such a situation is free to request for explanations and expansion of the responses and investigate deeper into issues and conduct active interactions with the interviewees (May, 2001). However, it is cautioned that the time-cost factor involved can be considerable (Gillham, 2000).

Researchers need to engage in preparation activities to conduct successful interviews. I prepared for interviews by considering ways of accessing children's views (Gwynn, 2004; Scott, 2000), designing (Cohen, et al., 2007; Hatch, 2002) and piloting interview schedules (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007; Cohen, et al., 2007), determining recording techniques (King and Horrocks, 2010) and familiarising with interview protocol (Cohen et al., 2007; Gillham, 2000; Wellington, 2000; May, 2001).

3.11.1 INTERVIEWING CHILDREN

I wished to listen to the voices of children and articulate their views through the research because the voices of children, rich in their understanding, knowledge and views, especially regarding known situations such as schools (Ghaziani, 2010, Moore and Sixsmith, 2000) are an important element towards honouring their rights (Christensen and James, 2008). My search through literature revealed that interviewing children and accessing their views in the struggle to achieve social justice has been in existence for some time (Christensen and James, 2008; Tangen, 2008; Grover, 2004; Beazley, 2000; Slee, 1999; Freire, 1972).

Interviewers select naturalistic settings (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001), where children would feel secure to voice their opinions (Cohen et al., 2007). They then gain children's trust (Clifton, 2004) by empowering them with the belief that they are experts in their own right, to encourage children to break away from the passive role they usually play (Gwynn, 2004) and provide a rich data base. Interviewers practice a range of strategies as they relinquish their position as 'power holder[s]' able to steer children's destiny to 'power sharer[s]' who wish to understand and address their concerns (Gwynn, 2004; Scott, 2000). By acknowledging children's capability to think and communicate their views (Wilson and Powell, 2001) interviewers ask simplified questions, check for understanding by asking the children to repeat the questions, rephrase questions when children lack comprehension, use names instead of pronouns and refrain from asking questions which involve time (Boat and Everson, 1988 in Royse 2008). Further, they request that a child provides detailed accounts, explaining that it is necessary because the interviewer was not present during an event (Wilson and Powell, 2001).

Group interviews are suggested by researchers (Watts and Ebbutt, 1987 and Lewis, 1992 in Cohen, et al., 2007; and Gubrium and Holstein, 2001) who have succeeded, in accessing views of children who belong to different cultural groups. These studies concur that children feel more comfortable and supported in group situations when peers are present (Gwynn, 2004; Wellington, 2000). Difficulties encountered when conducting group interviews include time commitment (Koshy, 2005), dominance or reluctant participation of a single or few interviewees and the challenge of allocating equal time per speaker (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007).

Students with the label of SLCN may find it difficult to articulate their views or comprehend interviewer questions due to different aspects of communication difficulties (Bercow, 2008). Hence, accessing their views could be as difficult as research conducted with students for whom English is a second language (Clifton, 2004) or children at the periphery of school life (Charles, 2004).

Storytelling is an informal interviewing technique (Lewis and Lindsay, 2000, in Moore, 2000) which is sometimes used to gain access to children's perspectives, within naturalistic settings (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001). Further varied sources of gathering information from children including messages via play and creative and aesthetic means (Tangen, 2008) and visual representations such as drawings and sketches (O'Neill et al., 2002 in Coy 2006) is also encouraged.

3.11.2 DESIGNING INTERVIEW SCHEDULES AND PILOTING

Interview schedules are designed by taking into account the research objectives and translating them into questions (Cohen et al., 2007). Schedules include 'fixed alternative items' where choices are limited to the items provided by the interviewer, open- ended questions where information is provided without restrictions and scales where a rating is attached to the alternatives (Cohen et al., 2007). The questions can be direct or indirect, general or specific, factual or seeking opinions (Cohen et al., 2007).

Questions are organised in a logical format by using language familiar to interviewees to generate answers relevant to the research (Hatch, 2002). Factual or background questions that focus on participants' prior knowledge are posed initially, to build a rapport, ease into the interview process and gain trust (O'Hanlon, 2003). Thereafter essential questions which seek to extract information regarding the phenomena under investigation (Hatch, 2002) are organised.

When preparing interview schedules for semi-structured interviews, interviewers include a select number of less specific questions (Macintyre, 2000). Consideration is also given to the prompts and probes that will be used (Hatch, 2002; Wellington, 2000). Prompts enable interviewers to clarify information while probes enable interviewers to request for elaborations on topics (Cohen et al., 2007; Hatch, 2002).

Interview schedules are piloted (Cohen, et al., 2007) to guarantee that the questions are comprehensible and will elicit the information expected, but not too structured to confine the interviewees to generate only particular types of information that will affect the accuracy of data (Moore and Sixsmith, 2000). Further, piloting helps ascertain the pace and method of questioning (Scott, 2000), determine interview duration (Macintyre, 2000) and assist the interviewers to sharpen their listening skills (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007).

3.11.3 DETERMINING RECORDING TECHNIQUES

Interviews are recorded via manually noting responses on interview schedules or guides or tape-recordings or video recordings (Hatch, 2002). Since manual and audio/video recordings can be threatening to different interviewees, interviewers are encouraged to listen and write down the responses after the interviews (Cohen et al., 2007). Considering the valuable information that can be lost through this process, audio or video recordings together with note taking is recommended (King and Horrocks, 2010).

3.11.4 FAMILIARISING WITH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interviewers follow interview protocol during interviews keeping in mind that they are attempting to enter into a world of other individuals and gain their perspectives (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). Self presentation which includes dress code, non-verbal language and vocabulary play a significant role in the success of interviewers receiving the required information (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Interviewers avoid asking embarrassing questions, giving advice or abruptly ending interviews (Cohen et al., 2007). Researchers are also called upon to be sensitive to the affective dimensions of the interview (Hatch, 2002) and to give sufficient time for interviewees to respond (Cohen et al., 2007). Listening by focusing completely on the interviewees with interest and respect, enables the interviewer to gather a rich body of data (May, 2001; Gillham, 2000). As interviewees feel satisfied at being heard and appreciated for their views, they actively participate in the interviews (May, 2001).

Interviewers consider the 'comfort, privacy and quiet' (King and Horrocks, 2010, p42) of physical locations selected for interviews because the ideal location facilitates interviewers to ask for sensitive information and interviewees to divulge such information (Hatch, 2002). Seeking interviewee preference for location is also advocated (King and Horrocks, 2010).

3.12 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Observation is described as a method of understanding what really goes on in live, true situations by monitoring the different ways that people interact with each other (Fawcett, 2005). Hence, observations are an effective method to record classroom talk (Ary, et al., 2009).

Conducting observations either via a structured systems based approach or a descriptive method, is challenging due to speed of interactions (Ary, et al., 2009). It is however cautioned that observers must consider more than a single observation to ensure validity of data (Mercer, 2010).

Prior to embarking on real time observations researchers determine recording techniques (Rymes, 2008; Kember, 2000; Macintyre, 2000) and level of involvement (Ary et al., 2009; Hatch, 2002; Kember, 2000), conduct trial runs (Fawcett, 2005) and select data analysis techniques. Each of these procedures is discussed in detail below.

3.12.1 DETERMINING RECORDING TECHNIQUES

Classroom observations are recorded manually or via technological aids (Foster, 2006). When classroom talk is collected manually, observers use an existing observation schedule or a data collection grid such as a 'viewing log' (Rymes, 2008) or a 'running record' (Corrie, 2002) or develop their own, to document dialogue continually (Foster, 2006). However, documenting dialogue manually is challenging, due to the speed at which events can and do happen within classrooms (Ary et al., 2009; Kember, 2000) and the possibility of missing out on detail. To overcome problems researchers identify a fixed length of time for each observation, keep a clear focus (Cohen, et al., 2007), record dialogue continuously (Walsh, 2006), represent data in columns (Rhymes, 2008) and record optimum detail (Foster, 2006).

The popular technological aids including audio and/or video recorders, record all forms of 'Speech events', directly and indirectly related to the teaching–learning act (Rymes, 2008). Video recordings are capable of capturing the complex interactive style well while audio recordings are often complemented with field notes, especially to record nonverbal communication and details regarding the context (Rymes, 2008). Audio recording is considered the least invasive means of recording data (Kember, 2000) to reveal 'spaces in interactions, silences, phatics, speed of diction and voice intonation as well as the

actual words' (Macintyre, 2000, p63) while it also turns the researcher into a 'blind observer' (Rymes, 2008, p79) due to lack of visual representation. Although the presence of equipment is reported to disturb classroom proceedings, small appliances are considered useful (Kember, 2000). Concerns regarding distracting subjects are disputed by the claim that those who are observed quickly forget the presence of observers and equipment and proceed with their normal behaviour (ibid).

3.12.2 CONSIDERING THE LEVEL OF OBSERVER INVOLVEMENT

Observer involvement can be 'Active, Moderate, or Passive' (Spradley, 1980, in Hatch, 2002). By considering levels of disclosure of the observer, observations are classified as 'overt'; with participant knowledge, or 'covert'; without participant knowledge (Royse 2008). Observer involvement is also classified as complete participant, the participant-as-observer, observer–as-participant and the completely detached observer (Ary et al., 2009; Kember, 2000).

When researchers choose to be completely detached observers their role is hidden, while in observer–as-participant the researchers reveal their researcher identity (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). In the role of participant-as-observer, researchers participate actively in the research setting and are well known to the members while researchers as complete participants actively participate in the setting but do not reveal their role as researchers (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). Participant-as-observer and observer–as-participant is identified as the most useful types of observation because voluntary consent of participants is sought prior to engaging in observation and researchers take on the dual roles of insider and outsider simultaneously (Johnson and Christenson, 2012).

3.12.3 CONDUCTING A TRIAL RUN

Trial runs are useful to gauge the effectiveness of mechanical devices and data collection instruments (Cohen et al., 2007). Trial runs also enable researchers to reflect on their current abilities and to practice the skill of collecting data whilst standing outside the action and observing with an open mind without formulating judgments, as data collection is in progress (Fawcett, 2005).

Subsequent to deciding on the data collection methods, researchers consider the research question and decide on methods of data analysis (Walliman, 2004).

3.13 DATA ANALYSIS

The mixed methods analysis is a systematic approach to understanding the interaction of variables in the environment by analysing data from two angles; quantitative and qualitative, to understand the same phenomena (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006). For quantitative analysis data is transformed to figures, measures and frequencies (Thomas, 2003) while for qualitative analysis data is considered as forms other than numerical representations including but not limited to words, pictures and photographs (Jackson, 2011).

A combination approach enables better understanding of situations and enriches the decisions made (Axinn and Pearce, 2006). Several authors (Sosu, McWilliam and Gray, 2008 and Creswell, 2003 in Lichtman, 2010; Patton, 2002; Strauss and Corbin, 1998) advocate the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis within a single research project.

3.14 CHOOSING METHODS OF ANALYSIS

I choose to engage in a mixed methods approach. This method is selected for multiple reasons. Firstly, I choose the mixed methods approach because I agree with the authors (Axinn and Pearce, 2006) who suggest that a blend of qualitative and quantitative analysis provides different and useful perspectives that enrich decisions made during the research process.

Secondly, my decision is influenced by the school administrators' preference for quantitative data, such as changes in students' test scores and frequency of occurrence of behaviours in teachers as the excerpt below highlights.

> "You realise that granting permission to conduct the research means that we will need to see results, such as improvements in both students and teachers. If you can show increases in students test marks at least for first language and also how often teachers carry out the agreed strategies the board will be convinced that approving the research was worthwhile." *(Field notes, December 2007)*

Thirdly my prior experience with working with teachers also made me believe that I would witness subtle qualitative changes as the research progresses. Hence, my decision to blend the qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis, by pursuing a mixed methods approach to analysis.

3.14.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Quantitative analysis is a twofold procedure which involves organising unrefined information by translating it to 'patterns, trends or relationships' (Royse, 2008, p318) and displaying the data (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006).

When analysing classroom talk, the most commonly used quantitative, structured, system based approaches is 'systematic observation' and the most recent computer-based text analysis tools (Mercer, 2010). These methods categorise fixed units of text or utterances according to already specified codes or categories (Walsh, 2006) which are assigned values (Berry, 2006). Researchers either design their own categories by considering the research question and information gleaned through prior observations of classroom or use existing categorisation systems (Mercer, 2010). The widely known schedules (Walsh, 2006) include Flanders Interaction Analysis (1970), Moskowitz', Foreign language interaction (1971) and Frolich and Spada's (1984) Communication orientation of language teaching (Walsh, 2006).

3.14.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

When conducting qualitative analysis researchers make sense of the data by following a staged approach to analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Burns 1999 in Burns 2010; Hall 2008; Cohen et al., 2007). The stages which tend to overlap as researchers move between them (Neuman, 2006) include (1) data reduction or organising (2) displaying data and (3) interpreting data or drawing conclusions (Cohen et al., 2007; Punch, 2005; Adler and Clark, 2008; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Dey, 1993).

Meaningful data reduction occurs as researchers immerse themselves in the data to ensure familiarity (Marshall and Rossman, 2011; Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007; Wellington, 2000). Once the data is visible researchers identify themes, patterns and relationships (Burns, 2010; Bernard and Ryan, 2010; Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007; Mertler, 2006) by considering similar qualities in the data, meaning and not the words (Miles and Huberman, 1994), to generate categories (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Another view is that identification of categories is not absolutely necessary because qualitative data analysis is embarked upon to understand the complex ways in which people think, rather than to identify common thinking (Armstrong, 2003). Once data is organised researchers display the data 'as fairly, clearly, coherently and attractively as possible' (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007, p104) for the purpose of interpretation

(Adler and Clark, 2008; Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007) which is attempted by looking deeply into the information and reflecting beyond the most obvious issues (Burns 1999 in Burns 2010).

Analysing classroom talk

Prior to analysing classroom talk researchers listen to the audio or video recordings many times and transcribe the data (Burns, 2010). When a large amount of data is present researchers enrol the assistance of transcribers (Mercer, 2010; Berry, 2006).

When analysing classroom talk via qualitative methods, researchers choose either ethnographic analysis, conversation analysis or sociolinguistic discourse analysis (Mercer, 2010). In each of these methods, attempts are made to describe and interpret naturally occurring data rather than attempting to fit into predetermined categories (Walsh, 2006). Hence the aim is to 'reveal the nature, patterns and quality of spoken interactions' (Mercer, 2010, p6). Ethnographic analysis aims for a detailed in-depth analysis of a few classrooms for the purpose of description (Mercer, 2010). Conversation analysis is a multilayered method which examines the meaning and context of social interaction by linking it to the sequence of talk within a limited space in time (Gardner and Forrester, 2010; Walsh, 2006).

Sociolinguistic discourse analysis within educational settings, focuses on the social contexts which influences the interactions, the interactional context which determines the structural organisation and sequential properties of talk and individual agency which is described as the control a person can have on utterances and their understanding in interactions (Rymes, 2008). The common structural organisations reported (Mercer, 2010; Rymes, 2008) are the triadic models of Teacher Initiation-Student Response-Teacher Feedback or 'IRF' pattern employed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975in Mercer, 2010) and Teacher Initiation- Student Response- Teacher Evaluation or 'IRE' pattern used by Mehan (1979 in Mercer, 2010) which is discussed in chapter 2 under the subtitle 'the traditional style of classroom discourse'.

Classroom discourse analysis as studies suggest has to date focused mostly on teachers in mainstream classrooms (Rymes, 2008) while a few researchers have sought to study classroom discourse focused at student with the label of SLCN (Radford, Ireson and Mahon, 2006; Henton, 1998; Sadler and Mogford-Bevan, 1997). One study engaged in

discourse analysis by listening to children with speech and language difficulties in a unit attached to a mainstream school interact with teachers and peers and analysing their conversational features to show progress in the skills that are taught and the lack of progress in spontaneous conversation (Henton, 1998). Another study looked at children with language impairments and their teachers within a language unit and used discourse analysis to understand the impact different types of teacher moves has on children's spontaneous production of speech (Sadler and Mogford-Bevan, 1997). A recent study focused on students with speech and language impairments (SLI) in a specialist language provision to reveal the role of the triadic dialogue model in facilitating learning of language (Radford et al., 2006).

The strength of unstructured qualitative methods of analysis it is argued lies in the fact that the transcribed data remains throughout the analysis and categories emerge from the data paving the way for a broader view (Mercer, 2010). Analysis therefore helps teachers to understand communication differences between social groups, facilitates classroom talk and learning and improves school achievement and the professional lives of teachers (Rymes, 2008). Inability to analyse large sets of data, difficulties in generalising findings and researchers selection of examples that they prefer are considered as disadvantages (Mercer, 2010).

As discussed above each method has its distinctive advantages and disadvantages. Researchers choose method/s by considering a number of factors including the aims of the research (Burns, 2010; Mercer, 2010).

The processes of selecting a research methodology and data collection instruments and methods of analysis concluded in this manner. It is therefore necessary to consider, critical reflection, an important phase in the action research cycle.

3.15 THE CRITICAL REFLECTION PHASE IN ACTION RESEARCH

Critical reflection is a key phase in the action research cycle (Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Kember, 2000). It follows the monitoring and evaluation phase in my action research model (Figure 3.1). Critical reflection in action research, involves systematic reflection of one's practice by reviewing what has been done, determining its effectiveness by considering what worked and what did not work and making alterations to improve future practice (Mertler, 2006; Dick, 2002). Action researchers at this stage

usually ask questions such as 'would I do anything different next time? What did I learn about my practice? Did I answer my question? Did I collect the right data for my question?' (Ary et al., 2009, p533)

Critical reflection is not restricted to a particular time in the action research process but is rather an ongoing activity that helps shape the direction of the research (Mertler, 2006). When researchers critically reflect on their actions they become reflective practitioners (Costello, 2003; Kemmis & Willkinson, 1998; Schon, 1983) who develop their own living theories (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Within the living theory approach, research and practice is hardly separable as practitioners concerned with issues at a micro level become a "living I" and take responsibility to look critically at their own practice and bring about change, thereby developing I-theories; knowledge about self within the broader arena of the world (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002).

Literature on action research contains the debate regarding self-reflection and collaborative teaming for critical reflection (Kember, 2000). While some researchers such as Carr and Kemmis (1986), Lewin (1946, 1952) and Schon (1983) have identified action research as a solitary activity involving self-reflection others including Stenhouse (1975) and McTaggart and Garbutcheon-Singh (1987) argue that it is a collaborative venture between researcher and research participants who engage in critical reflection as a team activity (Kember, 2000).

According to Schon (1983) reflection takes two forms; reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action is a short lived experience which occurs when individuals theorise their practice while being engaged in action (Jasper, 2003). Therefore, as researchers encounter problems they engage in 'on the spot experimentation' (Farrell, 1998, p12 in Reed, et al., 2002, p257). Reflection-on-action transpires at a later time, when events including reflections-in-action are recalled, analyzed and outcomes are considered in a critical manner (Reed, et al., 2002).

Critical reflection within action cycles provides opportunities to correct mistakes (Dick, 2002) and enables researchers to experience a 'perspective transformation' that encourages a change of direction (Mezirow 1981 in Kember, 2000). These features are considered as norms when dealing with human beings and systems which can be highly unpredictable (Ladkin, 2006). However, this flexibility as several authors caution may

result in action researchers not achieving their initial expected outcome (Grant, 2007; Armstrong, and Moore, 2004).

3.16 CONCLUSION

By considering research in educational settings, my interest in not merely to producing a thesis (Kember, 2000) but bridging the gap between the academic world of research and actual practice (Reason and Bradbury, 2008) and my vision for students with the label of SLCN, I selected the action research methodology to guide the research. Action research is deemed ideal because of its suitability to study social situations and bring about change (Neuman, 2006). Further action research is considered since it blends the dual processes of research and action to solve problems and transform practice (Reason and Bradbury, 2008).

Literature pinpoints several advantages of action research which also made it a desirable choice. It is flexible (Grant, 2007; Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006), it empowers people (Somekh and Zeichner, 2009; Neuman, 2006; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; McWilliam, 2004), it is a participatory democratic process (Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Ferrence, 2000) and it improves communication and networking (Grant, 2007; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002). The literature search also pointed to several disadvantages of action research, primarily its immensely popularity only in the field of education (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002) and the traditional researchers' view that it is unscientific (Cohen, et. al., 2007; Grant, 2007; Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006). Other disadvantages discussed include the possibility of reflection being an ineffective exercise (Grant, 2007), non-divulgence of data (Cohen, et. al., 2007), resistence from participants (Armstrong and Moore, 2004) and institutions to change practices (Whitehouse, 1986, in Cohen, et. al, 2007), concerns surrounding validity, reliability and generalisability (Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006), the vast amount of qualitative and quantitative data (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995), the time consuming nature of the dual processes (Grant, 2007; Burns, 1999 in Burns and Rochsantiningsih, 2006) and insider research that may be biased (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995).

Within action research, research and action takes place in spirals of cycles (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore by considering the varied models that describe the cyclical process, I designed my action research model to consist of two action cycles; the minimum required

to witness transformation (Kember, 2000). Each cycle involves four phases; critical reflection, planning, action and monitoring and evaluation.

By studying data collection instruments commonly used when researching in educational settings I selected semi-structured interviews (Kember 2000) and classroom observations (Ary et al., 2009) as data collection instruments. My choice of method of data analysis is influenced by authors (Axinn and Pearce, 2006) who suggest that a combined approach of qualitative and quantitative analysis provides different and useful perspectives that enrich decisions made during the research process, the school administrators' preference for quantitative analysis and my own perceptions of suitability of qualitative analysis.

Critical reflection described as a key phase in the action research cycle (Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Kember, 2000) follows the monitoring and evaluation phase of my action research cycles (Figure 3.1). Critical reflection helps correct mistakes (Dick, 2002) and enables researchers to experience a 'perspective transformation' (Mezirow 1981 in Kember, 2000). Reflection takes two forms; reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983) which individuals experience while being engaged in action (Jasper, 2003) and reflection-on-action (Schon, 1983) that occurs at a later date (Reed, et al., 2002). Self-reflection and/or collaborative teaming for critical reflection are selected by researchers (Kember, 2000) according to the aims of the research.

Having identified the research methodology and the methods of data collection and analysis suited to the research, I proceed to describe in the following chapter, the manner in which, I launched the pre-action stage by collecting and organising data.

CHAPTER 4
FINDING OUT ABOUT PRACTICE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I describe the pre-action stage of the action research process which aims at showing the situation as it is. This involves the preliminary procedures of engaging in discussions, observing school protocols, selecting the ideal candidates and obtaining consent from research participants; parents, students and teachers.

Thereafter data collection and analysis is embarked upon to understand current practices in adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN. Establishing the pre-action status is of twofold importance to me. Firstly because I do not want to rely on preconceived ideas but aspire to understand the current practices in adult-child communication to identify a starting point for action. Secondly, the recorded facts and figures are necessary for comparative analysis to establish the effectiveness of the action cycles designed to influence change.

I engage in a triangulation exercise (Ary, et al., 2009; Axinn and Pearce, 2006; Ferrence, 2000) and use different data collection instruments including interviews and observations. I also involve different individuals to present different perspectives. Data are analysed using a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006).

The manner, in which I conducted these processes, is set out below.

4.2 GETTING READY FOR ACTION RESEARCH

The research within the focal school began in November 2007, amidst disruptions caused to daily life, due to the internal war raging in Sri Lanka, as described in chapter one. While experiencing a sense of urgency to begin the research I was also concerned of the possibility that the research will not be completed, should the prevailing conditions worsen. My fears involved teacher and student turnover and absences, excessive school closures that will disrupt the smooth flow of action and thereby distort the research outcomes and the possibility that my own family will have to consider migration as an option.

Despite these misgivings, I embarked on preliminary processes by engaging in discussions, observing school protocol, selecting research participants and obtaining their consent. What follows is a description of each of these topics.

4.2.1 ENGAGING IN DISCUSSIONS

I requested for a meeting with the warden of Palmyrah College, to discuss my proposal to conduct the research within this school. The meeting focused on the benefits to the school and the impact it will have on participant students and teachers. The tone of the meeting was one of healthy curiosity. Despite student support in the focal school focusing on physical and social integration as discussed in chapter one, the warden was amenable to the proposal. However, he cautioned that formal approval will be granted after official documents are perused by the governing body.

4.2.2 OBSERVING SCHOOL PROTOCOL

On receiving official approval from the ethics committee of the University of Sheffield, Department of Human Communication Sciences, I submitted the approved ethics document, the school information sheet, letter seeking permission and the school consent form (Appendix 2.1) to the school governing body for formal approval. Two weeks after, I was invited for a meeting with a select group of administrators; warden, sub-warden and the primary school headmaster.

The administrators posed queries regarding the number of observations envisaged, frequency and duration of observations, type of data that will be collected, the manner in which data will be collected and recorded, teacher involvement and the role of the school when the message is taken to the national stage. Satisfied with the responses, they granted formal approval with the warden signing the consent form. At this juncture according to the administrators' request I agreed to keep the school abreast of the research activities through progress reports and monthly meetings.

4.2.3 SELECTING RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The research required the participation of adults (teachers and parents) and children (students). Adult participants were dependent on student selection. Hence, selection of students was given priority.

Selecting students

After careful perusal of existing records and conversations with learning support teachers I decided to select students from amongst those who receive student support. The potential recruits were identified as primary grade students aged between 6-12 years, currently receiving support services.

Their speech, language and communication difficulty was judged through a rating scale developed for this purpose. The scale is comprised of four levels (0-3) with skill level descriptions of; never [0], sometimes [1], often [2], always [3]. The skills assessed are an expanded and simplified description of the specific skills indicated in the Bercow (2008) definition discussed in chapter two. The skills include; speaks fluently (without stammering), speaks clearly without articulation errors, describes stories and events sequentially, uses age appropriate grammar and vocabulary, expresses needs clearly, follows whole class instructions perfectly, answers questions accurately, interacts with peers, participates in classroom activities such as group recitation and works in groups.

The learning support teachers were educated regarding the skill description and the manner in which the rating ought to be recorded. Thereafter the support teachers selected students who receive support and who sometimes or never display at least two of the communication skills stated. The need for speech, language and communication difficulties to be the only or primary impairment was ruled out. Although initially five students were identified, ten students of different ages with the lowest total scores were subsequently shortlisted (Table 4.1). This decision was influenced by the high turnover of primary grade students with impairments and the prospect of student, parent or teacher unwillingness to participate.

To create student profiles, (Table 4.1) I selected pseudonyms to refer to the student participants, all boys, to maintain anonymity. Thereafter I recorded their age, areas of concern by categorising them as SLCN, learning and other. Because inclusionary practices in adult-child communication, as discussed in chapter two, can have a positive impact on learning for students with the label of SLCN (Rhymes 2008; Hassan, 2007; Black, 2004; Nayak, 2004; Martin and Miller, 1999; Fleming, Miller and Wright, 1997; Pignatelli, 1993) I recorded the students' first language scores, as a percentage value, in the final column. These scores labelled as "Actual" are extracted from students' report cards of December 2007 when they were evaluated, with a written examination paper,

similar to their peers within their respective classrooms. None of these students were provided with any supports neither did they answer differentiated first language papers for this examination. I included the minimum scores the school expects from students in each grade, in the "Expected minimum" column, to display the gap between expectations and individual student performance. The data are selected because the administrators, as discussed in chapter three, divulged a preference for evidence of changes in learning via quantitative analysis.

Table 4.1: Student profile

Student Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Areas of concern		Language scores %	
		SLCN	Learning /Other	Actual	Expected minimum
Malan	*6*	*Articulation errors*	*Reading*	*15*	*75*
Shanuth	*6*	*Grammar and vocabulary isn't age appropriate & cannot follow instructions*	*Reading, Writing,*	*5*	*75*
Charitha	*8*	*Articulation errors*	*Reading*	*32*	*75*
Josh	*7*	*Grammar and vocabulary isn't age appropriate & cannot follow instructions*	*Reading, Writing,*	*18*	*75*
Samuel	*7*	*Fluency difficulties*	*Writing*	*27*	*75*
Amal	*9*	*cannot follow instructions*	*Reading, Writing, AD/HD*	*66*	*80*
Yadesh	*8*	*cannot follow instructions*	*Reading Comprehension, Writing, AD/HD*	*64*	*75*
Heshan	*9*	*cannot follow instructions*	*Dyscalculia, Depression, AD/HD*	*14*	*80*
Yovaan	*10*	*cannot follow instructions*	*Mechanics of hand writing, Spelling*	*88*	*80*
Sajeeve	*12*	*Grammar and vocabulary isn't age appropriate*	*Mild Intellectual Impairment, Reading comprehension & Spelling*	*55*	*80*

Selecting parents and teachers

Parents of the 10 students and the class teachers were then invited as participants to the research. The teachers (Table 4.2) are all female; a standard feature in primary schools in Sri Lanka. They are of varying ages, ethnic groups and religions and at different phases of their professional careers. Some classrooms consist of a single teacher. Of the 10 teachers, two have attended training programmes that focus on teaching students with the label of SLCN.

Table 4.2: Teacher profile

Student name	Teachers' qualifications	Years of service in the present school	No: of students	Presence of an assistant teacher	Attendance at a training programme concerning teaching students with the label of SLCN
Malan	*GCE A/L*	*5*	*35*	*Yes*	*No*
Shanuth	*Diploma in Montessori teaching*	*3*	*36*	*Yes*	*No*
Charitha	*GCE A/L*	*7*	*36*	*No*	*No*
Josh	*GCE A/L*	*7*	*33*	*Yes*	*No*
Samuel	*GCE A/L*	*8*	*37*	*No*	*No*
Amal	*Bachelor's in Education*	*14*	*34*	*No*	*Yes – a one year diploma programme*
Yadesh	*Diploma in Psychology*	*6*	*32*	*No*	*No*
Heshan	*GCE A/L*	*11*	*36*	*No*	*No*
Yovaan	*Bachelor's in Education*	*26*	*35*	*No*	*No*
Sajeeve	*Bachelor of Arts*	*4*	*31*	*No*	*Yes – a day programme*

4.2. 4 OBTAINING CONSENT FROM RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

It is suggested that humans ought to have freedom of choice without been influenced by others (Cohen, et al., 2007). Obtaining 'informed consent' is therefore described as an important step when conducting research (Tickle, 2001).

Providing information

The research participants were provided with written and verbal information and adequate time to formulate their own judgment. A clause assuring participants the freedom to opt out at any point during the research process (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002) without the necessity to provide explanations was included in the information sheet. Care was taken not to exert coercion at any given time.

Guaranteeing anonymity

The information sheet also contains a clause which guarantees anonymity to participants (Quicke, 2008; Coy, 2006). Therefore all students are allocated a pseudonym (table 4.1) and the respective teachers (Table 4.2) and parents are associated with the same pseudonym, to minimise confusion. Anonymity is extended to the school as discussed in chapter one and the administrators are referred to by their job titles, such as, warden.

Assuring confidentiality

The information sheet also assures participants, confidentiality of information (Quicke, 2008; Coy, 2006). Assurance is given that data will be stored securely and be inaccessible to outsiders. It is also emphasised that data will be used solely for the purpose of knowledge enhancement and awareness building.

Meeting parents

A meeting was organised to inform the parents about the research. The meeting was chaired by the warden who emphasised the necessity to encourage research within school communities.

Since young children are participants to the research I first explained to the parents the priority placed to ensure the rights of children are preserved, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of Children (UNICEF, 1989) and article 12 (4) of the Constitution of Sri Lanka (1978). Next I distributed the information sheets (Appendix 2.2) consisting of the research aims, selection of students, the process to be followed, benefits to be derived, confidentiality, study review, future actions and the consent forms; one for parents and one for children containing written and visual representations to aid comprehension. Each topic was discussed and participants were given the opportunity to read the documents, voice their concerns, pose any queries and seek clarification. They were thereafter entrusted to explain the research activity to the children. A model narrative written in a simple and easy to understand style was provided for this purpose.

Parents viewed the invitation differently. Some parents, while concerned were eager to be part of the process while others had reservations regarding the impact the research will have as the spotlight is turned on their child. Other concerns include students' feelings and thoughts about being observed, confidentiality of information divulged by the students at interviews and anonymity. Once all concerns were dealt with and facts were understood, parents were requested to handover the completed consent forms in sealed envelopes to the respective class teachers, during the course of the week.

One parent of each student was required to sign the form since a single parent was present for most of the students. This is because spouses are overseas or parents are divorced or separated. When both parents were present, the parent most involved with life at school, usually the mother, was requested to sign the form. I collected the forms from the

teachers and filed and stored the letters immediately in the storage cupboard allocated for this purpose. All ten students and parents consented to participate.

Meeting teachers

Upon receiving consent from students and parents, the respective class teachers were invited to a meeting. The meeting was once again chaired by the warden and conducted in a manner similar to that for parents. Nine teachers with the exception of Malan's teacher attended the meeting. In keeping with the clause to opt out, no questions were asked from this teacher. Hence, the reason for declining is unknown.

The teachers were given the consent form and the information sheet (Appendix 2.3) which addressed topics including the reasons for been chosen, their freedom to accept or decline the offer, consequences of been part of the research process and benefits to be derived, possibility of risks, the ending of the process, confidentiality of information, reviewers of the research and finally methods of utilizing the research outcomes to promote inclusive practices in schools in Sri Lanka. During question time the teachers voiced their concern regarding added workload and were assured that additional work will be included only with their consent. All nine teachers signed the consent form and returned it to me on a pre-specified date.

4.2.5 DETERMINING METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As discussed in chapter three, I opted for data and methodological triangulation (Ary, et al., 2009; Axinn and Pearce, 2006; Ferrence, 2000). Data triangulation involves engaging different individuals as research participants and methodological triangulation involves using the same method at different times (Johnson and Christenson, 2012). I selected teachers, students and parents to provide me with different view points regarding adult-chid communication. Multiple observations are carried out at different times in the same classrooms to understand classroom dynamics surrounding practices in adult-child communication between the teachers and all their pupils including the student participants.

I elected to analyse data via a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006) as further explained in chapter three. Within this research qualitative analysis focuses on individualised views and

practices while quantitative analysis is concerned pre-dominantly with whole classroom data.

The analysis process follows a two staged approach; organising data and interpreting data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Burns 1999 in Burns 2010; Ary et al., 2009). During the organising stage I immerse myself in the data to ensure familiarity (Marshall and Rossman, 2011; Ary et al., 2009; Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007; Wellington, 2000) which enables meaningful data reduction (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Thereafter, I interpret the data by looking deeply into the information and reflect beyond the most obvious issues (Burns 1999 in Burns 2010). The most useful data is presented to support the developing story and to answer the research question (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

The preparations were concluded in this manner. I next explain the processes of data collection and analysis in the pre-action stage which commenced in January 2008.

4.3 CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

I selected semi-structured interviews, as discussed in chapter three, because I can conduct the interviews with a predetermined set of questions, with the option of amending the questions according to the type of responses given by the interviewees (Kember, 2000). Further, semi-structured interviews also give me the flexibility to request for explanations and expansion of the responses if I wish to investigate deeper into issues (May, 2001).

The different interviewees; students, parents and teachers, will enable me to understand their perspectives regarding adult-child communication. I also hoped to gain different suggestions to address any problems surrounding adult-child communication according to their understanding and experiences (King and Horrocks, 2010). I was confident that such data will enrich the action research process.

4.3.1 DESIGNING INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

I drew up interview schedules (Cohen et al., 2007) for each group of participants by following suggestions by several authors. Therefore the schedules contain unambiguous questions framed by using language familiar to the interviewees (Hatch, 2002) and organised in a logical format (Lindlof and Taylor, 2010). The interviews open with factual questions by focusing on the participants' prior involvement with student support,

a topic most participants are familiar with and hence, easy to build a rapport and gain trust (O'Hanlon, 2003).

4.3.2 PILOTING INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Schedules were piloted (Cohen, et al., 2007) with select groups of teachers, parents and students from the focal school who are not research participants. This was to guarantee that the questions are comprehensible and will elicit the information that I expect (Moore and Sixsmith, 2000). Further, piloting helped ascertain the pace and method of questioning (Scott, 2000) and duration of interviews (Macintyre, 2000) since it has been cautioned that the time factor could be considerable (Gillham, 2000). It was also an opportunity to develop my skills as an interviewer (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007).

4.3.3 CONSIDERING INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

When organising interview settings I made every attempt to create a tranquil and respectful atmosphere (King and Horrocks, 2010) to encourage interviewees to voice their views while elaborating and discussing issues of concern. I minimised disturbances by selecting locations away from the hustle and bustle of school life, posted a 'do not disturb' sign outside the room and reduced possible diversions while interviews were in progress such as switching off phones (Field and Morse, 1989, in Cohen et al., 2007).

While interviewing I followed interview protocol by providing sufficient time for interviewees to respond and avoiding asking embarrassing questions and giving advice or abruptly ending the interviews (Cohen et al., 2007). I listened, by focusing completely on the interviewees (Gillham, 2000), sensitive to the affective dimensions of the interview (Hatch, 2002) and used prompts and probes (Hatch, 2002; Wellington, 2000) where necessary to seek elaborations and clarifications.

4.3.4 INTERVIEWING STUDENTS

Living in a culture that reflects the global trend of treating young disabled children as objects of study rather than as agents of change as noted in another study (Clark, McQuail and Moss, 2003 in Tangen, 2008) I was interested in accessing the students' insider perspectives regarding practices in adult-child communication. By refusing to see children as objects to be studied (Grover, 2004) I acknowledged the power of their words and listened to their voices as advocated by many researchers (Ghaziani, 2010; Tangen, 2008; Grover, 2004; Slee, 1999; Freire, 1972).

The participants

Nine students were interviewed since Malan's teacher declined to participate.

The procedure

     Group interviews

Group interviews were selected because children are more comfortable and feel less vulnerable and supported (Wellington, 2000) when peers are present (Gwynn, 2004). The ideal group size of four and five and interview duration of 60 minutes was settled after considering other studies (Scott, 2000; Hill, Laybourn and Borland, 1996). Group P consisted of Shanuth, Charitha, Josh, Samuel, and Yadesh, while Amal, Heshan, Yovaan and Sajeeve formed group Q. The interview time and days were decided in concurrence with the respective class teachers.

By following suggestions by several authors (Gwynn, 2004; Mayall, 2002; Scott 2000) I selected the Student Support Unit (SSU) as the interview location, because it is familiar to the students and located at a distance from the primary section of the focal school. Further, the sound proof room made the students feel safe and secure to express their views, because they are aware that they cannot be heard by others.

The students sat in a semi-circle, while I sat in close proximity and directly opposite them to capture their attention, encourage active participation and reduce opportunities of students getting embroiled in other activities and losing focus of the interview (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007). After welcoming the students and chatting with them informally, I explained the interview process. Since being interviewed was a new experience to the students I explained to them that the Dictaphone placed nearby, was for the purpose of recalling the conversation at a later date. I sought to reduce the students' anxiety of being audio recorded by encouraging them to engage in a sample voice test and listen to a replay. Having completed the voice test, students in group Q and some in group P were eager to carry on with the interview.

During interviews, I used simple and precise language (Cohen et al., 2007) and rephrased questions in the students first language (i.e. Sinhalese or Tamil) to ensure comprehension. Students in group Q responded to the questions whilst freely expanding on ideas. However, Josh, Charitha and Shanuth in group P appeared shy and refrained from speaking despite encouragement from Yadesh and Samuel.

Reflecting post event, and by considering experiences of other researchers, I identified some factors that may have contributed to their hesitation. These include the presence of an audio recorder (Cohen, et al., 2007), adhering to cultural norms of passivity as witnessed in a previous study in Sri Lanka (Villiamy, Lewin and Stephens, 1990), inability to comprehend and/or express opinions due to speech, language and communication difficulties, anxiety, finding the interview uninteresting and some students [Yadesh and Samuel] dominating the conversation (Lewis 1992, Simon 1982, in Cohen, et al., 2007) despite allocating turns.

Storytelling

Due to the mixed results achieved for group P, I made further attempts to gather data through informal methods (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995; Lewis and Lindsay, 2000 in Moore, 2000). Storytelling, an informal interviewing technique (Lewis and Lindsay, 2000, in Moore, 2000) was utilised. I picked a folktale about a 'slow' rabbit and modified it (Appendix 3.2) for the purpose of eliciting information that is similar to the interview questions (Appendix 3.1). The location was shifted to the periphery of the playground bordering the Indian Ocean, a naturalistic, informal setting (Gubrium and Holstein, 2001).

With the sea breeze caressing us and the sun piercing through the branches of the coconut trees, we spread a mat on the warm sand and made ourselves comfortable. Reflection-in-action, a few minutes into the exercise highlighted that story telling was a time consuming exercise and the students whose voices I needed to hear were as silent as during the group interviews.

Excerpts of the story clearly indicate the continued dominance of the talkative and enthusiastic students, Yadesh and Samuel, as they simultaneously associated their experiences, with the role of the 'slow' rabbit even as I (Researcher) related the story.

> 7. *Researcher: That's right. So, a slow rabbit is unusual. This rabbit was different from the rest of his family and friends because he was "slow". He was always picked on. All everybody told him was that he must "hurry up".*
> 8. *Yadesh: I am also like that rabbit. Teacher is always telling me to hurry up, and Amma (Mother) is always shouting that I take long to finish my homework.*
> 9. *Samuel: My mother is also like that, always shouting hurry up. I get angry then.*

Josh, Charitha and Shanuth responded only to direct questions. Then too they were reluctant to respond verbally.

> 47. Researcher: *So, would you also like if someone helps you? Like Owly helped rabbit?*
> 48. Josh: *[speaks for the first time] Malan helps me.*
> 51. Researcher: *Charitha? Shanuth? Does anyone help you?*
> 52. Charitha: *[shakes head from side to side to indicate 'no']*
> 53. Shanuth: *[does not seem to have either heard or understood the question]*

Hence, storytelling extracted minimal information. However, I persisted as I observed the students inch their way to sit closer to me to drape my sari fall [formal, culturally accepted attire of female teaching staff] around them, while listening with rapt interest.

Before I embarked on the storytelling exercise I was confident of invigorating the students to provide the information that I sought. Subsequent to the storytelling exercise as I reflected on the outcome, I realised that I had clearly misunderstood the complexity of the task, the wisdom of having contingency plans for occasions when interviews may go awry, planning for more time and student perception of my role within the school.

> *"Do you know what Josh told me today when he saw you entering school? He said, look mama that is the teacher who teaches our teachers how to teach us!"*
> *[Field notes April 2008, Josh's mother]*

However, an unexpected outcome of the story telling exercise is that Josh, Charitha and Shanuth are now at ease to run up to me and greet me, chat with me and even offer to help me carry files and books when they spot me in the corridors.

Informal interactions

Recalling one author's view that listening does not merely involve the written and spoken words but also messages communicated via play, creative and aesthetic means (Tangen, 2008), I became alert to turn these occasions to rich data collection opportunities. The spontaneity of the occasions however, meant that data are not recorded instantaneously, but is done as quickly as possible. One such conversation with Josh (Figure 4.1) who hardly communicated during the interviews brings another dimension to student views.

One day as I [R] was walking across the playground I felt a tug on my sari fall. Turning around I saw a grinning Josh. I had been to his classroom earlier in the day and encouraged him to complete his work on time. He announced, "Miss, I finished all my work today in class. Teacher said I can play after school." He was turning around to dart into the crowd, when I realized that this was the opening I was looking for. I quickly reached out and held his hand. I asked him if he would help me carry some of my books to my office. Even as he obliged and we began to walk, I casually posed some questions.

R: Sometimes it's hard for you to finish the work in class. Would you like if someone helps you?

Josh: (Nods head vigorously and smiles shyly) then I can play in the interval? (Josh often has to forgo interval and playtime to complete the day's work.)

R: Yes, of course. That would be lovely wouldn't it? Is it alright if I ask Miss Mendis (pseudonym for the assistant teacher) to help you a little?

Josh: (With a frown creasing his brow. He seems very worried) Will Miss (class teacher) get angry?

R: I am sure she will be happy to see you finish your work soon.

Josh: (Lowers voice to a whisper) Please, don't tell Miss that I said this!

R: No, I won't.

Josh: Can I tell you a secret?

R: Yes, only if you want to.

Josh: Will you bend down?

R: (I oblige)

B: (Speaks with cupped hands to my ears) I don't like when she shouts "Nichola: s" (Imitating the class teacher who calls him by his last name; a feature practiced in most boys' schools) then I forget what I have to do.

R: Hmm. I know it can be hard. Let me see what I can do? (We reach my office) Let's keep the books on this table. Thank you for helping me.
(I quickly write a note for the teacher who might punish him for being late to class)
Take this note for Miss and run to your class now? I will see you tomorrow.

B: Bye, Miss. (runs quickly weaving his way through a throng of students pretending to drive a car) Brrmm, brrmmm peep peep   [Field notes 19ᵗʰ March, 2008]

Figure 4.1: An informal conversation with Josh

I also filed sketches drawn by Yovaan and Charitha (Figure 4.2) as I agreed with the view that visual representations speak directly to the audience (O'Neill et al., 2002 in Coy 2006). These sketches were obtained when they were asked to illustrate one thing that stood out in their learning environment, during a preliminary round of an art competition. These two drawings were brought to my notice by their teachers, who claimed that,

'Your special needs students are cheeky brats'.   [Field notes May 2008]

The first sketch depicts a young teacher bearing a cane and threatening punishment while the second depicts an older teacher with a cane, commanding the students "Go, go and sit down".

Figure 4.2: Yovaan's and Charitha's sketches

4.3.5 INTERVIEWING PARENTS

The number of students dwindled at the time when parent interviews were scheduled.

The participants

From the nine students who were interviewed, seven remained. Charitha, fell ill and was absent from school for two months. Samuel's parents were overseas when the interviews were being scheduled. They returned when interviews were in progress and informed me that they were migrating to Australia immediately. Both sets of parents of Shanuth, Josh and Yovaan, and Yadesh, Amal and Sajeeve' mothers and Heshan's father participated in the interviews.

The procedure

A total of ten parents of the seven students were interviewed using the semi-structured interview format. Prior notice was given of the exact time and length of interview to help parents plan for leave if necessary. However, there were occasions when rescheduling had to be done due to unforeseen reasons.

Yovaan's parents selected telephone interviews. Other parents opted for face-to-face interviews in school at a predetermined yet convenient time. While Josh and Sajeeve's parents agreed for tape recordings, others opted for manual recordings which were written verbatim. I kept notes on the main points (King and Horrocks, 2010) and wrote

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down non-verbal behaviours, context factors and impressions (Cohen, et al., 2007; Hatch, 2002) when recording the interviews manually. When interviewees responded at a quick pace, I periodically requested them to provide a summary of views (King and Horrocks, 2010). As the interviews ended I returned to the interview notes as quickly as possible and filled in the gaps that could be recalled (King and Horrocks, 2010).

4.3.6 INTERVIEWING TEACHERS

The participants

Teachers of the seven students mentioned in the parent interviews were interviewed.

The procedure

The interviews followed a semi-structured interview format similar to students and parents interviews. The primary school library or staff room, depending on the level of privacy at a given time was chosen as interview locations. Individual teachers chose a time convenient to them. Yadesh and Amal's teachers opted for manual recordings while the other teachers agreed to audio recordings. During manual recordings I followed the same process as discussed in parent interviews.

4.4 ANALYSING INTERVIEW DATA

Data are analysed by following a two stage approach of organising and interpreting data.

The organising stage

This stage involves word processing interview data by listening to the tapes and reading written notes where the interviewees opted for telephone interviews or the manual method. Each interviewee's responses to the questions (Q) are listed (Appendices 3.1-3.4) as shown in the example (Table 4.3) which is extracted from student interviews (Appendix 3.1). Data are then organised by categorising responses and counting frequencies for each category. Response categories are assigned when they are clearly identifiable such as "Yes" and "Non-committal" (Table 4.3).

Keeping in mind that the purpose of analysing is to understand the complex ways in which people think rather than to identify common thinking (Armstrong, 2003), when categories are not clearly visible; like Heshan's response "I like animals" in question 7 (Table 4.3), such statements are not forced into an existing category or assigned one but treated as a separate unit worthy of analysis.

If an identical or similar response is made by multiple students as in Q3 (Yadesh and Sajeeve) in the example, one response is cited as an example and the total is recorded as '2'. When counting frequencies the total number of responses (n) for a given question varied since multiple views are acceptable from a single interviewee or as in parent interviews although both parents were present, often only one parent responded.

Table 4.3 Example of organising interview data for analysis

Q7	Student	Parent Response	Category
Is there anything the teacher could do to make sure that you understood what she has said?	*Shanuth*	*Yes*	*Yes*
	Charitha	*Don't shout*	*Yes*
	Josh	*No reply*	*Non-committal*
	Samuel	*I sweat a lot in the class. The fan is so slow*	*Yes*
	Amal	*Use small words*	*Yes*
	Yadesh	*Speak slowly*	*Yes*
	Heshan	*I like animals*	
	Yovaan	*Don't speak all those big words.*	*Yes*
	Sajeeve	*Speak slowly*	*Yes*
Q3			
What is the help you would like outside the classroom?	*Yadesh*	*help me with class work*	*Yes*
	Sajeeve	*help me in the class*	*Yes*

The interpretation stage

This stage begins once data are organised. It involves counting the mentions of response categories and building a picture of the manner in which adult-child communication is viewed by the three categories of participants.

4.4.1 STUDENT INTERVIEWS

The responses of nine students acquired through a three-pronged effort; interviews (Appendix 3.1), story-telling (Appendix 3.2) and informal interactions (Figure 4.1 & 4.2), are considered for analysis.

Table 4.4 Student interviews: response categories and frequencies

No	Question (Q)	Response Category	Verbal Responses	*n*
1	*Did you like the help you received to do your school work last year (2007)?*	Positively influenced	Yes	1
			My teacher helped me to do the sums in the class.	1
			Yes a little. I didn't like Sinhalese	1
			I liked it.	1
			Good	1
		Did not receive help	None	4
2	*What is the help you would like in the classroom?*	Opportunity to revise	Give test papers	1
		Support	Help me with class work	2
			My friends to help me	1
		Non-committal	No answer	1
		Not applicable	None	4
3	*What is the help you would like outside the classroom?*	Peer acceptance	For the boys to help me to make a sand castle	1
			Let me play cricket	1
		None	Shakes head indicating 'No'	1
		Misunderstood	I will help the other boys	2
		Not applicable	None	4
4	*When the teacher is teaching the whole class why is it difficult to listen and understand?*	How she speaks	She shouts and I feel scared	1
			I don't like when she shouts my name	1
			Hard/big words	2
			Fast I can't understand	1
		Lack fluency in the English language	I don't understand English	1
		Both	Sometimes because the class is so noisy - Something like a bomb blast	1
		Non-committal	Shrugs / no reply	2
5	*What do you do when you are unable to follow the teacher's instruction?*	Get teacher's help	I won't try. She will come before that	2
			I ask the teacher	1
		Get peer's help	I do what they are doing	2
			I ask the boy who sits next to me	2
		Take no action	Nothing	2
		Non-committal	No reply	1
		Sometimes	Sometimes	3
		Non-committal	No reply	1
6	*Is it helpful when your teacher comes up to you and speaks to you?*	Yes	Yes	5
		No	I am scared	1
			She shouts	1
		Non-committal	No reply	1
7	*Is there anything the teacher could do to make sure that you understood what she has*	Yes	Don't shout	1
			Speak slowly	2
			Yes	1
			Don't speak big words.	1
			Use small words	1
			I sweat a lot in the class. The fan is so slow	1

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	said?	Non-committal	No reply	1
			I like animals	1
8	Does the teacher understand what you say?	Yes	Yes	8
		Uncertain	Don't know	1
9	When she does not understand your speech, what do you do?	Repair breakdowns	I will repeat	4
		No-action	I won't say anything	2
			Just wait	1
			Nothing	1
		Non-committal	No reply	1

Interpreting data

The four students who received support in 2007 explained that they were positively influenced by the support (Q1). Their suggestions (Q2&3) for improvement include

- Support class work = 2 mentions
- Peer acceptance = 1 mention
- Opportunity to revise = 1 mention

Students identified the inclusionary features in the classrooms (Q5 & 6) including

- Individualised help = 3 mentions
- Peer assistance = 4 mentions
- Teachers addressing the students personally = 5 mentions

Recognising that communication is a two way process (Nind, et al., 2001) four students use repetition to repair breakdowns in communication (Q9).

Students highlighted exclusionary adult-child communication strategies such as (Q4, Figure 4.1 and Appendix 3.2)

- Loud speech and yelling = 4 mentions
- Use of complex vocabulary = 2 mentions
- Employing a quick pace when speaking = 1 mention
- Speaking in English = 1 mention
- Noisy classroom environment = 1 mention. This response is from Samuel, a boy who had lived through war in the North of Sri Lanka since his birth, prior to transferring to the focal school six months ago.

An important memory for two students is teachers threatening with a cane as they attempt to discipline their classrooms (Figure 4.2).

4.4.2 PARENT INTERVIEWS

The responses of the 10 parents acquired through telephone and face-to-face interviews (Appendix 3.3) is organised below.

Table 4.5 Parent interviews: response categories and frequencies

	Question (Q)	Response Category	Verbal responses	n
1	In what ways did your child benefit from the support he received last year (2007)? Please describe.	Did not benefit	He did not receive help in 2007	2
		Met classroom targets	The teacher kept him after school	1
			Assistant teacher copied notes & learning support teacher monitored his activities	1
			He performed well at the term tests	1
		Became interested in learning	He tried to do some of his school work	1
			He became a more confident learner since he was taught at his level of capability and assessed at that level as well	1
2	Would you consider accepting continued support this year?	Yes	Yes	7
3	What other forms of assistance would you like your son to receive?	In-class	In-class support	7
		After school	After school teaching	2
4	What do you think of the level of communication that takes place between school and home?	Satisfied	I can meet the teacher when I want to	1
			The support teacher always communicates with me	2
			All messages sent are received and I go in whenever they ask me to	1
		Somewhat satisfied	Occasionally she would call us	1
		Dissatisfied	Restrictions to enter school makes communication a problem	1
			Correspondence book contains only the problem	1
			Homework not specified in detail	1
			Negligible	1
5	As parents what form of support would you like to receive?	Education meetings	Workshops	2
			Monthly meetings	4
		Better communication	Better communication with home	1
		Empathy	Empathy	1
6	Do you think your son is happy with what goes on in the classroom?	Unknown	He has not said anything	2
		Unhappy	He is upset when children shout & bullying is a problem	1
			The boys always complain about him to the teacher and they are not his friends	1
			Because the teacher won't allow him to do group activities because he is disruptive	1
			Because the boys laugh at him when the teacher shouts his name	1
			Because he has no friends and the teachers just ignored him	1
7	Do you think	Happy	Teacher always repeats instructions for him	1

your son is happy at the level of communication that takes place between the teacher and himself?	*Unknown*	*When I ask him about school he just shrugs*	**2**
	Unhappy	*He does not understand the math and environmental studies lesson because the teacher is too fast.*	**1**
		He thinks that the teacher enjoys shouting and must be given the opportunity to do so.	**1**
		Teachers use big words	**1**
		He tells me that he sits near his best friend who finishes his work and then helps him	**1**
		Ignores the teacher when she is shouting	**1**
	Unknown	*No. Never.*	**3**
		No. But the teacher says he does not utter a word even when she scolds him	**1**
		Not really. But I guess not very well.	**1**

Interpreting data

The parents of all students who received support (Q1) agreed that student support ought to continue in the current year. The benefits outlined are,
- Ability to meet classroom targets = 3 mentions
- Increased interest in learning = 2 mentions

Parents' suggestions for student support include (Q2 & 3)
- In-class support = 7 mentions
- After school teaching = 2 mentions

Parents considered communication between school and home (Q4)
- Satisfactory = 4 mentions
- Somewhat satisfactory = 1 mention
- Unsatisfactory = 4 mentions

Parents also requested for (Q5)
- Workshops = 2 mentions
- Monthly meetings = 4 mentions
- Better communication = 1 mention
- Empathy = 1 mention. This request is from Heshan's father who is taking care of his son as a single parent

Five parents highlighted the difficulties their children face in school (Q6) with one mention each for noisy classrooms, bullying, complaints from peers, teacher's prohibiting group involvement, being laughed at by peers and being ignored by teachers. Two mentions are made of lack of friends. Josh and Heshan's parents could not identify problems because their children do not discuss their school life at home. However, Josh during an informal conversation with me (Figure 4.1) indicated his distress at being addressed in a loud voice.

Adult-child communication strategies (Q7) as noted by parents include
Inclusionary strategies
- Repeating instructions = 1 mention

Exclusionary strategies
- Fast rate of speaking = 1 mention
- Using 'big' words = 1 mention
- Loud speech = 2 mentions

4.4.3 TEACHER INTERVIEWS

The results from interviews with seven teachers (Appendix 3.4) are considered next.

Table 4.6 Teacher interviews: response categories and frequencies

No	Question (Q)	Response Category	Verbal Responses	*n*
1	*How effective were the teaching practices discussed and implemented to meet needs of student/s with speech and language difficulties in your classroom, in the last year (2007)?*	*Effective*	*They worked well*	*1*
			It was a real good start	*2*
			He had done better at the test	*2*
		Somewhat effective	*I managed to implement some strategies and they worked to a certain degree.*	*1*
			I saw some development	*1*
2	*Did collaboration with the Student Support Team and Learning Support Teachers go well?*	*Satisfied*	*Yes. I didn't have any problems*	1
			I worked well with the teacher	3
		Somewhat satisfied	*Very limited contact*	2
		No direct support	*I worked directly with the classroom teacher*	1
3	*What would you like to see done differently?*	*Support teacher involved in classroom teaching*	*Support teacher coming into the classroom and working with the struggling children thereby reducing the teacher's workload*	*1*
		Evaluate students once a month	*Evaluate the child once a month and inform their parents about their progress or lack of it so that parents can take action*	*1*
		Support teacher collaborate more with teachers	*The support teacher must keep contact with us and a week ahead get the work sorted out such as photocopying notes for students who don't write fast*	*1*
		Remedial teaching focused on repetition	*Do the same thing that is done in the class, then I think that would be beneficial; it will be like revising / practice work*	*2*
		Parent involvement	*Now, in.... matter the parents were of great help. All parents must be asked to do the same*	*1*
4	*Should you have*	*Yes*	*Yes. I think so*	*3*

	another student with impairments would you feel that you are better equipped to follow the Individualised Educational Plan (IEP)?		No problem. I have been teaching for 33 years and I had 2 sons. So, I am prepared for anything.	1
		Depends on other factors	Following the IEP is not the problem but finding the time to do it	1
			I won't be able to do the same with everyone.	1
			Yes but I would like assistance	1
		Non-committal	[Teachers did not directly answer the question. Instead they described the student as the example below] I know he is very slow. He can't understand anything. This is a problem when teaching so many kids	4
5	This year [student participant's name] is in your class. How will his inclusion impact your day to day teaching?	Routine work	Actually I am used to it	1
			I don't think it will make much of a difference	1
		Difficult	I have to spend time monitoring his work. That is not possible all the time	3
			I t will not be easy. It is more work even to remember he is there	1
			Very hard; I just don't have time to devote for him	1
6	What challenges do you face when communicating with a student with impairments?	The student's refusal to speak	He understands but won't speak a word to me	1
		Slowing my pace of speaking	I find that sometimes I speak too fast and Amal, does not understand	2
		Individualising instruction	I have to put aside a little time to give him instructions separately – that is difficult	3
		Repeating instructions	It is mostly their slowness and the need to repeat instructions.	1
7	Do you have any strategies you find useful to cope with the student's inability to follow whole class and/or individual instructions?	Collaborating with an assistant teacher	She works with 5 kids who are slow and Shanuth is one of them	1
		Providing visual support	Sometimes we have to write the answer and show him. Then we have to say this is the answer you have to write before he is able to do anything	1
		Employing peer support	I ask the friend who sits next to him to help him as and when the need arises	3
		Calling out the student's name loudly	I shout out his name and he becomes alert. He is scared of me and doesn't fool around too much	1
		Seating the student close by	He works well if I seat him close to me	1
8	How do you deal with the student's inability to express his views effectively?	Speaking kindly	I try to encourage him by speaking very kindly – but other than saying 'bye' when he is leaving and giving a flying kiss there has been no progress	2
		Nothing	He can express himself	5
9	How do you encourage the	direct questions	I ask questions	3
		Group work	I organize group work	2

	student with impairments to participate in active communication within the classroom? (e.g. ask direct questions, ask yes/no etc)	*Give a leadership role*	*I make him a leader when doing group activities. Then he works well. If I don't make him the leader then the whole group suffers because he will disrupt them and go on a tangent. The other boys get upset and the group disbands quickly*	*1*
		Involve the student in discussions	*I involve him in by talking about current affairs. He gets really excited and participates, forgetting his usual shyness*	*1*
10	*What reinforcers do you use to encourage better communication?*	*Stars*	*We give stars. They like that. Not the red pen. We have coloured stars.*	*6*
		Verbal praise	*Mostly praise*	*2*
		Encouraging peers to acknowledge success	*I also get children to appreciate each other by getting them to clap when someone gives the correct answer.*	*1*
		Writing encouraging remarks	*I write 'very good' in his book.*	*1*
11	*How do you motivate self-confidence in students with impairments?*	*By giving immediate feedback for task completion*	*He can't even tie his shoe laces and used to stick his leg out when he wants me to tie it. Now I encourage him to do it alone although it is not a perfect job. Then I praise him and show him how to do it better.*	*4*
		By encouraging independence	*I make him do all his work even slowly.*	*3*
		By giving the student the opportunity to provide feedback	*I need to push him for some things other things he will do on his own. Giving him time to tell me how he feels helps get him focused on the work.*	*1*
		By recognising student abilities	*I try to assign special duties or make him a leader.*	*2*
			I appoint him as a messenger.	*1*
12	*Are you familiar with self-reflection as a tool to improve teaching practice?*	*No*	*No*	*7*
13	*How often do you engage in collaborative teaming?*	*Sometimes*	*When we have to plan for extra-curricular activities like the sports meet or concerts or trips*	*4*
			When we decide on the practical activities for lessons	*3*

Interpreting data

Teachers who taught students with the label of SLCN the previous year (2007) indicated that teaching strategies implemented were (Q1).

- Effective = 5 mentions
- Somewhat effective = 2 mentions

Teachers considered collaboration with the student support team members (Q2) as
- Satisfactory = 4 mentions
- Somewhat satisfactory = 2 mentions

Teachers' suggestions to enhance students learning (Q3) include
- Direct involvement of learning support teachers in classrooms = 1 mention
- Evaluating students once a month = 1 mention
- Support teachers collaborating more with classroom teachers = 1 mention
- Remedial teaching focused on repetition = 2 mentions
- Involvement of parents = 1 mention

When conversation turned to including students with impairments (Q4) four mentions are made of their ability to include and three mentions revolve around success depending on factors such as time, type of disorder and the level of assistance. However, inclusion of student participants (Q5) is considered
- Routine work = 2 mentions
- Difficult = 5 mentions

The challenges teachers face when communicating with students with impairments (Q6) is identified as
- Student's refusal to speak = 1 mention
- Slowing the pace of speaking = 2 mentions
- Individualising instructions = 3 mentions
- Repeating instructions = 1 mention

The coping strategies the teachers engage in to deal with students who are unable to follow whole class and/or individual instructions (Q7) include
- Collaborating with an assistant teacher = 1 mention
- Providing visual support = 1 mention
- Employing peer support = 3 mentions
- Calling out the student's name loudly = 1 mention
- Seating the student close to the teacher = 1 mention

Majority of teachers (5 mentions) believe that students can express their views (Q8) while a minority (2 mentions) speak kindly to encourage students to be verbally active. To include students with impairments to participate in active communication within the classrooms (Q9), teachers explained that they use
- Direct questions = 3 mentions
- Organise group work = 2 mentions
- Give leadership roles = 1 mention
- Involve students in discussions = 1 mention

The popular reinforcers teachers use to encourage better communication (Q10) are
- Stars = 6 mentions
- Verbal praise = 2 mentions
- Encouraging peers to acknowledge success = 1 mention
- Writing encouraging remarks = 1 mention

Teachers use the following approaches to motivate self-confidence in students (Q11)
- Giving immediate feedback for task completion = 4 mentions
- Encouraging independence = 3 mentions
- Giving the students the opportunity to provide feedback = 1 mention
- Recognising student abilities = 2 mentions

None of the teachers currently engage in self-reflection. Teachers also reported that collaborative teaming is an infrequent practice.

4.4.4 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

Most interview questions were aimed at adult-child communication which is the focus of the research. As data analysis reveals students identified inclusionary and exclusionary features of communication used by their teachers and offered suggestions for better communication. Parents pinpointed exclusionary communication strategies and a single inclusionary strategy teachers' use which were similar to those stated by the students. Parents also gave ideas for improvement. Teachers emphasized on the coping strategies they use to ensure better communication and motivate students while discussing problems they face when teaching students with the label of SLCN. They made suggestions to further support these students. Teachers added that while collaborative teaming is not a common occurrence at Palmyrah College that they do not engage in reflection to improve practice.

Having concluded interviews for all participants and analysed the data I turned my attention to observing classrooms and recording adult-child interactions.

4.5 CONDUCTING CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

A total of seven classrooms were observed to ascertain communication practices the teachers engage in when addressing all their pupils including students with the label of SLCN. Although the research did not focus on inspiring teachers to change communication directed at the whole classroom, data pertaining to whole classrooms were collected because the teacher and student participants communicate within the broader context of their classrooms.

A systematic process, as discussed in detail below, is followed because 'carefully gathered discourse data provides evidence that our changes are based in empirical enquiry and not whim, fad or random desire' (Rymes, 2008, p80). The processes involved determining the recording technique, designing a data collection grid, conducting a trial

run, deciding on data analysis, developing codes for quantitative analysis, preparing to observe, conducting observations, word processing and coding and analysing data.

4.5.1 DETERMINING THE RECORDING TECHNIQUE

I acceded to the administrators' request and settled for manual recordings although my preference was to use a video or audio tape recorder which provides a multi-dimensional view, takes away observer bias and can be shared with the teachers for subsequent analysis (Rymes, 2008).

4.5.2 DESIGNING A DATA COLLECTION GRID

Following suggestions by several authors (Rymes, 2008; Corrie 2002) I designed a grid to document the interactional dimension and enable both quantitative and qualitative analysis (Table 4.7). The data collection grid comprises of Time, Turn, Speaker Direction, Dialogue and Commentary.

Table 4.7: Data collection grid for classroom observations

Time	Turn	Speaker Direction	I,R E/F	Dialogue	Code	Commentary

Time: Time is recorded at five minute intervals.

Turn: A record of each turn of talk is represented by a numerical value. A turn comprised of a single or more moves (Sadler and Mogford-Bevan 1997). For instance;

Teacher (a): Show me your books (Single move)

Teacher (b): I don't want any noise. Sit down and start writing (two moves)

In this study when several moves are noted in quick succession by a single speaker (Teacher b) it is considered as a single turn. When the speaker resumes speaking after a pause, where s/he was engaged in another activity, it is considered as a new turn. For example:

Teacher (turn 1): Now write like this (guiding the student's hand and forming the letter m)

(Helping the student to write 5 letters in silence)

Teacher (turn 2): Now go on writing.

Speaker Direction: This is indicated by using the sign ">" (Sylva, et al., 1980 in Fawcett, 2005). Speakers are identified with abbreviations (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995); Teacher (T), Student who is been observed (S), Peers referred to as pupils (P) and Whole Class (C). Hence, if the teacher addressed a peer it is recorded as T>P.

I, R, E/F: The exchange type; Teacher Initiation (I), Pupil Response (R), Teacher Evaluation (E) /Feedback (F), recorded during data analysis

Dialogue: The exact words as spoken with some transcription symbols (Table 4.8) suggested by other authors and symbols devised by me after considering the data collected in the trial run.

Code: A unique code as described below for each exchange type and its sub-categories is allocated during the analysis stage.

Commentary: The social dimensions as suggested are recorded via field notes to aid the understanding of the context or behaviours (Rymes, 2008; Koshy, 2005) and to give life to the classroom.

Table 4.8: Transcription symbols

Author	Symbols
Gail Jefferson (1984) cited in Rhymes (2008)	** quietly said** *LOUD: ALL CAPITALS* *Elongated single sounds: Elo: :ngated*
Atkinson and Heritage (1984)	*(..........):Words spoken but not audible*
Codes devised by me	*[.....] :Words spoken in Sinhalese/Tamil* *...............: when teacher / class continuously reads a passage / recites*

4.5.3 CONDUCTING A TRIAL RUN

Three different classrooms were observed and data was recorded on the data collection grids. The outcomes were discussed with the validation group to ascertain the suitability and practicality of the instrument to record the necessary data. The trial run also enabled me to practice the skill of observing without judgment and recording data as a passive observer (Fawcett, 2005).

4.5.4 DECIDING ON DATA ANALYSIS

Because I was relying on manual recordings of classroom talk and had to depend on data recorded on the data collection grid, my memory and field notes to recall interactions and classroom scenarios I refrained from considering unstructured data analysis methods such

as conversational analysis which examines the meaning and context of social interaction by linking it to the sequence of talk (Gardner and Forrester, 2010; Walsh, 2006). Therefore, I opted to use prior coded categories popular in structured system based approaches (Walsh, 2006), that would enable both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Quantitative analysis aided by the coding process provides cumulative information of all classrooms including percentage measures, time allocations and frequencies. Further by considering the exchange types I identify patterns of communication and their frequency of occurrence. Keeping in mind that representing adult-child communication via numbers is a 'reductive exercise…masking the rather fluid, uncertain and negotiated meanings that are evident when talk is examined' (Swann 1994, p47) I provide samples of dialogue to present an individualised qualitative perspective. Therefore whilst the quantitative data provides an overview of classroom dynamics surrounding adult-child communication, the individualised perspective presents a detailed picture of any attempts the teachers make to alter communication practices with the student participants, and the practices they engage in, within the broader arena of the classroom.

4.5.5 DEVELOPING CODES FOR QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The teacher and student utterances recorded in the trial run were perused to identify attributes of verbal utterances. During this exercise it became clear that exchange types including teacher initiation (I) which elicits pupil responses (R) sometimes followed by an evaluative (E) comment by the teacher which ends the interaction, or feedback (F) with the intention of moving the interaction further, is present. This finding is consistent with literature that suggests that there is global evidence that the IRE/F patterns of discourse continue to be the dominant styles of discourse in classrooms in countries in the North and South (Rymes, 2008; Radford, et al., 2006).

Considering the sequential pattern present, the broad categories of teacher and pupil talk labelled as 'exchange types' focuses on four categories; teacher initiation, teacher feedback and evaluation, pupil response and pupil initiation (Table 4.9). Taking into view the high incidence of teacher talk directed at behaviour management, the teacher initiation category is further analysed in terms of 'teacher initiation for behaviour management'. The relevant codes considered for this exchange type includes codes 4a & 4b and 6a & 6b. Any learner in the classroom; student participant or peer is considered when counting the "Pupil" category of exchange types.

Each exchange type is further split into sub-categories. A unique numeral "Code" is used to tag the sub-categories of exchange types. The 18 sub-categories of exchange types and the relevant details (Table 4.9) emerged after further examination of the trial run data and by considering studies which focus on teacher talk (Gillies and Khan, 2008; Rymes, 2008; Berry, 2006) including those directed at students with language disorders (Saddler and Mogford-Bevan, 1997), speech and language impairments (Radford, et al., 2006) and speech and language difficulties (Henton, 1998).

The sub-categories of teacher exchange types include:
> Code2; informing is taken from Sadler and Mogford-Bevan (1997);
> Code2; lecturing, Code4; giving direction for behaviour management and Code9a; teacher accepting student responses is extracted from categories developed by Gillies and Khan (2008) and modified to suit the context;
> Code3; giving directions for the lesson, Code5; asking content related questions, Code7; checking, correcting a learner's contribution, Code9d; rephrasing questions and Code10; using pupil ideas are exchange types adopted from Berry (2006);
> Code8; Resorting to bilingual code switching, Code6; questioning behaviour and rejecting pupil contributions or using communication blockers criticising, name calling, threatening, Code9b; using sarcasm and interrupting emerged from the trial run

The sub-categories of pupil exchange types include:
> Code12; answering teacher initiated questions, expressing ideas, questioning, Code16; informing and Code17; talk among peers is taken from Gillies and Khan (2008) categories and modified to suit the context;
> 'Silence' described as thinking time in traditional classrooms is taken from Rymes (2008). I identified two types of 'silence'. Silence in response to a request for silent engagement in learning tasks (Code12g) and silence initiated by pupils without teacher direction (Code18).
> Code13; 'Greeting a teacher' emerged from a study conducted by Henton (1998)
A lower case alphabetical code is attached to the details section. The term '*Unintelligible*' is used to describe interactions that are softly or quickly spoken amidst other sounds in the classroom. Examples from real time observations are provided in the final column to further explain the manner in which categories are coded.

Table 4.9 Coding teachers' and pupils' dialogue

Person	Exchange type	Code	Sub-categories	Details	Examples
Teacher	*Initiation*	*1*	*Sets boundaries*		*Today we are going to learn the letter 'm'*
		2	*Informs / Lectures*	*a. Generalises*	*This is number '5'*
				b. Personalises	
		3	*Gives directions for the lesson*	*a. Generalises*	*Alright everyone copy it*
				b. Personalises	
		*4	*Gives directions for behaviour management*	*a. Generalises*	*Children look at the board*
				b. Personalises	
		5	*Asks content related questions*	*a. whole class*	*Give me the names of these plants*
				b. single pupil	
		*6	*Questions behaviour*	*a. whole class*	*Where were you?*
				b. single pupil	
		7	*Checks*	*a. whole class*	*Children have you finished*
				b. single pupil	
		8	*Resorts to bilingual code switching*		*Speaks in English/Sinhalese and switches to Sinhalese/ English in the same sentence*
Teacher	*Feedback & Evaluation*	*9*	*Accepts*	*a. Praise / encourages*	*That's right. Class give a clap.*
			Rejects and uses 'Communication Blockers'	*b. criticizing, name calling, advising, threatening, sarcasm, interrupting*	*Don't tell me that you are deaf*
			Corrects a learner's contribution	*c. Correcting an error quickly and directly*	*No. Reading and recitation.*
			Rephrases the question	*d. Asks in another way*	
		10	*Uses Pupils ideas*	*a. Extending a learner's contribution*	*That's right the sun rises in the east and so we feel the sun rays from the windows on the right*
				b. cued	*What is on the clock is called...*
		11	*Responds to pupil questions / statements with an evaluative comment that does not encourage further interaction*	*a. whole class*	*Very good*
				b. single pupil	

Pupil	Response	12	Answers teacher initiated questions or responds to commands / requests	a. Appropriate	Number 4
				b. Appropriate with elaboration	Yes Miss we did it last year
				c. Incorrect / partial	
				d. None	
				e. Unintelligible	mutters
				f. Nonverbal	Shrugs shoulders
				g. Silence	Work in silence as required
Pupil	Initiation	13	Greets a teacher	Before the teacher greets	Good morning
		14	Express own ideas / argues/ apologizes / protests / grumbles	a. Clear	Sorry
				b. Unintelligible	
		15	Questions	a. Clear	Mrs. P do we have to write all the numbers?
				b. Unintelligible	
		16	Informs	a. Clearly	Mrs. P there's a letter missing
				b. Unintelligible	
		17	Talk among Peers	General chatter	
		18	Silence	Short periods of silence	Not directly initiated by the teacher

Notes: 4& 6* = sub categories of teacher initiation for behaviour management*

4.5.6 PREPARING TO OBSERVE

I drew up a timetable after discussing with the sectional heads suitable times and days for observations. Alternative dates were earmarked by considering the existing uncertainties in the country due to ethnic tensions and possibilities of unplanned school closures and teacher absenteeism.

Two 30 minute observations were planned for each of the seven classrooms on different days of the week. Each classroom was scheduled to be observed twice because it is explained that more than a single observation is required to provide valid results (Mercer, 2010). The observations were scheduled for different subjects; language, environmental studies and mathematics, taught by the participant teachers. Teachers were not given prior notification regarding the date or exact lesson that will be observed to ensure authenticity of classroom behaviours. However, teachers were notified of the duration of the

observation and the manner in which the data will be recorded and shared with them (Koshy, 2005).

4.5.7 CONDUCTING OBSERVATIONS

As described in chapter three I opted to observe by not disturbing the classroom activities. Hence, I chose an unobtrusive seating location as suggested by some authors (Corrie, 2002; Koshy, 2005), to have a clear view of the student participant unknown to anyone in the classroom. Neither the pupils nor the teachers were perturbed by my presence since observing is part of my routine course of work.

Each observation began by recording external factors (Koshy, 2005; Rhymes, 2008); the day, number of students, date, time and lesson description. Since manual recording may not be able to capture all interactions I focused on recording as many interactions of teachers and pupils in any given classroom while targeting to record all interactions teachers directed at participant students and their contributions to classroom talk. I recorded certain features of vernacular speech used by some teachers frequently such as 'aiyoo' which is an expression of disgust or hopelessness often used by exasperated adults or 'putha' which means son or 'baba' meaning baby, to preserve the tone of the classroom. When lessons were conducted in the Sinhalese language I translated the teacher component of communication to the English language, to aid analysis. I recorded the students' communication during such observations with the symbol "[...]". This decision was made because the research is concerned with the communication strategies teachers use to include students with the label of SLCN and not the students contributions. None of the lessons are recorded in the Tamil language because Samuel, who was studying in the Tamil language, migrated soon after the student interviews and another student studying in the Tamil language with the label of SLCN in the same classroom could not be identified. I wrote field notes as short notes and key words while the observations were in progress (O'Hanlon, 2003) or immediately after.

4.5.8 WORD PROCESSING AND CODING

I word processed the manually recorded data and then allocated exchange type codes in the data collection grids for days (D) 1 and 2 post-observation (Appendix 4.1-4.7). To ensure reliability two members of the validation group, trained by me, also coded the dialogue. We compared the coding and when it differed amended by referring back to the field notes.

4.6 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: A CUMULATIVE PERSPECTIVE

I first combined the frequency of distribution of each sub-category of exchange types from individual observation grids on D1 and D2, and transferred the data to a cumulative data analysis grid (Appendix 4.8). Thereafter I calculated the totals and percentage values for each exchange type; teacher initiation, teacher talk for behaviour management, teacher feedback, pupil response and pupil initiation. Finally, I identified and counted the patterns of communication present in individual observation grids on D1 and D2.

4.6.1 PERCENTAGE VALUES

The percentage values of each category of exchange type (Appendix 4.8); Teacher initiation (without behaviour management) 37% [371-127/665], Teacher Initiation (Behaviour only) 19% [127/665], Teacher Feedback 13% [84/665], Pupil Response 16% [108/665] and Pupil Initiation 15% [102/665] are displayed in Figure 4.3.
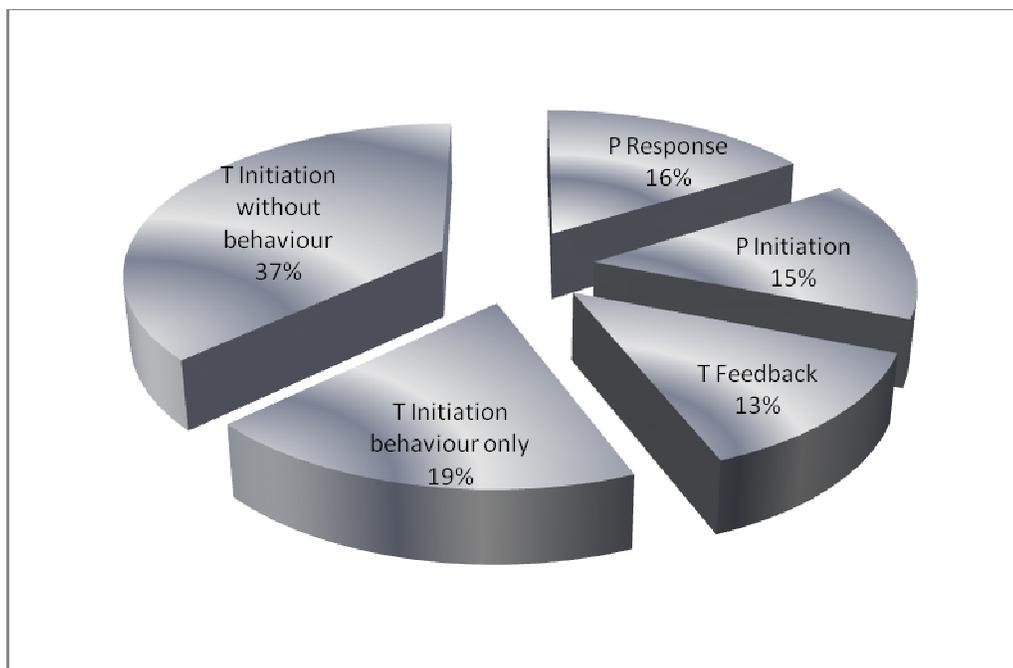
Figure 4.3 Whole classroom percentage values of Teacher (T) and Pupil (P) Exchange Types - Pre-action

4.6.2 TIME MEASUREMENT

Time measurement is arrived at by considering a 30m lesson with the percentage values recorded in Figure 4.3. The analysis reveals that on average 11.1m (30 X 37%) is used by a teacher to lecture and 5.7m (30 X 19%) is spent for behaviour management. A teacher

on average provides feedback for 3.9m (30 X 13%), while pupils are allocated 4.8m (30 X 16%) to respond and 4.5m (30 X 15%) to initiate conversation.

4.6.3 PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

I first scrutinized each turn in conversation and named and highlighted the turns which can be classified as teacher initiation (I), teacher evaluation (E) or feedback (F) and pupil response (R). Thereafter as the examples demonstrate, the turns in close proximity were grouped to reflect patterns of communication. Three patterns emerged during the process.

The IRE pattern: In this pattern the third turn functions as a closed-ended comment not encouraging further response from the pupils (Rymes, 2008).

Amal Day 1: Sinhalese language			
	Turn	*Speaker Direction*	*Dialogue*
I	*19*	*T>C*	*Now each one give me an example of what you wrote.*
R	*20*	*C>T*	*[....], [.....], [.....], etc*
E	*21*	*T>C*	*Good, good, very good.*

The IRF pattern: In this pattern the third turn encourages pupil contributions (Richards and Lockhart, 2000 in Xiao-yan, 2006).

Heshan Day 1: Sinhalese language			
	Turn	*Speaker Direction*	*Dialogue*
I	*23*	*T>P*	*... what is the moral of the story?*
R	*24*	*P>T*	*'We must always say the truth*
F	*25*	*T>C*	*Right. The story tells us that by saying the truth we can do greater things. Because of that we must not say the untruth. Always in class also you must speak the truth.*

The IR pattern: This third pattern which emerged when scrutinizing dialogue reveals that the pupil response is immediately followed by silence or a further question or topic change by the teacher without acknowledging the response. Although this pattern is endemic in this study my literature search did not reveal any such pattern.

Shanuth Day 1: English language			
	Turn	*Speaker Direction*	*Dialogue*
I	*22*	*T>C*	*Now if we put 'm-a-n'. What is this word?*
R	*23*	*C>T*	*/man/*
I	*24*	*T>C*	*When we put 'p-a-n'. What is this word?*

The patterns of communication were counted for D1 and D2 (Appendix4.1-4.7) and tabulated as a cumulative value per classroom. Threafter, the percentage values of each pattern of communication as a function of the total number of turns for each classroom and as a total are calculated and presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Patterns of communication and frequency of occurrence; Pre-action

Pattern / Student's classroom	nT	nIR		IRE		IRF	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Shanuth	89	8	9	4	4.5	2	2.2
Josh	81	2	2.5	4	4.9	1	1.2
Yadesh	100	13	13	5	5	2	2
Amal	77	6	7.8	2	2.6	3	3.9
Heshan	102	17	16.7	4	3.9	5	4.9
Yovaan	114	5	4.4	14	12.3	4	3.5
Sajeeve	106	18	17	11	10.4	0	0
Total: 7 classrooms	669	69	10.3	44	6.6	17	2.5

Notes: n = total number; T= Turns; IR = Teacher Initiation- Pupil Response;
IRE=Teacher Initiation - Pupil Response-Teacher Evaluation; IRF=Teacher Initiation - Pupil
Response-Teacher Feedback

4.6.4 INTERPRETING CUMULATIVE DATA

Cumulative analysis reveals that "Good Learning time" including effective time spent on teaching and learning and excluding time spent on behaviour management amounts to 24.3m (30-5.7) or 80%.

The time measurements of 20.7m (11.1+5.7+3.9) recorded for teacher talk in this study indicates consistency with early studies and theories of traditional classrooms, in the 70's through to the 90's in countries of the North (Nystrand, 2006; Cullinan, 1993; Sharan and Sharan, 1992; Hertz-Lazarowitz and Shachar, 1990; Goodlad, 1984; Lortie, 1975) and recent studies in countries in the South (Inamullah et al., 2008; Sahlberg and Boce, 2008) which report that two thirds of classroom time in traditional classrooms is dominated by teacher talk. The total dominance of teacher talk as witnessed in another study in Sri Lanka (Alwis, 2005) is not evident in these classrooms. When considering pupil talk, pupils spend slightly more time (0.3m) responding to teacher initiated questions than initiating their own conversations. The teacher: pupil ratio of percentage values of exchange categories is recorded at 69:31 (Figure 4.3).

The IR pattern not evident in the literature search emerges as pattern of communication in these seven classrooms (Table 4.10). Patterns of communication that occur from high to

low incidence include the IR, IRE and IRF patterns. However, the total percentages of these interaction patterns amount to 19.2% [10.3+6.6+2.5] for the seven classrooms. Therefore, it is concluded that the IR, IRE and IRF patterns although present, are not the dominant feature of adult-child communication in these classrooms.

4.7 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: AN INDIVIDUALIZED PERSPECTIVE

An individualised perspective is considered to ascertain adult-child communication practices directed at students with the label of SLCN. This activity is carried out in two stages. In the first phase I identify the communication strategies, teachers use with student participants by scrutinising observation data on D1 and D2. In the second phase I compare teacher views (Appendix 3.4) with real-time classroom observations (Appendix 4) and analyse whether teacher rhetoric and communication practices coincide.

In stage one I identified eleven strategies teachers frequently use as they communicate with student participants. A unique Roman numeral code with a single sample excerpt analytically relevant to highlight each strategy is presented below.

I.   Asking questions to engage the student

Sajeeve D1: English language - Adjectives			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
28	T>S	What are the adjectives?	Teacher encourages Sajeeve to name the adjectives verbally.
29	S>T	Old, dirty	Very softly
30	T>S	And?	Encouraging to give more answers
31	S>T	Mmm	Finger on his lips
32	T>S	Look at this. It says BIG store	
33, 34			Another pupil speaks to the teacher
35	S>T	Big?	Unsure
36	T>S	That's right.	Teacher indicates accuracy

II.   Providing reminders to keep the student on task

Amal D1: English language - Nouns			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
11	T>S	Amal start writing	Teacher speaks to Amal from the front of the class.

III. Engaging the student in 'whole class' lessons

Yadesh D1: Sinhalese language			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
36	T>C	Now tell me some more words that fall in to this category.	
38	T>S	Yes Yadesh? What is the answer?	
39	S>T	[.....]	Rushes to the board and gives the correct answer in Sinhalese

IV. Conveying modified expectations to the student

Heshan D1: Sinhalese language			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
37	T>S	You write only the answers.	Walks up to Heshan and speaks to him softly to remind him that he does not have to write the question as explained to others.

V. Stating expectations firmly

Heshan D1: Sinhalese language			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
39	T>S	I don't want any excuses. Begin now.	Insistent

VI. Articulating positive evaluative remarks

Sajeeve D1: English language - Adjectives			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
15	T>S	Very good Sajeeve	Smiling and nodding her head in approval

VII. Answering student questions and giving explanations briefly and clearly

Josh D2: Environmental studies			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
24	S>T	Miss shall I colour the pictures?	Josh walks up to the teacher
25	T>S	Don't colour.	

VIII. Providing negative evaluative remarks

Yovaan D2: Sinhalese language – writing			
Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
46	S>T	Miss I got everything right.	Comes to Yovaan who is rocking his chair
47	T>S	You got it wrong?	

48	S>T	No Miss I got everything right.	
49	T>S	Hmm, let's see	In a disbelieving tone takes the book and looks at it.
50	C>T	Aiyo (Sinhalese expression of disgust) but I don't like this hand writing. Very ugly, very ugly!	Looks unconcerned and continues to rock his chair

IX. Using threats to move students to act

Shanuth D2: Environmental studies

Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
40	T>S	Eat, eat the two of you.	Shanuth opens his box and stares at his sandwiches. Takes one opens it and eats the filling, continues to do the same with another sandwich.
41	T>S	If not you won't get to play today.	Neither student acknowledges the presence of the other.

X. Ignoring student initiated conversations

Heshan D1: Sinhalese language

Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
41	S>T	Yes Miss. I saw him hit	Heshan raises his head from the desk and gets involved. Pointing at the boy
42	T>C	I have told you not to get involved with the Aiyas (older students)	Ignoring Heshan's contribution

XI. Rushing through explanations with several moves in a single turn

Josh D1: Mathematics

Turn	Speaker Direction	Dialogue	Commentary
32	T>S	This is 10; 9 comes before, put 9. 11 comes after, put 11 here. The next one is 7; 6 comes before, put 6 here. 8 comes after, soon write 8. Soon, soon now write 12. 11 comes before. Write 11; 1 and 1 here. 13 comes after write 13	The teacher goes up to Josh and helps him to copy write the numbers from the board. She speaks to him at a rapid pace forcing him to write the numbers with no explanation. Josh attempts to follow instructions.

In the second phase data are arranged (Table 4.11) for each teacher in relation to the participant student.

Table 4.11: Comparison of teacher views and real-time observations

	How will the student participant's inclusion in your class impact your day to day teaching?	D	Inclusionary communication strategies							Exclusionary communication strategies			
			I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI
Shanuth	Very hard; I just don't have time to	1	1	3			2			1			1
	devote for him	2	3	5			6		2	1	1		
Josh	I will try	1		6	1		3		1	4	1		1
		2		2			1		1				
Amal	It is very difficult because the first term is a very heavy term for us. But I	1	1	5			4			1		1	
	think with your support I have learned something and it is my duty as a teacher and I am also a mother, to help him	2		2			2		2			1	
Yadesh	Actually I am used to it. Every year I have a child like that in my class. I always give personal	1		9	1		1						
	attention. For example if Yadesh has not taken the books out I will go near him and ask him to take the book out or help him to take out the book and become ready	2	1	4			7		2				
Heshan	I have to spend time monitoring his work.	1		4	1	2	3					1	
	That is not possible all the time	2		3		1						1	
Yovaan	I can cope with him. It	1					1		1	4			
	will mean that I will have to always keep an eye on him	2		3	1		2		3	2			
Sajeeve	I don't think it will make	1	2	2	1		1	2	7				
	much of a difference	2	1	1			1						
Total			9	49	5	3	34	2	19	13	2	4	2

Notes:D = observation day

Responses to teacher interview Q5 are tabulated in the second column. Thereafter frequencies of occurrence of communication strategies observed during real-time observation on D1 and D2 for each teacher are recorded using the Roman numeral code already allocated. Strategies I-VII are categorised as inclusionary and VIII-XI as

exclusionary, by considering teacher, student and parent responses to interview queries. Totals of each strategy are calculated in the final row.

4.7.2 INTERPRETING DATA

The individualised analysis (Table 4.11) reveals that providing reminders to keep students on task (codeII), stating expectations firmly (codeV), answering student questions and giving explanations briefly and clearly (codeVII), and asking questions to engage the students (codeI) are inclusionary strategies used more often than others. Of the exclusionary strategies providing negative evaluation (codeVIII) is noted to occur most frequently.

When comparing teacher strategies with teacher views Yadesh's and Sajeeve's teachers who were confident of their ability to include the students used only inclusionary strategies. Shanuth and Amal's teachers who at the outset stated that including students was difficult recorded ratios of inclusionary: exclusionary strategies 20:3 and 17:3. Ratios for Josh and Heshan's teachers, who indicated that they will try to include the students, are 15:6 and 14:2. Yovaan's teacher, who indicated her ability to 'cope' with him, recorded a ratio of 11:6. Hence, it can be concluded that within the traditional teacher centred classrooms all teachers engage in some inclusionary communication strategies that are beneficial to students with the label of SLCN.

4.8 CONCLUSION

The pre-action stage was designed to 'show the situation as it is'. Therefore data which represented different perspectives were collected through the triangulation exercise. This involved interviewing students, parents and teachers and engaging in real time whole class observations of adult-child communication. The mixed methods approach to analysis helped scrutinize the same data from different angles and provide a comprehensive view of current practices in adult-child communication.

Analysis of interview data highlighted individuals' views regarding inclusionary and exclusionary practices in adult-child communication. Students and parents focused on strategies teachers could follow to improve present practices. Teachers identified supports that they will require, to engage in more inclusionary practices in the future.

The quantitative analysis of whole classroom interactions revealed that good learning time, described as time spent on teaching and learning and excluding behaviour management, amounts to 80%. Further, it was established that the classrooms are traditional teacher centred classrooms with interaction time of two-thirds dominated by teacher talk. When considering the patterns of communication in all seven classrooms the IR, IRE and IRF patterns are prevalent for approximately 19.5% of the total interactions. Since this represents a fifth of the total ineractions as an average it can be concluded that the structural organisation of dialogue is not a dominant feature in these seven classrooms.

The analysis of whole classroom data to arrive at individualised perspectives revealed the manner in which each teacher incorporated inclusionary and exclusionary strategies in adult-child communication. Every teacher other than Yadesh's and Sajeeve's teachers who recorded only inclusionary strategies use a combined approach with the balance tipped more towards inclusionary strategies. Hence, it can be concluded that the individualised perspective provides a positive starting point for the research process.

Having completed the activity in the pre-action stage I proceed to engage in critical reflection, plan for change, implement action plans and monitor and evaluate the progress in the first action cycle. These phases are described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5
FALLING INTO ACTION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter showed the situation as it is through data collection and analysis. In keeping with the cyclical nature of action research it is therefore necessary, as discussed in chapter three, to engage in the first action cycle consisting of four phases; critical reflection, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation (Figure 3.1).

The first phase, critical reflection, is based on the outcomes of data analysis discussed in chapter four. Reflection occurs as a twofold activity of self-reflection and collaborative critical reflection. Individual teachers engage in self-reflection to uncover communication strategies they currently use. Collaborative critical reflection provides an opportunity for an open and honest discussion on existing strategies. In the planning phase teachers select inclusionary communication strategies beneficial for their students and make a personal commitment towards eliminating exclusionary strategies currently used. The action phase follows as plans are implemented for a period of two months.

The effectiveness of plans is monitored and evaluated in the next phase through data collection and analysis. Data are collected via classroom observations, progress reports on individualised intervention plans (IIPs), documentary evidence of test scores and informal conversations. Data are analysed using a mixed methods approach (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2006) and are presented from a cumulative and individualised perspective similar to the pre-action stage.

What follows, is the manner in which the phases which constitute action cycle 1 (actionC1); critical reflection, planning, action, monitoring and evaluation, unfold.

5.2 PREPARING FOR ACTION CYCLE 1 (actionC1)

Whilst preparing for actionC1, my engagement with literature informed me that teachers ought to be familiar with critical reflection (Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Kember, 2000) and collaborative teaming (Ferrence, 2000; Reason and Bradbury, 2008; Dick, 2002); essential components of an action research project. At this juncture, I was also introduced to the debate of critical reflection as a self-reflective or collaborative process in action research (Kember, 2000). By considering the context of the research, the research aims and question, I settled for a mixture of reflective styles.

Self-reflection I believed will provide teachers the opportunity to consider their practices in adult-child communication privately and gain an important skill that will influence their future practice (Marcos et al., 2009; Johansson and Kroksmark, 2004). In addition, collaborative teaming for the purpose of critical reflection will enable teachers to appreciate that open and honest discussions in teams brings long-term benefits to them and their students (Korth et al., 2010; Thomazet, 2009; Rizman et al., 2006; Salend, 2005).

The teacher participants as highlighted in the interviews (Table 4.6; Q12) were unfamiliar with reflection as a tool for improving practice. Further, they engaged in collaborative teaming occasionally (Table 4.6; Q13). A similar predicament is reported in other countries of the South (Rarieya, 2005; Reed, et al., 2002) and discussed in chapter two. Hence, I organised and conducted workshops for three consecutive weeks, in February and March 2008, bi-weekly after school hours, with the aim of empowering teachers with the knowledge and skills required to engage in action research.

The teachers were amenable to learn and participated in the workshops with interest. Having completed the training I proceeded to engage in the critical reflection phase.

5.3 ENGAGING IN CRITICAL REFLECTION

Critical reflection is described as a systematic process of reflecting on one's practice (Armstrong and Moore, 2004) to determine its effectiveness and consider amendments for future practice (Mertler, 2006; Dick, 2002). Hence, critical reflection provides opportunities to correct mistakes (Dick, 2002) whilst experiencing a transformation of one's perspectives (Mezirow 1981 in Kember, 2000).

5.3.1 SELF-REFLECTION

At the final workshop the teachers were presented with their respective data collection grids (Appendix 4). They were given instructions and encouraged to engage in self-reflection (Dimova and Loughran, 2009). A checklist (Table 5.1) a useful tool to create a visual representation of findings was utilized for practice and aided the action research process.

The checklist was developed by considering communication strategies teachers' use when communicating with student participants in the classroom (Table 4.11). The inclusionary

strategies are listed first followed by the exclusionary strategies to ensure the teachers begin the reflective process on a positive note. The teachers were required to scrutinise the grids and indicate the absence/presence of each strategy with a Y/N sign indicating 'Yes' or 'No'. If any feature is present they were asked to note the day (D1/2) the characteristic is present and the relevant dialogue turn/s (T) which reflect the strategy. A week was set aside for the teachers to carry out this exercise.

Table 5.1: Checklist for reflection

	Y/N	D 1/2	T
I......			
Ask questions to engage the student			
Provide reminders to keep student on task			
Engage the student in 'whole class' lessons			
Convey modified expectations to the student			
State expectations firmly			
Articulate positive evaluative remarks			
Answer student questions and give explanations briefly and clearly			
Use negative evaluative remarks			
Use threats to awaken students to action			
Ignore contributions initiated by the student			
Rush through explanations with several moves in a single turn			

5.3.2 COLLABORATIVE CRITICAL REFLECTION

I met with the teacher participants and the learning support teachers in the last week of March to engage in critical reflection as a collaborative team activity (Collins and Simco, 2006). Reflection was to be directed at the findings that emerged from the self-reflection process (Table 5.1). Shortly into the meeting I realised that the teachers' checklists either remained blank or were marked with an item or two. By considering the analysis of teacher views and real-time observations (Table 4.11), I was aware that each checklist should contain a minimum of five features. The realisation led to a discussion regarding teachers' attitude towards self-reflection.

The teachers informed me that they had no need to document their findings via written means. However, the teachers proceeded to engage in a discussion of their findings without hesitation. This approach indicated a preference for reflective conversations as reported in a study in Pakistan (Ashraf and Rarieya, 2008). Recognising the opportunity to involve the teachers to document findings, I encouraged them to tick off the Y/N column while discussions were in progress. Thereafter, I suggested that we work in pairs;

a teacher and a learning support teacher, while I assisted each pair complete the table. The learning support teachers were reminded at this juncture to work as equal partners, without judgment.

As the documentation process was initiated the teachers were on guard and attempted to justify their dialogue instead of engaging in critical reflection. Their discomfort arose, I believe, because open and frank discussions concerning ineffective teaching practices of individual teachers, to improve practice is rare amongst teachers in the focal school. I had to keep assuring them that the exercise is not for the purpose of passing judgment, but rather to enable them to be more effective teachers in diverse classrooms. As the meeting progressed, the teachers were more at ease to engage in the exercise. Due to the extended nature of the discussion and because school holidays were scheduled for the following week, another meeting was scheduled at the end of the week.

5.4 PLANNING

The second meeting was designed to assist teachers to select inclusionary practices in adult-child communication. I commenced the meeting by making the teachers aware of the transactional perspective of communication that places the responsibility of communication on both partners (Nind, et al., 2001). The teachers were encouraged to avoid viewing students' deficits as the sole cause for communication breakdowns and to consider ways in which their own interaction styles could be adjusted (Martin and Miller, 1999) to facilitate better adult-child communication. Because action research is about improving learning and practice (Armstrong and Moore, 2004), I educated the teachers on communication strategies they may use as reflected in literature and suggested in research studies. Because I wished to practice the reciprocal consultation model (Hartas, 2004) which considers all participants as experts in their fields, I listened to teacher suggestions, mostly drawn from experience.

Once the briefing concluded teachers teamed with the learning support teacher who supports and monitors individual student participant's progress as part of their daily routine. The learning support teachers at this juncture shared pertinent information regarding the type of difficulties individual student participants experience and offered suggestions for practice.

As the excerpt below reveals, I stepped in with questions, to stimulate creative thinking (Hanko, 1999).

> *Yovaan's teacher:*   *I have tried everything. Maybe you should suggest something.*
> *(Since she is a senior teacher the other teachers remained silent)*
> *I:*   *In your experience, Miss, do you think it will help Yovaan if his attempts at following instructions are acknowledged through praise?*
> *Yovaan's teacher:*   *Of course I praise all the boys. But too much of praise and they try to walk all over you. Hmm... It might work with Yovaan because he keeps asking me, 'am I good, Miss?' every time I correct his book. Maybe he is looking for recognition. His mother is too strict with him; always nagging him about his marks. To be honest he is not doing too badly in his work.*

The teachers freely chose inclusionary strategies and identified exclusionary strategies that they ought to avoid. They were cautioned to select strategies that are practical and attainable and minimally invasive to the rest of the pupils (Case-Smith and Holland, 2009). When teachers considered strategies that will indirectly influence communication such as change of seating location, these suggestions were accommodated. Further, teachers agreed to choose a few strategies and make a few changes since taking small steps would help them to ease into the process, experience gains and be confident participants.

As the planning progressed the teachers suggested including learning support teachers and assistant teachers as partners to the action process, on the basis that adverse communication is triggered by the highly stressful conditions within which they work. The involvement of an additional individual, they believed, will ease the tension and leave room for them to practice inclusionary adult-child communication strategies. Even though this suggestion brought in another dimension to the exercise, the proposal was accommodated because I wished to encourage the teachers by scaffolding and supporting all efforts to include novel practices. The suggestion was also accepted because it is reported that working through other people who are well trained within children's environment can be beneficial for children (Mercow, et al., 2010; Gardner, 2006).

Two learning support teachers and one assistant teacher; qualified special needs teachers, volunteered to join the effort. They were expected to support select students during school hours for particular subjects and conduct an after school enrichment programme. However, all students could not be supported due to the learning support teachers' tight schedule. Some students could not commit to the after school enrichment programme because they attend sports training programmes. Therefore, five parents of Amal, Yadesh,

Heshan, Yovaan and Sajeeve, were enrolled to carry out a learning programme at their homes. A supplementary action cycle was thus created and the spotlight was extended to other adults, establishing that action research is a non-linear process which is constantly evolving (Grant, 2007; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002; Kember, 2000; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998).

During this phase the students were not directly consulted to select adult-child communication strategies or the learning targets to be pursued via the enrichment programme. The non-involvement of children when making plans that affect their lives, as some authors describe is a violation of children's right to be heard (Skar and Tamm, 2001, Hemingsson, Borell and Gustavsson 2003 in Mortier, Desimpel, De Schauwer and Van Howe 2011). Hence, to overcome the lack of direct input, I ensured that the strategies were designed by considering student views as expressed during the interviews (Appendix 3.1). Therefore it is argued that indirect consultation took place and strategies were designed to ease student concerns.

The broad aims for change were tabulated (Table 5.2) by considering the inclusionary strategies teachers will follow, the exclusionary practices they will avoid and the strategies the learning support / assistant teacher and/or parent will implement.

Table 5.2: The broad aims for change in actionC1

Name	Teacher: Inclusionary Strategies to follow	Teacher: Exclusionary Strategies to avoid	Learning Support / Assistant Teacher &/or Parent Strategies
Shanuth	*1. Make eye contact* *2. Give single directions.* *3. Praise any attempts by Shanuth during in-class activities* *4. Encourage communication via picture cards / single word answers*	*1. Rushing to Shanuth's side and making him engage in tasks that do not encourage learning.* *2. Using negative evaluation & threats*	*Learning Support Teacher:* • *Take on the role of a shadow teacher during language, math & environmental studies.* • *Encourage spontaneous conversation* • *Use a buddy system to encourage participation during art/singing*
Josh	*1. Give individual instructions after the class has begun assignments - if Josh is still inactive – by going up to him and speaking in a soft tone* *2. Set attainable targets for task completion*	*1. Expecting Josh to set the pace.* *2. Encouraging Josh to feel that completing work after school is permitted always / for all subjects* *3. Using negative*	*Assistant Teacher:* • *After school enrichment programme to master basics in reading and writing*

		evaluation & threats	
Amal	1. Give individual instructions after the class has begun assignments - if Amal is still inactive. 2. Rephrase instructions in simple language for comprehension. 3. Set attainable targets for task completion	1. Seating Amal too close to the wall 2. Using negative evaluation 3. Ignoring Amal's contributions	*Parent:* • *Use a timer to help Amal work to time.* • *Identify words that are problematic for Amal and build a word dictionary.* • *Introduce those words explicitly.*
Yadesh	1. Seat Yadesh in the front rows. 2. Approach him and make eye contact before speaking. 3. Use a personal behaviour chart. Set target behaviour: 'I will raise my hand when I finish my work/ if I want to ask a question. If I leave my seat unasked I lose a point'.	1. Encouraging Yadesh to run up to the teacher	*Parent:* • *Use a timer to improve Yadesh's attention skills*
Heshan	1. Give single directions 2. Give instructions to Heshan after the class has begun the assignment – be firm! 3. Set attainable targets for task completion 4. Assign a 'Buddy' to help Heshan achieve specific tasks 5. Use a personal behaviour plan & a star award system for effort & not the quality of the final product. 6. Praise the smallest effort	1. Permiting Heshan to achieve his personal agenda 2. Seating near the window 3. Giving black stars 4. Ignoring Heshan's contributions	*Learning Support Teacher:* • *In class support for language and math* *Parent:* • *Use a behaviour chart at home and involve Heshan in productive learning activities for 30 minute time spans. (Although Heshan's father took the responsibility the home tutor was responsible to carry out the task)*
Yovaan	1. Give specific feedback or instructions 2. Look for opportunities to praise and establish a rapport.	1. Seating Yovaan too close to the wall 2. Using negative evaluation	*Parent:* • *Use a timer to help Yovaan work to time.*
Sajeeve	1. Seat Sajeeve near a peer buddy. 2. Encourage buddy to help when needed 3. Give instructions to Sajeeve after the class has begun the assignment – if he is still inactive.	1. Speaking fast when addressing Sajeeve personally	*Parent:* • *Engage in shared reading with Sajeeve for fun and pleasure.* • *Engage in fun ways of teaching spelling.* • *Encourage reading for meaning*

| | | 4. Use a slow pace when speaking. | | |
| | | 5. Check frequently if Sajeeve is on task. | | |

Individualized Intervention Plans (IIPs) (Appendix 5), a detailed description of the broad aims for change was then written as a collaborative effort. A table format (Table5.3) was adopted for this purpose. The IIPs were designed in terms of domain, goal and strategies with the participation of class teachers, parents, learning support teachers and/or assistant teachers. The "Domain" is the broad focus of intervention, the "Goal" describes the target skill and "Strategies" provide a descriptive account of the actions the person responsible ought to take. The final column is included to record students' response to intervention.

Table 5.3: Sample IIP taken from Appendix 5.6 [Yovaan]

Person responsible	Domain	Goal	Strategies	Student's response to intervention
Teacher	*Self-esteem*	• *Increase the number of times Yovaan's efforts are valued*	• *Praise even the smallest effort*	
Parent	*Attention skills*	• *Improve effectiveness of time spent on writing and spelling*	• *Use a timer* • *Begin with attainable levels and increase the requirements by 5 minutes every fortnight.*	

5.5 ACTION

The action phase, commenced in May 2008, after the first term vacation. I organised a meeting at the beginning of the second term, prior to implementation, to give the teachers an opportunity to discuss the process and clarify doubts. The teachers were confident about their commitment to change and were keen to move into action.

I organised weekly meetings during the action phase, May and June, while been available on telephone and e-mail, to discuss or clarify any issues quickly with the participants if the programme was not working as planned. Parents, learning support teachers and assistant teachers, intrinsically motivated to make a difference, benefitted from these opportunities. Often classroom teachers did not make it to the meetings due to work overload or the need to fill in for absent colleagues. They also refrained from contacting me via telephone or e-mail. By considering the teachers' busy schedules and because I

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did not want them to feel isolated or abandoned, I made it a point to visit them during their free time and to give ear to any discussions initiated by them. Hurried conversation, along corridors as the excerpt below indicates, was also a norm.

> Teacher: I am finding that giving individual instructions to Amal is really useful. The poor fellow does not have to miss any other lessons then. But to be honest it is not something I can do all the time. I also often forget [laughs]. Age is catching up I guess.
>
> Researcher: Why not give Amal the responsibility to listen to and follow through on two instructions per lesson period? Talk to him about it. Then when you are giving whole class instructions get his attention and through non-verbal means – may be a nod – encourage him to proceed. This will increase his independence and also improve his listening skills.
>
> Teacher: That is an idea. I will try it this week and let you know.
>
> (Field notes, June 2008)

Due to the prevailing war condition the action phase was interrupted by three unexpected school closures and student absenteeism. Despite these drawbacks teachers and parents made every attempt to ensure that learning was least affected.

5.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

I gathered evidence in two phases. Observations were conducted during the action phase and feedback from IIPs, documentary evidence of test scores and informal conversations was gathered post action.

Data are organised as in the pre-action stage to maintain consistency and enable comparison. Two perspectives; cumulative and individualized are considered. The cumulative perspective is obtained through quantitative analysis. The individualised perspective is arrived at through a mixed methods analysis.

5.7 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: A CUMULATIVE PERSPECTIVE

An observation per month; May and June 2008, day (D) 3 and 4, per classroom was conducted in the same classrooms as in the pre-action stage. The routine followed was also similar to the pre-action stage. Six classrooms were observed, as Sajeeve left school in mid May.

Data were recorded using collection grids (Appendix 6.1-6.6). Next the manually recorded dialogue was word processed and coded. The validation group also coded the dialogue independently and a comparative analysis was carried out as in the pre-action stage, discussed in chapter four. Thereafter, codes from individual data collection grids

were combined on a cumulative data analysis grid (Appendix 6.7). Totals of each sub-category were counted and percentage values for exchange types were calculated. I also identified and counted the different patterns of communication present in individual observation grids.

5.7.1 PERCENTAGE VALUES

The percentage values of each category of exchange type (Appendix 6.7); Teacher Initiation (without behaviour management) 37% [192]/523], Teacher Initiation (Behaviour only) 18% [93/523], Teacher Feedback 13% [66/523], Pupil Response 18% [98/523] and Pupil initiation 14% [75/523] is displayed in Figure 5.1.
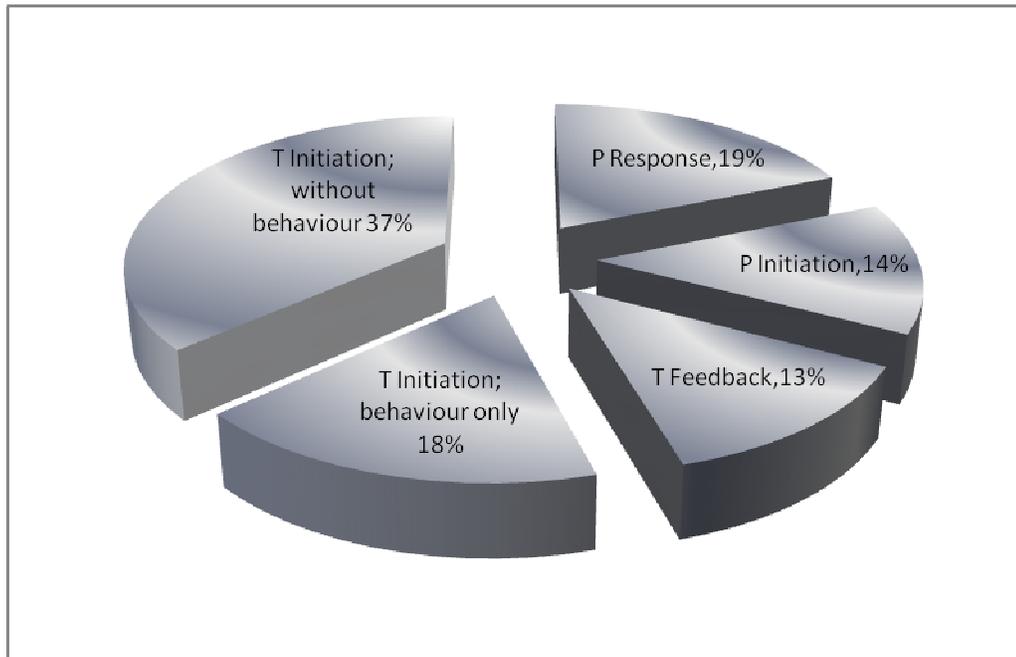
Figure 5.1: Whole classroom percentage values of Teacher (T) and Pupil (P) Exchange Types - Action C1

For a comparison of percentage values of exchange types in the pre-action and actionC1 stages, see Figure 5.2.
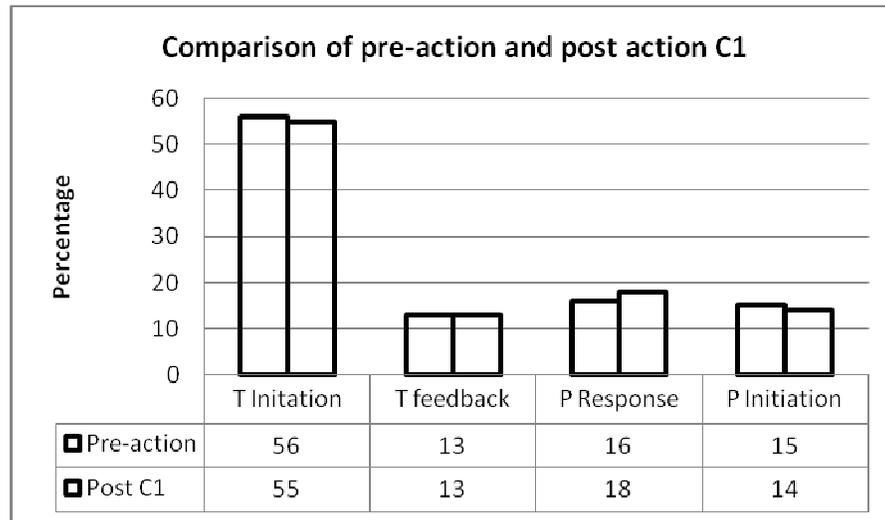
Figure 5.2: Whole classroom exchange types; from Pre-action to ActionC1

Notes: T = Teacher; P= all Pupils in the classroom

5.7.2 TIME MEASUREMENT

Time measurement is arrived at by considering a 30m lesson with the percentage values recorded in Figure 5.1. The analysis reveals that approximately 11.1m [30 X 37%] is used for lecturing, 5.4m [30 X 18%] to engage in behaviour management and 3.9m [30 X 13%] to provide feedback. Pupils are allocated 5.4m [30 X 18%] to respond to teacher initiated questions and 4.2m [30 X 14%] to initiate conversation. These outcomes are displayed on a time line with data from the pre-action stage for comparison (Figure 5.3).

Teacher - Lecturing	Teacher - behaviour management	Teacher - feedback	Pupil - response	Pupil - initiation
Pre-action 11.1	5.7	3.9	4.8	4.5
ActionC1 11.1	5.4	3.9	5.4	4.2

Figure 5.3: Whole class time distribution; a comparison of the Pre-action stage and ActionC1

5.7.3 PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

The patterns of communication were counted for D3 and D4 (Appendix 6.1-6.6) and tabulated as a cumulative value per classroom. Threafter the percentage values of each pattern of communication as a function of the total number of turns for each classroom and as a total are calculated and presented in Table 5.4. Data from the pre-action stage,

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excluding Sajeeve's classroom (Table 4.10), due to his non-participation in actionC1, is included for comparison.

Table 5.4: patterns of communication, frequency of occurrence and percentage values; ActionC1

Pattern / Student's classroom	nT	IR		IRE		IRF	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Shanuth	69	5	7.2	7	10.1	1	1.4
Josh	94	6	6.4	13	13.8	1	1
Amal	81	4	4.9	6	7.4	5	6.2
Yadesh	86	4	4.7	13	15.1	2	2.3
Heshan	86	20	23.2	3	3.5	1	1.2
Yovaan	107	8	7.5	10	9.3	1	0.9
Total: actionC1[6 classrooms]	523	47	9	52	9.9	11	2.1
Total: Pre-action [6 classrooms i.e.total-Sajeeve's classroom]	669-106 =563	69-18 =51	9	44-11 =33	5.9	17-0 =17	3

Notes: n = number; T= Total number of Turns; IR = Teacher Interaction-Pupil Response; IRE=Teacher Interaction- Pupil Response-Teacher Evaluation; IRF=Teacher Interaction-Pupil Response-Teacher Feedback

5.7.4 INTERPRETING CUMULATIVE DATA

Cumulative analysis highlights that "Good Learning time" which includes effective time spent on teaching and learning but excludes behaviour management amounted to 24.6m or 82%. The increase from the pre-action stage is attributed to teachers spending 0.3m less on behaviour management. As in the pre-action stage (Figure 5.3) two-thirds of the classroom interactions time {30-[5.4+4.2] =20.4m} is dominated by teacher talk indicating continuation of the traditional style of communication.

When percentage measures of cumulative analysis for adult-child communication are compared with the pre-action stage (Figure 5.2) a 1% decrease in teacher initiation and identical measures for teacher feedback are noted. Pupil response shows a 2% increase and pupil initiation a 1% decrease further indicating that teachers didn't relinquish control of the classrooms but maintained the traditional style of teaching. The teacher: pupil ratio of percentage values of exchange categories (Figure 5.1) shows a minimal increase in favour of pupils from 69:31 to 68:32.

The total number of turns in communication; teacher and pupils, dropped in actionC1 (Table 5.4) and the structured organisation of patterns of communication increased

{[9+9.9+2.1]-[9+5.9+3]} by 3.1% in the same six classrooms as the pre-action stage. The IRE pattern of communication increased while the IR pattern remained constant and the IRF pattern decreased. However, the IRE pattern dominated in contrast to the pre-action stage when the IR pattern was dominant. The 2% increase in pupil responses or the extra 0.6m allocated for pupils to respond is further indicative of an increase in the structured organisation of communication in actionC1.

5.8 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: AN INDIVIDUALISED PERSPECTIVE

The individualised perspective is presented through a mixed method analysis. First the strategies the teachers opted for is linked with real time observational data on D3 and D4 and frequency of occurrence of the strategies is recorded. Next, the IIPs are perused to gauge changes due to action plans.

5.8.1 COMPARING REAL TIME OBSERVATION DATA WITH TEACHER STRATEGIES

A table format is followed to organise data for comparison. Communication strategies teachers selected are listed first with strategies that will indirectly influence adult-child communication stated thereafter. Individual data collection grids (Appendix 6) are scrutinised to identify implementation of strategies (Table 5.5) for each student participant. Examples of evidence are provided by referring to the conversational turn (T). Commentaries are extracted and stated in brackets to validate information.

When teachers implemented the strategies during the observation sessions it is described as "Achieved". When select strategies were not observed it is described as "Not Achieved". The number of occurrences (n) is counted for each observation on Day (D) 3 and 4. The final column labelled 'Conclusion' summarizes the outcomes using the following format; zero incidences (None), less than five incidences for both days (Few) and more than five (Some). When teachers implemented one off strategies such as changing seating arrangement it is considered as "Some" because the strategy continued to be implemented on both days.

Table 5.5: Individualised analysis (July 2008)

Shanuth's Teacher							
	D3 T	**Example**	**n**	**D4 T**	*Example*	*n*	*Conclusion*
Make eye contact	0	*Not Achieved*	0		*Not Achieved*	0	*None*
Give single directions and ensure Shanuth follows.	14	*Hold the pencil*	3	13	*Here hold the pencil*	3	*Some*
Praise all attempts by Shanuth	0	*Not Achieved*	0	15	*Good boy.*	1	*Few*
Encourage communication via picture cards / single word answers	10	*See this is 1[Showing the number card]*	2	7	*[Shanuth points to the word]*	1	*Few*
Avoid rushing to Shanuth's side and making him engage in tasks that do not encourage learning.	14	*One, two, three …. eight, nine ten.[The teacher sits next to Shanuth and reads out the numbers written on flash cards Shanuth looks with interest]*	6	4	*Shanuth come fast [calls him to approach the board]*	2	*Some*

Josh's Teacher							
	D3 T	**Example**	**n**	**D4 T**	**Example**	**n**	*Conclusion*
Give individual instructions after class has begun assignments. Speak in a soft tone	0	*Not Achieved*	0	29	*Leave 2 pages and copy this now*	1	*Few*
Set attainable targets for task completion	0	*Not Achieved*	0	0	*Not Achieved*	0	*None*
Avoid expecting Josh *to set the pace.*	7	*Right. Start answering the question now.*	4	0	*Not Achieved*	0	*Few*
Do not encourage Josh *to feel that completing work after school is permitted always / for all subjects*	34	*Everybody do that soon.*	1	0	*Not Achieved*	0	*Few*

Amal's Teacher

	D3 T	Example	n	D4 T	Example	n	*Conclusion*
Give individual instructions after the class has begun assignments	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Rephrase instructions in simple language	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Set attainable targets for task completion	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Avoid seating Amal too close to the wall		<u>*Achieved*</u>			<u>*Achieved*</u>		*Some*

Yadesh's Teacher

	D3 T	Example	n	D4 T	Example	n	*Conclusion*
Seat Yadesh; front rows.		<u>*Achieved*</u>			<u>*Achieved*</u>		*Some*
Approach him and make eye contact before speaking.	15	*What is this? [Not attended to]*	1	30	*Don't think about anything else, Yadesh. Finish your work.*	1	*Few*
Use a personal behaviour chart.	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not Achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Avoid encouraging Yadesh to run up to the teacher		*No running was witnessed*			<u>*Achieved*</u>		*Some*

Heshan's Teacher

	D3 T	Example	n	D4 T	Example	n	*Conclusion*
Give single directions	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Give instructions to Heshan after the class has begun assignment; be firm!	26	*[…]*	1			0	*Few*
Set attainable targets for task completion	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Assign a Buddy to help Heshan achieve specific tasks		<u>*Achieved*</u>			<u>*Achieved*</u>		*Some*

	D3 T	Example	n	D4 T	Example	n	Conclusion
Use a personal behaviour plan and a star award system. Award for effort not the quality of the final product.	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Praise the smallest effort	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	*None*
Avoid permitting Heshan to achieve his personal agenda	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	1	*Heshan, remember if you don't complete your work you will not be taken on the class trip*	2	*Few*
				33	*Why are you bothering that child?*		
				34	*At least write the answers*		
Avoid seating near the window		<u>*Achieved*</u>					*Some*
Do not give black stars		<u>*Achieved*</u>					*Some*

Yovaan's Teacher							
	D3 T	**Example**	**n**	**D4 T**	**Example**	**n**	***Conclusion***
Give specific feedback / instructions	16	*This is a Sinhalese lesson. We don't speak in English.*	1	37	*You are not in this world but in the outside world*	2	*[The feedback was negative and not meant to encourage]*
				40	*You must pay attention. I was watching you looking outside*		*None*
Look for opportunities to praise & establish a rapport.	0	<u>*Not achieved*</u>	0	39	*Very good.*	1	*Few*
Avoid seating Yovaan too close to the wall		*Moved him to the first group*			*Yovaan remained in the first group*		*Some*

Notes: T= conversational Turn; D3 = Day3; D4 = Day4; n = number of occurrences

5.8.2 INDIVIDUALISED INTERVENTION PLANS (IIPS)

I first tabulated each student's response to intervention as recorded by the person responsible (Appendix 5.1-5.7). Thereafter instead of resorting to semi-structured interviews as in the pre-action stage, I explored the power of 'personal accounts' (Potts, 1992 in Armstrong, 2003) and obtained feedback directly from the teachers, parents and

students. Further, I collected students' test scores for language, as recorded at the July 2008 examination (J08). These percentage values were tabulated along with the scores from December 2007 (D07). All data are summarised in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Summary progress report of IIPs (May-June 2008)

S	Teacher	Learning Support or Assistant Teacher	Parent	Student	Test scores%	
					J 08	D 07
S h a n u t h	• Shanuth attempts to communicate occasionally • Shanuth is more attentive during lessons	•Shanuth focuses on material presented and attempts work with interest. • He is able to complete 50% of classroom work during lesson periods. • He can express ideas clearly with minimum encouragement. •The buddy system enabled greater social acceptance of Shanuth.	1/08/08 Not involved. Commented • More willing to wake up and attend school	25th July: "I go early to school to play 'hora police' [cops & robbers] with Ravi and Dylan"	25	5
J o s h	• Josh writes faster and spelling is improved	•Josh is interested & actively participates. •His spelling has improved from 20%-80%. •He met classroom expectation for copywriting in one month. •He can identify initial, mid & end phonemes in words •He reads 3 or 4 letter words and sight words at Pre-primer level fluently. •Josh can read books a year lower than his grade •Comprehension is 70% for material read by Josh independently & 86% for choral reading passages. •Josh is attentive in class & answers questions in detail	4/08/08 Not involved. Commented • Josh is eager to attend school • Josh is interested to do home work in the evenings • Josh loses only a few things unlike before	18th July: "I do all my work after school until Aiya [older brother] finishes school. I don't have to stay in class in the interval because I finish my work."	36	18
A m a l	• Amal's pace of work has increased. • Amal's level of constant talk has reduced.	Not involved.	Amal works for 25 minutes before taking a break. Completes most work on time. Does not seek word	18th July: "I go for all my classes because I finish my work. I also get to play cricket in the interval. But they	60	66

			clarification constantly.	*cheat and tell that I have a low score."*		
Yadesh	• *Unable to monitor behaviour constantly.* • *Yadesh moves less; is quieter & works faster.*	*Not involved.*	*Behaviour contract was implemented to help him to complete work during the time allocated especially for language and math. Yadesh tries hard to meet the goals.*	*18th July: "I like to sit near Miss. See I finished all my work and teacher gave me a star today."*	*46*	*64*
Heshan	• *Heshan responds occasionally.* • *Buddy system has helped him engage in some work.* • *He demands praise before achieving goals.*	• *Heshan works well on some days and refuses on other days.* • *Heshan is sometimes receptive to work in the library*	*The personal home tutor encourages Heshan to complete assignments.*	*25th July: "I like Miss. But I don't like to write. I feel lazy and I don't like to play".*	*26*	*14*
Yovaan	• *Praise causes misbehaviour.* • *Works only when strict rules are enforced.*	*Not involved.*	*The behaviour program was successful. Yovaan's books are neater.*	*25th July: "I haven't got punished this month even though I play pen fight teacher doesn't see us. We hide behind the others. I win every time."*	*82*	*88*

5.8.3 INTERPRETING INDIVIDUALISED DATA

The comparison of real-time observations with communication strategies teachers chose reveals that teachers succeeded in implementing some strategies although success level for each teacher varied. Josh and Yadesh's teachers chose a single communication related strategy and implemented it a few times. Of the five communication related strategies Shanuth's teacher chose, she implemented four. Amal's teacher chose two such strategies and despite her conversation with me regarding the benefits of one strategy; giving personalised instruction, did not implement that strategy during observations. Heshan's

teacher chose three communication related strategies and implemented a single. Yovaan's teacher selected two such strategies and implemented one. The teachers who chose additional strategies that will indirectly influence adult-child communication implemented some of these strategies.

All teachers were satisfied with student progress. Yovaan's teacher concluded that using praise as positive reinforcement is detrimental to Yovaan's success. Therefore she continued with her traditional authoritarian style of communication which she believed benefited him. Josh and Shanuth's learning support and assistant teachers, reported success and were enthusiastic to extend the programme. Heshan, who received help from his home tutor and support teacher, displayed an interest to engage in learning activities on some days. Shanuth and Josh's parents although not actively involved in a home programme noted improvements in their children's enthusiasm to attend school.

All the students reported positive experiences. Shanuth who did not utter a word in school as noted in the pre-action stage now arrives at school early to play with peers. Josh no longer has to stay in class during the interval to complete his work. Amal does not miss any of his favourite subjects due to incompletion of work and is also now included in play by his peers. Yadesh is happy with the positive feedback he receives, Heshan is engaged in learning more frequently and Yovaan has not been punished for a month. Shanuth, Josh and Heshan recorded higher test scores. Shanuth displayed a 500% increase while Josh and Heshan recorded approximately 200% increase. Yadesh's low score is attributed to his extended absences from school due to ill health. Amal and Yovaan recorded a decrease in test scores of approximately 7 - 9%. Although Yovaan's scored lower marks for the July 2008 examination, only his score remained above the expected minimum mark for his grade.

5.9 CONCLUSION

ActionC1 which commenced with seven student participants and their classroom teachers encompassed the phases of critical reflection, planning, action and monitoring and evaluation. The teachers were prepared for the action research process by first empowering them with knowledge and skills. Thereafter they were encouraged to scrutinize the data collection grids, engage in self-reflection and collaborative critical reflection to identify exclusionary adult-child communication strategies they ought to avoid when communicating with the student participants.

Plans were designed through a collaborative team effort. The teachers had the freedom to select adult-child communication strategies and additional strategies that will indirectly influence adult-child communication, that they wished to incorporate. It was also decided to support students learning by engaging learning support teachers, an assistant teacher and parents. IIPs were drawn up for each student to enable effective and efficient execution of the plans. The action phase was implemented in May and June 2008.

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected during and after the action phase. Observational data was collected from six classrooms since Sajeeve left school during the action phase. Feedback from IIPs, documentary evidence of tests scores and data collection via informal conversations occurred on completion of the action phase.

Classroom observational data of the six classrooms were subjected to quantitative analysis. The data were compared with the findings from six classrooms, other than Sajeeve's, in the pre-action stage. The analysis highlighted the continuation of the traditional style of communication with a 2% increase in 'good learning time'. Changes in exchange type categories are recorded as 0.6minutes or 2% increase for pupil response and a decreased time of 0.3minutes or 1% each for teacher initiation for behaviour management and pupil initiation. An increase in the structured organisation of communication a drop in number of turns in communication is also noted.

I next looked at the data from an individualised perspective. Since the research is focused on understanding the impact of changes in adult-child communication on students with the label of SLCN, I first compared the qualitative data collected via real-time observations of adult-child communication to ascertain the implementation and frequency of implementation of strategies chosen by the teachers. The analysis indicates that all teachers attempted some strategies at varied levels of occurence. They incorporated communication related strategies including giving single directions, praising effort and personalizing instruction and refrained from implementing making eye contact and rephrasing instructions. Further, teachers implemented strategies that indirectly influence communication including, assigning a buddy and changing the seating arrangement but did not implement, setting attainable targets for task completion and using a personal behaviour chart.

Adult feedback on IIPs was encouraging. All teachers reported positive changes in their students. Parents who conducted home programmes (Amal, Yadesh, and Yovaan) also reported gains at varying degrees. Heshan's home tutor attempted to encourage Heshan to complete assignments. Students described benefits due to extra help including completing work in class, time to play, attendance at other classes and not been punished. Amal who complained that he was not included in cricket during the pre-action interviews revealed that he is now included although his relationship with peers continues to be problematic as he is accused of cheating. Shanuth and Yovaan also declared positive experiences with peers. Test scores reflected enhanced learning for half of the student participants; Shanuth, Josh and Heshan from December 2007 to July 2008. The results therefore indicate that learning improved for some students due to the IIPs. Students' ability to express their views to me spontaneously (Shanuth, Josh) and interact with peers (Shanuth, Amal), a change from the pre-action stage, point to an increase in self-esteem and improved social relationships.

The overall analysis encourages the view that teachers inspired to consider the role of adult-child communication in the lives of students with the label of SLCN embarked on a process of change. The lives of the six students too changed as their learning, self-esteem and social relationships improved at varying degrees for each of them. Despite these changes proof available is insufficient to link student successes directly to altered adult-child communication practices.

With the conclusion of actionC1 in keeping with the action research process, it is necessary to critically reflect on the outcomes and to decide on the next course of action. Since two action cycles are selected for this research I must decide whether to pursue the existing plan, follow it with amendments or to redesign new plans for actionC2. The unfolding of these phases in actionC2, is discussed in chapter six.

CHAPTER 6
REENERGISING THE RESEARCH PROCESS
6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses action cycle two (actionC2) and the phases of critical reflection, planning, action and monitoring and evaluation. Reflections on actionC2 are presented finally. ActionC2 proceeded with the six students who were present in actionC1.

Critical reflections on actionC1 are based on the outcomes of data analysis which is discussed in detail in chapter five. Self-reflection and collaborative critical reflection is carried out as in the pre-action stage (Chapter five) to give the teachers the opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the action plans and identify the successes they gained and targets not achieved.

During the planning phase, the suitability of the present strategies to answer the research question is considered. Thereafter, it is decided to continue with the existing plans while also incorporating a teacher training programme to give the teachers a broader perspective that would ultimately inspire them to alter adult-child communication. The IIPs are implemented from September to December 2008 and the training programme is run from September 2008 to March 2009.

The monitoring and evaluation phase focuses on data collection through a triangulation exercise. Data are collected at two critical junctures, December 2008 and April 2009, since actionC2 straddles two school years 2008/9. Data collection instruments are similar to actionC1; classroom observations, IIP records, test scores for language and informal conversations with participants, with the addition of questionnaires. Data analysis uses a mixed methods approach. Quantitative analysis focuses on exchange types, time allocation and patterns of communication that occur in the six classrooms as a whole. Qualitative analysis focuses on individual participants; teachers and students. Questionnaire data measures outcomes of the training programme for all the teachers in the primary section of the school, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Critical reflection of actionC2 is based on the outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation phase in the same action cycle. It occurs at two points in time. In both instances teachers engage in self-reflection and collaborative critical reflection to understand the contribution of action plans to transform adult-child communication with different

student participants. The impact of the research activity on teachers' and students' lives is also considered during the critical reflection phase.

6. 2 ENGAGING IN CRITICAL REFLECTION ON ACTIONC1

Critical reflection which follows actionC1is engaged in, to gauge the suitability of the chosen approaches to inspire teachers to transform practices in adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN. Critical reflection is conducted as in the pre-action stage discussed in chapter five, with teachers engaging in self-reflection and thereafter assembling as a group for collaborative critical reflection.

6.2.1 SELF-REFLECTION

A meeting was arranged and the teachers were provided with individual data collection grids (Appendix 6) to reflect on the number of occasions the strategies were implemented. By recalling teacher unease at documenting their findings during actionC1, the teachers were encouraged to carefully read the dialogue and make notes if they wished to. As per the teachers' request three days were set aside for this activity.

6.2.2 COLLABORATIVE CRITICAL REFLECTION

Subsequent to teacher self-reflection we met as a team to collaboratively reflect on the outcomes. The teachers were first presented with the cumulative quantitative data collected from the six classrooms. I brought to their notice the subtle changes in teaching styles including the provision of more time for students to respond, reduced occurrence of the initiation-response pattern and decreased teacher initiation for behaviour management and an increase in good learning time. Engaging in reflective conversation the teachers attributed the changes to a heightened sense of awareness regarding the need to pursue inclusive communication practices. As one teacher explained,

> *"I had a nagging feeling each time I addressed Shanuth and other 'slow' students that I should be doing things differently. [Laughing] Not that I knew what to do or even had the time to follow through on this thought. Nevertheless it kept bugging me through the day and I think altered the way I taught very slightly."*
>
> *[Field notes, Shanuth's teacher, July 2008]*

Discussions then turned to the individualised profile of teachers and success rates at implementing or maintaining consistency of incorporating the strategies. Reflective conversations, as the excerpt below demonstrates, reveals that teachers often forgot their commitment to change communication within the busy school day.

"I remember my commitment when Amal greets me in the morning and thereafter when he thanks me in the afternoon before leaving school. Then it is too late."
[Field notes, Amal's teacher, July 2008]

Within this reasoning the teachers suggested that Palmyrah College consider an alternative to teaching students with impairments, instead of demanding already over burdened teachers to embrace inclusion. They discussed the benefits these students would receive if they were educated in 'special schools or units' where specialist teachers are aware of different strategies. A similar response from teachers, is reported from UK (Lindsay et al., 2010) revealing that teachers in countries of the North and South display similar attitudes when implementing inclusive education. Operating with such a belief, may have made it more difficult for the teachers to alter existing practices in adult-child communication with the conviction that it is their responsibility to meet the needs of students with the label of SLCN.

We next reflected on the benefits students derived during actionC1. Gains in learning, increased self-esteem and improved social relationships it was concluded indicates that even though the teachers were unable to implement all the chosen strategies consistently, the changes directly incorporated by the teachers and the indirect support provided by the learning support and assistant teachers and/or parents led to positive outcomes for the students.

As the meeting drew to an end, it became clear that the teachers' perceptions regarding including students with the label of SLCN had changed. They were now of the opinion that these students can be included when the necessary supports are provided and by consciously removing exclusionary practices in adult-child communication. Further, within the backdrop of the focal school they concurred that the students' total learning experience can be enhanced by collaborative teaming.

"We were discussing the other day that helping us to talk through the challenges we face with students with speech and language difficulties has made a difference in our understanding of the students better. This has made us realise that we must receive the necessary training and guidance to include these students. I think the school must take the initiative."
[Field notes, Yadesh's teacher, July 2008]

The teachers therefore agreed to commit to actionC2.

As I removed myself from the context of the research and reflected on this phase, the process and outcomes, I realised that the quantitative data which provided an overall view of six classrooms at a given moment of time was insufficient evidence for the teachers to

feel success and to be inspired to move on. However, the qualitative data although vast in quantity through reflective conversations, aided to change teacher perspectives and to arrive at possible solutions for the future.

6.3 PLANNING

Planning for actionC2 commenced with a decision making process targeted at agreeing to forge ahead with the existing plans or seeking alternative ways of incorporating inclusionary practices in adult-child communication. My personal reflections immediately after the collaborative reflective phase as mentioned above led to the belief that a broader perspective regarding creating inclusive classrooms is required to inspire teachers to incorporate inclusionary practices and to follow a 'service ethic' (Talbert and McLaughlin, 1994) that makes them responsible to meet the needs of all students. Hence, while the debate regarding future action was in progress, I suggested incorporating a Continual Professional Development (CPD) programme for teachers to gain further knowledge and skills, as they continue to implement the select strategies at a personal level.

This suggestion was influenced by research evidence which indicates that when teachers engage in professional learning it has an immediate effect on the way students learn (Bodam et al., 2005, in Talbert, 2009; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2001, Anderson and Togneri, 2003) because of the positive impact on curriculum, teaching methods, teacher commitment and teachers relationships with students (Talbert and McLaughlin, 1994). Further, as studies suggest teacher attitudes towards teaching disabled students vary depending on their professional development (Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007 in Kosko and Wilkins, 2009). By considering the limited focus on teacher training within the focal school, as explained in chapter one, I believed that a CPD programme would provide the exposure required to widen their outlook concerning inclusive education.

The teachers were in favour of a CPD programme provided it was directed at all teachers in the primary section of the school.

> "It is not worth for some of us to know these things. Everybody must have the same understanding and knowledge. If not the students will fall behind when they move on to the next grade." [Field notes, Yovaan's teacher, July 2008]

I agreed to the teachers' suggestion and requested for a meeting with the administrators in August 2008, with the intention of updating them on the outcomes of actionC1 and to

discuss proposed plans for actionC2. The unexpected departure of the warden, who initiated the student support service and was responsible in gaining approval for the research project, is an unforeseen turn of events that I had to deal with at this juncture. However, this new development had minimal impact on the continuity of the research, because the sub-warden, who had always been actively involved in the decision making process for student support, was appointed as acting-warden.

The discussion began by considering the different aspects of the research process and outcomes including the success of the IIPs, benefits derived by the students and the struggles faced by the teachers. Bearing in mind the positive effects of actionC1, it was agreed that the IIPs continue in actionC2 subject to necessary amendments. The proposal for a CPD programme for the participant teachers and all primary grade teachers was presented thereafter. The decision to move at a macro scale I explained was due to two reasons; CPD is an essential component for the school to become more inclusive and it is more cost effective to teach a larger group rather than a few.

The acting-warden acquiesced that teacher training is an important aspect to consider to encourage inclusive practices in classrooms. He also acknowledged that the school had lagged behind so far, in developing teachers to cope with the demands of a diverse student population. The non-provision of time for teachers to engage in group dialogue, to learn from one another and their practice and lack of insistence on pre-service and in-service teacher training, despite programmes being available at national level (UNICEF, 2003) he agreed were shortcomings at Palmyrah College that need to be rectified in the future. The acting-warden then agreed to discuss the proposal at the governors meeting. I was informed the following week that the proposal was approved.

Thus, the planning process for actionC2 began on a positive note focusing on two aspects; modifying IIPs and organising a CPD programme for teachers.

6.4 MODIFYING AND EXTENDING THE IIPS

The IIPs were modified with the involvement of the participants in the first week of September 2008. The teacher strategies remained unchanged because teachers felt that they needed more time to incorporate the strategies to their daily schedule. The learning support and assistant teachers and parent strategies were amended (Table 6.1) according to student achievement in actionC1.

Table 6.1: Amending the IIPs

Name	Other strategies
Shanuth	The support teacher will: act as shadow teacher for language, environmental studies and math; encourage recitation in pairs and sometimes individually; continue with the buddy system
Josh	The assistant teacher will: continue the after school enhancement programme for reading and writing
Amal	The parent will: together with Amal build a learning contract and implement immediately; continue to build the word dictionary and introduce words explicitly
Yadesh	The parent will: build a learning contract with Yadesh and implement immediately
Heshan	The support teacher will: provide in- class support for language and math The parent will: extend behaviour chart at home to focus on learning activities for 45 minutes
Yovaan	The parent will: build a learning contract with Yovaan and implement immediately use the look-cover-visualize-spell method to learn spelling

6.5 ORGANISING THE CPD PROGRAMME

After several discussions between the acting-warden and me, we decided that the aims of the CPD programme will be to promote the ideal of inclusive education, solve problems surrounding current pedagogy, especially adult-child communication practices and bring about change in teacher attitudes when assigned to teach disabled students. Having clarified the aims, organising occurred via a step-by-step process of listening to participant views, developing a programme overview, searching for teacher educators and identifying ways of measuring CPD outcomes.

6.5.1 HONOURING VOICES

CPD programmes in education it has been explained must meet the needs of teachers and students (Noddings, 2005; Keltchtermans, 2004). I therefore obtained permission from the acting-warden to access their views to choose topics for the programme.

Talking to students

I listened to student participants' views believing that their opinions can influence what their teachers learn and transform the classroom climate they learn in. I met with the students in the original groups as for the pre-action interviews. Each group consisted of three student participants because three of the students left school after the research commenced. Shanuth, Josh and Yadesh remained in group P. Amal, Heshan and Yovaan formed group Q.

The meeting was to gather views regarding personal preferences for different types of classroom arrangements because it is reported that the physical environment in schools affect the academic and social development of children (Dudek, 2000 in Ghaziani, 2010). Four images of different classroom types (figure 6.1) ranging from formal and semi formal classrooms (I, II) the students are familiar with to the more unfamiliar learner centred classrooms were displayed to stimulate discussion.

| I | II | III | IV |

Figure 6.1 Types of classroom organisations

When asked for preferences, students unanimously chose the learner centred classrooms (III, IV) using key phrases including, 'I like this; "more fun", "not boring", "wow", "then teacher can't punish me" and "free". The pictures also provoked active dialogue amongst the students. I listened with care and noted down their views (Excerpts 1-5) hoping it would shed further light on their thinking and preferences. The spontaneous animated discussion gave a clear indication that the students' wished to move away from the traditional, austere, routine classrooms and experience learning in environments where they are free to explore and experiment.

Excerpt 1:
    Yadesh: "Are these real classrooms or just pictures?"
           [He was fascinated with figure III and kept looking at it for a long time]
           "Can you really put your legs up and sleep on the floor?"
           [This query was quickly followed by]
           "Don't they have to do tests in these classes?"
           [When I explained that assessment takes place in a variety of ways he promptly
           answered with a cheeky grin]
           "You teach my teacher to do like that. Then I will come to school every day".
    Amal: "Me too"
    Shanuth and Josh: [smiling nod their heads in agreement]
Excerpt 2:
    Yovaan: "School is so boring. I hate school. Why can't we have fun like these children are
           having [pointing to IV]?"
Excerpt 3:
    Heshan: Our teachers have a lot of work. My teacher is always telling us not to disturb her.
           So we can't talk. We have to sit and wait. I feel lazy and go to sleep.
Excerpt 4:
    Josh: [looking at III and IV, thoughtfully], 'Our school is not like this"

Excerpt 5:
    Amal: I like my art class. [Pointing to IV] We can walk around like this.

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These views and views expressed during student interviews in the pre-action stage provided a base to drawing up a list of possible topics that could be included in the CPD programme.

Rating teacher choice

I also met with the teacher participants to inform them of the decision to proceed with a CPD programme. At the same meeting a brainstorming of ideas took place with teachers listing, the top five challenges they encounter in classrooms in terms of teaching and communication. This data were analysed for key topics.

Building a consensus

I organised the topics that emerged through the process of listening to the voices of participant students and teachers and school administrators, as suggested, on a modular basis (Quicke, 2008). I included a brief explanation of the topic and submitted the module matrix to the acting-warden for review. A key feature when designing module content is maintaining a focus on adult-child communication.

Having reviewed the matrix, the acting-warden met with the primary school staff after morning assembly. He explained the plans for a long term CPD programme, while emphasizing that the school expected 90% attendance from each teacher due to the school's decision to commit to providing student support within classroom settings. Queries were welcomed at this point. Questions revolved around the time commitment, days and frequency of the programme. The matrix was then circulated according to my suggestion, for administrator and teacher views. I collected the suggestions at the end of the meeting.

6.5.2 DESIGNING THE CPD PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

I amended the programme after considering the feedback. To reflect the adoption of a holistic attitude to education (Noddings, 2005) the programme was then reorganized with the approval of the acting-warden, to focus on the broad areas of school, student and teacher development (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: CPD programme overview

FOCUS	NO	MODULES	EXPECTED BENEFITS
SCHOOL	1	*Understanding inclusive education*	*Attitudinal changes regarding inclusion and a willingness to learn new pedagogies.*
	2	*Collaborative teaming*	*Learning to work in a democratic process by sharing views and listening to others in a respectful manner.*
STUDENT	3	*Differentiating for successful learning*	*Enhanced student skills and competencies as teachers engage in a range of pedagogies, create atmospheres conducive for learning and prevent problematic attitudes and behaviours. Altered adult-child communication.*
	4	*Inclusive classroom practices*	
	5	*Interdisciplinary curriculum*	
	6	*Authentic assessment*	
TEACHER	7	*Becoming a reflective teacher*	*Emergence of a confident teacher who is capable of thinking independently, who would use communication as a tool to create welcoming classroom environments with minimal behaviour problems.*
	8	*Effective adult-child communication in the inclusive classroom*	
	9	*Behaviour management skills for the general education teacher*	
	10	*Stress management*	*Positive attitudes towards teaching a diverse student population.*

6.5.3 SEARCHING FOR SPECIALISTS AND OUTLINING EXPECTATIONS

Fundamental issues including duration of each session, workshop dates and resource requirements, were established before I embarked on the tedious task of contacting and convincing the limited number of teacher trainers versed in the philosophy of inclusive education to take on some teaching. Sri Lanka like other Asian countries (Tripp, 2004) lacks professionals capable of conducting a comprehensive CPD programme. Thus, after much seeking and persuasion, several teacher educators were enrolled to share teaching with me. I then invited them to a team meeting to finalize programme dates and discuss aims of the modules and the manner of delivery.

After perusing literature we agreed that the CPD programme will not focus only on technical details, which is highlighted as a weakness in current training programmes concerning inclusive education (Moore and Slee, 2011). Hence, we elected for a programme that is light on theory and heavy on delivering opportunities to experience and engage in acquiring practical skills and techniques (Fielding, 2006, Day, 2002). By considering learner styles (Honey and Mumford 2000 in Bubb, 2004) and cognitive, emotional, psychological, social and personal needs, methods such as role plays,

discussions, group and pair work and independent practice (Trggvason, 2009) were selected to engage the teacher-learners after a busy school day. My suggestion to engage in practices that we advocate at the workshops, to demonstrate application and gain maximum influence over changes in thinking and practice of the teacher-learners (Smith, 2005; Trggvason, 2009), was accepted. Further, my proposal to create forums for teacher-learners to discuss and debate current practices and the manner in which practices can be embraced within their classrooms (Moore and Slee, 2011) was also welcomed.

6.5.4 FINDING WAYS OF IDENTIFYING THE BENEFITS OF THE CPD PROGRAMME

It has been claimed that evaluating effectiveness of CPD programmes is difficult because change as a result of CPD usually takes time to be witnessed across all levels of the school (Guskey, 2000). Further, measuring outcomes of CPD programmes through quantitative methods it is reported, is subjective because change for each individual is dependent on a number of factors such as 'past experience (life and career history), willingness, abilities, social conditions and institutional support' (Day, 1999, p15). Indicators of professional development are discussed to include factors including the emergence of confident teachers with the ability to deal with challenges and to justify their practice (Clement and Vandenberghe, 2000, in Keltchtermans, 2004) changes in school policy and systems and student gains (Day and Leitch, 2007).

Due to the relatively large number of teacher participants involved in the programme a questionnaire was settled for because it is identified as a quick and easy way of collecting objective data (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996). Considering suggestions by other authors the questionnaire is designed to include brief questions, written in simple language (Gray, 2004) by bearing in mind the literacy level of participants and their fluency in the English language. The use of 'double barrelled questions" (Dörnyei 2003 p.41) and negative constructions and the use of prejudicial language, vague and leading questions (Gray, 2004) is avoided.

Questions (Q) 1-7 are organised as closed questions to gather specific information. Q8-10 is open-ended to give the respondents freedom and opportunity to express opinions without restrictions. The question types are based on Kilpatrick's (Sims, 2006) four level evaluation model which focuses on participant reactions, participant learning and participants use of new knowledge and skills and student learning outcomes. A single question (Q7) is included to solicit information regarding effectiveness of facilitators, to

improve CPD programmes in the future. The responses to Q1-7 are evaluated through a five level scale with items including 'Not at all, Slightly, Fairly Well, Reasonably Well and Very well'. Q9 and Q10 are borrowed from other studies to curtail the extent of piloting (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996 in Bubb, 2004; Guskey, 2000). Feedback received from 22 returned questionnaires in a piloting exercise directed at 25 randomly selected teachers following CPD programmes in offsite contexts, helped refine the questionnaires (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: The CPD questionnaire

CPD QUESTIONNAIRE						
		Not at all	*Slightly*	*Fairly*	*Reasonably*	*Very*
1	*Did the CPD programme fulfil your expectations?*					
2	*How satisfied are you with the level of knowledge you gained via the CPD programme?*					
3	*Did you enjoy the learning activities?*					
4	*Were they related to your practical work?*					
5	*Was the content sufficiently challenging?*					
6	*Was the CPD modules well organized?*					
7	*Were the facilitators effective? You may describe in detail on page 2.*					

8. What difference if any, has the CPD programme made to you particularly in your knowledge and awareness?
…………………………………………………………………………………………

9. What are you going to do differently in your classroom practice?
…………………………………………………………………………………………

10. What difference has your learning had on your;
Pupils …………………………………………………………………………………….
Colleagues……………………………………………………………………………….
School...………………………………………………………………………………….

In keeping with the mixed methods approach adopted throughout the research the closed questions are analysed quantitatively and open-ended questions qualitatively.

The planning phase of actionC2, thus completed I proceeded to the action phase.

6.6 ACTION

The action phase continued through the difficult times when the internal security of Sri Lanka and the safety of its citizens were gravely tested. Surprise terrorist attacks continued to ground life to a halt in the city and suburbs. Within this backdrop action revolved around continuing with the IIPs by focusing on adult-child communication directed at student participants and launching a CPD programme for teachers to give them a broader perspective regarding creating inclusive classrooms.

6.6.1 IMPLEMENTING THE IIPs

Implementation of IIPs occurred during the final term of the 2008 school year; from September -December. The student-teacher participant combinations remained the same as in actionC1. The IIPs and hence, learning support was not extended in 2009, when the students moved to new classrooms. This was to ascertain the students' ability to work independently with the new curriculum.

Monthly meetings were held for adult participants to clarify any doubts. As in actionC1 the teachers struggled to make time to attend these meetings while parents and learning support and assistant teachers were always present. However, I supported the absentee teachers by meeting them informally to address any concerns.

6.6.2 THE CPD PROGRAMME

The CPD programme was conducted in-house, after school, every other Friday for 3 hours. The programme spanned two school terms for a period of five months; October and November, in 2008 and January to March, 2009.

My lack of understanding regarding the degree to which the sudden school closures affected the school calendar and the administrators' failure to highlight this fact during the planning process, led to rescheduling difficulties. As disruptions to the school schedule were experienced and other activities in the school took precedence when rescheduling had to be done, some teacher educators were unable to commit to new dates suggested by the administrators. Therefore, only five of the ten workshops materialised during this period. The topics covered included (Table 6.4), understanding inclusive education, collaborative teaming, becoming a reflective teacher, effective adult-child communication in the inclusive classroom and inclusive classroom practices.

Table 6.4: Lessons learned via the CPD programme

Topic	Lessons Learned
Understanding inclusive education	*The global perspective of inclusion and Sri Lanka's response. Teachers' personal response to the philosophy of inclusive education. Attitudinal changes required for inclusion. The manner in which attitude is reflected through the ways humans communicate.*
Collaborative teaming	*When teachers engage in sharing views and expertise for the benefit of the students their own growth as professionals is enhanced. Collaborative teaming with professionals, support teachers and parents helps teachers to understand their students better. Better understanding enables the practice of inclusionary strategies which directly influences students' learning, self-esteem and social relationships.*
Becoming a reflective teacher	*Reflection is an ideal tool to consider ones attitude towards students with impairments. Attitudinal changes transform adult-child communication which improves student outcomes.*
Effective adult-child communication in the inclusive classroom	*Classrooms are dynamic entities where communication takes place continuously. Teachers therefore need to understand their individual students and engage in communication strategies that include all students.*
Inclusive classroom practices	*Inclusive classroom practices eliminate exclusion inside the classrooms and beyond the activities of teaching and learning. It benefits children with and without impairments, parents, teachers, members of the staff and society at large. Hence a range of strategies including inclusive adult-child communication strategies is required to match pedagogy to student needs.*

During the action phase the administrators displayed their commitment to CPD by actively searching for off-site workshops and providing paid leave for teachers to attend the programmes held at provincial level. Teachers were also encouraged to be personally responsible for their own development and take advantage of the existing benefits of financial assistance and time off for learning when they enrolled in long term CPD courses leading to professional qualifications.

6.7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Even as the CPD programme targeted the entire teaching staff, the primary focus of the research remained on the original teacher participants and their journey towards change. Hence, ways in which action aided teacher participants to engage in inclusionary practices in adult-child communication and its impact on the students is revealed via a process of data collection and analysis.

Data collection occurred at two points in time; December 2008 and April 2009, for actionC2 because actionC2 straddled two school years 2008/9. As in actionC1 data is collected through classroom observations, feedback as recorded in the IIPs, documentary evidence of test scores for language and participant views gathered from informal conversations. Further, questionnaires provide feedback concerning the CPD programme. The data thus collected is analysed by using a mixed methods approach evident throughout the thesis.

6.7.1 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The observation procedures and the conditions under which the observations took place are similar to the pre-action and actionC1 stages. Two observations were carried out in each classroom, in November 2008 and February 2009, straddling two school years. The student participants were present with the participant teachers for the first observation in November 2008. The February 2009 observations were conducted with the same group of participant teachers who had acquired a new student participants except (Table 6.5), Shanuth's teacher. The subjects taught by the teachers during the two observations did not vary in some instances, as planned for in the previous stages, since the teachers were involved with different groups of students.

Table 6.5: Student-teacher organisation

Student's classroom	Student 2008 November	Student 2009 January & March
Shanuth's	*Shanuth*	*Akila [new student]*
Josh's	*Josh*	*Shanuth*
Amal's	*Amal*	*Josh*
Yadesh's	*Yadesh*	*Amal*
Heshan's	*Heshan*	*Yadesh*
Yovaan's	*Yovaan*	*Heshan*

6.7.2 FEEDBACK FROM THE CPD PROGRAMME

A questionnaire was distributed to the 40 teacher-learners including the nine research participants; six classroom teachers, two learning support and one assistant teacher on the final day of the programme. The teacher-learners were permitted to verify questions to overcome misunderstandings. Their request to remain anonymous was granted in keeping with cultural practices. The questionnaires were collected at the close of day thereby ensuring that all questionnaires were returned with teacher-learners having minimal opportunity to forget crucial information (Dörnyei 2003).

6.8 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: A CUMULATIVE PERSPECTIVE

I word processed manually recorded data on D5 and D6 to the individual data collection grids (Appendices 7.1-7.6) and coded as in the pre-action stage and actionC1. The validation procedure, similar to these two stages, was also followed. Next the codes from individual data collection grids were combined to form a single cumulative grid (Appendix 7.7). Thereafter, frequency of occurrence of sub-categories was recorded to calculate totals and percentage values of exchange types and time measurements. Finally, the patterns of communication are identified for each classroom and the frequencies are reported as a cumulative value in Table 6.5.

6.8.1 PERCENTAGE VALUES

The percentage values of each category of exchange type (Appendix 7.7); Teacher Initiation (without behaviour) 38% [250/655], Teacher Initiation (behaviour only) 17% [*113/655], Teacher Feedback 16% (101/655), Pupil Response 11% [73/655] and Pupil Initiation 18% [120/655] is displayed in Figure 6.2.
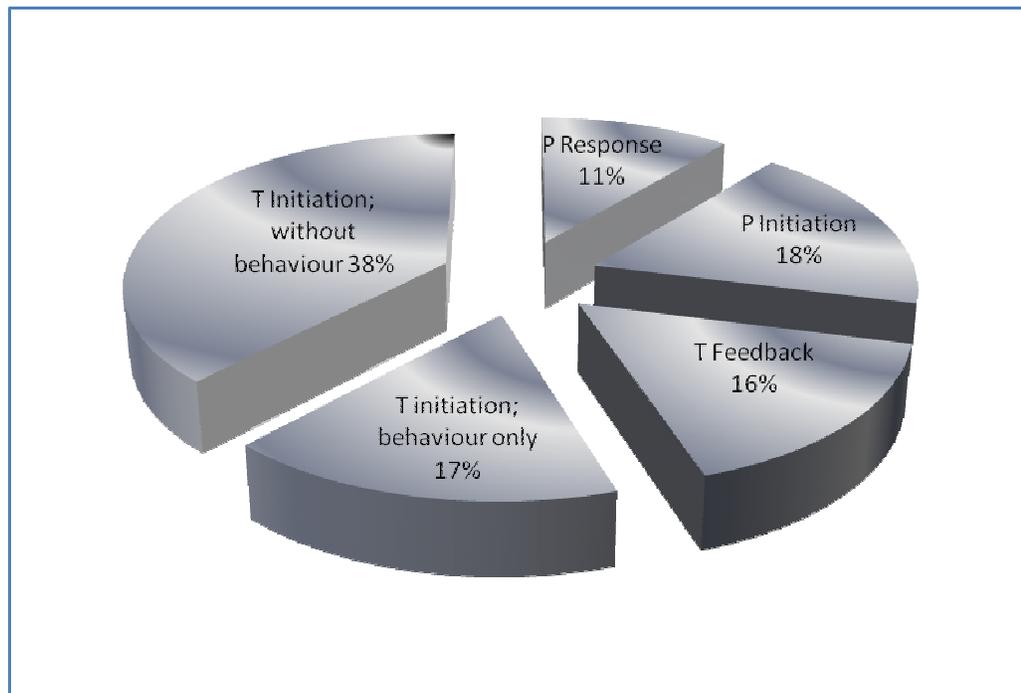
Figure 6.2: Whole class percentage values of Teacher (T) and Pupil (P) Exchange Types - ActionC2

For a comparison of percentage values of pre-action, actionC1 and actionC2 stages, data is arranged in Figure 6.3.

	T Initation	T feedback	P Response	P Initiation
☐ Pre Cycle	56	13	14	17
☐ Post C1	55	13	18	14
☐ Post C2	55	16	11	18
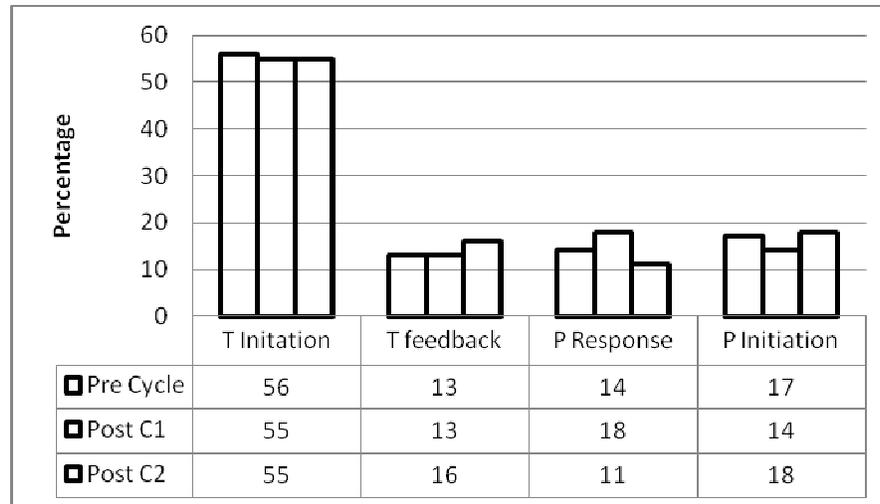
Figure 6.3: Whole classroom exchange types; from Pre-action to ActionC2

Notes: T = Teacher; P= all Pupils in the classroom

6.8.2 TIME MEASUREMENT

Time measurement is arrived at by considering a 30m lesson with the percentage values recorded in Figure 6.2. The analysis reveals that on average teachers' use approximately 11.4m [30m X 38%] to lecture, 5.1m [30m X 17%] to engage in behaviour management and 4.8m [30m X 16%] to provide feedback. Pupils are allocated 3.3m [30m X 11%] to respond to teacher initiated questions and 5.4m [30m X 18%] to initiate conversation. These outcomes are displayed on a time line with data from the pre-action and actionC1 stages for comparison (Figure 6.4).

	Teacher - lecturing	Teacher - behaviour management	Teacher - feedback	Pupil - response	Pupil - initiation
Pre-action	11.1	5 7	3.9	4.8	4.5
ActionC1	11.1	5.4	3.9	5.4	4.2
ActionC2	11.4	5.1	4.8	3.3	5.4

Figure 6.4: Whole class time distribution; from the Pre-action stage to ActionC2

6.8.3 PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

The patterns of communication were counted for D5 and D6 (Appendix7.1-7.6) for the six classrooms and tabulated as a cumulative value per classroom. Percentage values of each pattern of communication as a function of the total number of turns for each

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classroom and as a total are calculated for each pattern of communication. These figures are presented in Table 6.6 with similar figures from the pre-action stage and actionC1 extracted from Table 5.4 for comparison.

Table 6.6: Patterns of communication, frequency of occurrence and percentage values; ActionC2

Pattern / Student's classroom	nT	IR		IRE		IRF	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Shanuth	*112*	*4*	*3.6*	*8*	*7.1*	*8*	*7.1*
Josh	*88*	*4*	*4.5*	*8*	*9.1*	*6*	*6.8*
Amal	*105*	*5*	*4.8*	*10*	*9.5*	*5*	*4.8*
Yadesh	*105*	*10*	*9.5*	*10*	*9.5*	*4*	*3.8*
Heshan	*107*	*12*	*11.2*	*10*	*9.3*	*3*	*2.8*
Yovaan	*137*	*11*	*8*	*9*	*6.6*	*4*	*2.9*
Total: actionC2[6 classrooms]	*655*	*46*	*7*	*55*	*8.4*	*30*	*4.6*
Total: actionC1[6 classrooms]	*523*	*47*	*9*	*52*	*9.9*	*11*	*2.1*
Total: Pre-action [6 classrooms excluding Sajeeve's]	*563*	*51*	*9*	*33*	*5.9*	*17*	*3*

Notes: n = number; T= Total number of Turns; IR = Teacher Interaction-Pupil Response; IRE=Teacher Interaction- Pupil Response-Teacher Evaluation; IRF=Teacher Interaction- Pupil Response-Teacher Feedback

6.8.4 INTERPRETING CUMULATIVE DATA

"Good Learning time" (24.9m or 83%) including effective time spent on teaching and learning but excluding behaviour management, increased by 0.3m from actionC1. More than two-thirds of classroom interaction time is dominated by teacher talk (21.3m). This establishes the teachers' tendency to continue with the traditional style of teaching where most of the conversational rights are with the teacher, similar to actionC1.

The percentage measures of exchange types concerning adult-child communication, that encompass all six classrooms reveals a 1% or a 0.3minute increase and decrease respectively in the sub categories of teacher initiation without behaviour management and teacher initiation behaviour only thereby recording no changes in teacher initiation from actionC1. However, a 3% or 0.9minute increase in teacher feedback a 7% or 2.1minute decrease in pupil response and a 4% or 1.2minute increase in pupil initiation is recorded. The teacher: student percentage ratio of the categories of exchange types indicates a move from 68:32 to 71:29, with teachers increasing their right to communication in actionC2 by providing more feedback.

The total number of turns, teacher and pupils, increased by 25% [{(655-523)/523} X100] exceeding the number recorded in the pre-action stage. However, a 1% {[9+9.9+2.1]-[7+8.4+4.6]} decrease in the total number of structured patterns of interactions is noted between actionC1 and actionC2. Considering the percentage values of individual patterns of communication the IRE pattern continued to dominate in the six classrooms in actionC2, followed by the IR and IRF patterns. This trend is similar to actionC1. However, when compared with actionC1, the IRF pattern increased more than twofold while the IR and IRE patterns decreased by 22% and 15% respectively. This endorses the findings discussed above, that teachers provided more feedback to student responses. The 7% or 2.1m decrease in pupil responses supports the view that the structured patterns of communication decreased during this period. These changes are perhaps influenced by the action taken during the research process.

6.9 ANALYSING OBSERVATION DATA: AN INDIVIDUALIZED PERSPECTIVE

An individualised perspective of teachers implementing the chosen communication strategies is presented by considering D5 and D6 separately. Data are first organised by considering the observational data recorded on D5 when the student participants were still in the same classrooms as in actionC1. A descriptive analysis is carried out on D6 when the teacher participants acquired new student participants. Finally data from IIPs are analysed to record student progress.

6.9.1 COMPARING REAL TIME OBSERVATION DATA WITH TEACHER STRATEGIES – D5

Dialogue from D5 of the data collection grids (Appendix 7) is linked with the strategies the teachers opted for and the frequency of occurrence is recorded. Data are arranged (Table 6.7) similar to actionC1 (Table 5.5) to maintain consistency.

Table 6.7: Individualised analysis (December 2008)

Shanuth's Teacher				
	D5 T	**Example**	**n**	**Conclusion**
Make eye contact	*48*	*Taps him on the shoulder to gain attention.*	*1*	*Few*
Give single directions and ensure Shanuth follows.	*4*	*Look inside your bag.*	*8*	*Some*
Praise all attempts by Shanuth	*35*	*Very good*	*2*	*Few*
Encourage communication via	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*

picture cards / single word answers				
Avoid rushing to Shanuth's side and making Shanuth engage in tasks that do not encourage learning.	_3_	_Went up to Shanuth to encourage meaningful engagement in lessons_	_3_	_Few_

Josh's Teacher				
	_D5 T_	_Example_	_n_	**Conclusion**
Give individual instructions after the class has begun assignments. Speak in a soft tone	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Set attainable targets for task completion	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Avoid expecting Josh to set the pace.	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Do not encourage Josh to feel that completing work after school is permitted always / for all subjects	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_

Amal's Teacher				
	D5 T	**Example**	**n**	**Conclusion**
Give individual instructions after the class has begun assignments	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Rephrase instructions in simple language	_16_	_Did not rephrase but prompted with a reminder_	_1_	_Few_
Set attainable targets for task completion	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Avoid seating Amal too close to the wall		<u>_Achieved_</u>		_Some_

Yadesh's Teacher				
	D5 T	**Example**	**n**	**Conclusion**
Seat Yadesh in the front rows.		<u>_Achieved_</u>		_Some_
Approach him and make eye contact before speaking.	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Use a personal behaviour chart.	_0_	<u>_Not Achieved_</u>	_0_	_None_
Avoid encouraging Yadesh to run up to the teacher		<u>_Achieved_</u>		_Some_

Heshan's Teacher				
	D5 T	**Example**	**n**	**Conclusion**
Give single directions	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Give instructions to Heshan after the class has begun the assignment – be firm!	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Set attainable targets for task completion	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Assign a Buddy to help Heshan achieve specific tasks	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Use a personal behaviour plan and a star award system. Award for effort not the quality of the final product.	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Praise the smallest effort	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Avoid permitting Heshan to achieve his personal agenda	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Avoid seating near the window		*Achieved*		*Some*
Do not give black stars		*Achieved*		*Some*

Yovaan's Teacher				
	D5 T	**Example**	**n**	**Conclusion**
Give specific feedback / instructions	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Look for opportunities to praise & establish a rapport.	*0*	*Not Achieved*	*0*	*None*
Avoid seating Yovaan too close to the wall		*Achieved*		*Some*

6.9.2 COMPARING REAL TIME OBSERVATION DATA WITH TEACHER STRATEGIES – D6

Next dialogue on D6 is analysed (Appendix 7). In 2009, all students except Yovaan as explained previously (table 6.5) moved into classrooms, where the teachers are research participants. Although a student participant was not allocated to Shanuth's teacher a student with the label of SLCN was identified in her classroom. At the beginning of the year the teacher participants were notified of the presence of the student participants within their classrooms.

Observation data (Appendix 7; D6) reveals that Shanuth, Amal and Yadesh's teachers (previously Josh, Yadesh and Heshan's teachers) did not address these students during

the observations. Josh's teacher (previously Amal's) addressed him twice (Appendix 7.3, D6, T: 13&15), first to accuse him of not approaching her to paste the notice in the home-school correspondence book and then for lying when he contradicted her (T: 14).

> *13: Teacher: Josh you didn't come*
> *14: Josh: Miss I did.*
> *15: Teacher: Don't tell lies. I know if I pasted.*

As another pupil checked Josh's book to clarify the situation the teacher discovered that she was mistaken.

> *17: Pupil: Miss, you have pasted*

Heshan's teacher (previously Yovaan's) individualized instruction for him (Appendix7.4-D6) as the lesson continued from the previous period and peers were engaged in independent practice. The teacher directed 14Ts from a total of 73Ts as she corrected Heshan's homework. The communication strategies the teacher used include;

- Asking questions to engage Heshan (T: 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16) e.g. T*10: "4 minus 1?"*
- Providing reminders to keep him on track (T: 37, 62, 73) e.g. T*62: "Heshan. Have you finished?"*
- Using negative evaluative remarks; e.g.: 18 = "*Very bad ah! I am very disappointed with you; very bad homework. This is not the way I have taught you,"*
- Threatening; e.g. T19: "*Do your corrections properly if not no singing, art, chess or swimming"*

6.9.3 ANALYSING INDIVIDUALISED INTERVENTION PLANS (IIPs)

The data was collected as in actionC1 (chapter 5) in December 2008, because learning support was provided only in the third term. However, test scores at the April 2009 exam when students were not supported are also included. The teachers, parents and students views are summarized and arranged on Table 6.8 similar to actionC1.

Table 6.8: Summary progress report of IIPs from September – December 2008

	TEACHER	LST/AT	PARENT	STUDENT	TEST SCORES %	
					DEC '08	APRIL '09
S h a n u t h	*I found it easier to implement the strategies*	• *The amount of assistance required in class is minimal.* • *Poetry: Hesitant at first. But with coaxing he can recite 4 stanzas* • *He has more friends.*	*Not involved.*	*"I got A's in my report".*	*30*	*34*

J o s h	*Josh listens carefully and follows instructions. I don't have to give him instructions separately.* *He also completes his work during the lesson and does not stay during interval to complete*	• *Josh tries very hard to write legibly on the double ruled paper. His speed has increased.* • *The complexity of words was increased and he maintained a 75% success rate* • *Now able to identify beginning, mid and end sounds.* • *3 or 4 letter words are read with fluency* • *Primer words known. Can read books at grade level with assistance.* • *Comprehension 40% for material read by him independently and 75% for choral reading passages* • *Enjoys taking part in discussions and contributes willingly.* • *Peers are more accepting and do not jeer at his efforts.*	*Not involved. Commented; "Josh is now a changed child. What a relief not to be pulled up by the teacher".*	*"My mother takes me to the British Council Library. I like to read there".*	*48*	*47*
A m a l	*He works well without individual instruction.* *Completes work on most days.* *The boys don't complain about him cheating when playing cricket.*	*Not involved.*	*Works without asking for a break for 45 minutes* *His vocabulary usage has increased*	*"See my books are complete. I have stars".*	*62*	*72*
Y a d e s h	*Although a formal behaviour chart was not maintained I was able to ensure his behaviour was regulated through verbal reminders.* *This is easier and*	*Not involved.*	*Yadesh is able to work for 30 minutes before taking a brief break and*	*"See my report."* *His overall test scores had increased*	*53*	*66*

	quicker, for me. Also the other boys don't complain about things that happen due to his clumsiness. This was a big problem before.		*continuing for another 30 minutes.*			
Heshan	*He sits close to me so that it is easier to repeat instructions. It works for at least half the time. Heshan has a few friends who look out for him. I used nonverbal means to convey that I was pleased with his work. This made him want me to pay attention more frequently.*	*Have more good days when he is able to pay attention.*	*The personal tutor reports that Heshan works for 30 minutes before requesting for a break.*	*"I am getting a new puppy because I did my tests well. I hope Amma will call. Then I can tell her I am a good boy".*	*30*	*49*
Yovaan	*He is quieter now. In fact his whole bunch of friends has settled down and don't disrupt the class as before.*	*Not involved.*	*He works for 30 minutes without a break. Takes lesser time to learn spellings and is able to recall with 80% accuracy.*	*"Yeah! I am going to the middle school next year. Then nobody will scold me".*	*78*	*89*

6.9.4 INTERPRETING INDIVIDUALISED DATA

The individualised analysis conducted in December 2008 indicates that communication related strategies were implemented by Shanuth's and Amal's teachers. Shanuth's teacher implemented all except the strategy of encouraging communication via picture cards/single word answers. Amal's teacher implemented a single communication strategy of rephrasing instructions in simple language.

When analysing strategies that indirectly influence adult-child communication Amal, Yadesh and Yovaan's teachers continued with the strategies implemented in actionC1. Yadesh's teacher also incorporated a new strategy during actionC2. Heshan's teacher implemented two such strategies and didn't continue with the two strategies she

implemented in actionC1. Josh's teacher refrained from implementing any strategies claiming that Josh no longer requires specific attention (Table 6.8).

The individualised analysis of teacher dialogue on D6 indicates that most of the teachers despite the ongoing CPD programme did not take into consideration the presence of student participants other than for Heshan and Josh's teachers, previously Yovaan and Amal's teachers. Josh's teacher used exclusionary strategies while Heshan's teacher used a combination of inclusionary and exclusionary strategies.

IIP analysis highlights teacher reports of implementing adult-child communication strategies to varying degrees and successes gained at different levels. When compared with classroom observational schedules (Table 6.8 Day5) Shanuth, Josh and Amal's teachers' claims are identifiable, while Yadesh, Heshan and Yovaan's teachers' claims are not in evidence.

The learning support teachers and assistant teachers who worked with Shanuth, Josh and Heshan, and parents who supported Amal, Yadesh, Heshan and Yovaan all reported learning success of their students. Students' test scores increased from August to December 2008 for all except Yovaan. When scores from December 2008 to April 2009, a period when the students were not involved in a learning support programme is compared, increases in test scores are evident for all. Josh's score had dropped by a single digit, and therefore considered insignificant. These results imply that the students benefitted from the learning opportunities and are perhaps now capable of independent learning.

It is concluded that gains achieved in learning contributed to enhanced self-esteem. As per the teachers and learning support and assistant teachers' observations social relationship improved for all students. Heshan continued to be supported by the same peers as in actionC1.

6.10   ANALYSING STUDENT VIEWS: POST ACTIONC2

I collected student views through informal conversations, in April 2009, in addition, to feedback received in December 2008. The discussion focused on four specific areas of concern; the students need for continued support, their ability to follow teacher dialogue and express views coherently to teachers and classroom arrangements.

6.10.1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Questions (Q) 2&3 are taken from the pre-action stage interview to analyse changes due to the action research cycles. Q1 focuses at students' ability to cope independently and the Q4 concerns student views regarding classroom arrangements; a follow up on the discussion I had with them when planning for the CPD programme in actionC2.

Table 6.9: Students'(S) voices post actionC2

Q \\ S	1 Do you think you are able to do your class work without help this year?	2 When the teacher is teaching the whole class can you understand what she says?	3 Does your teacher understand what you say?	4 Do you like your classroom arrangement? Is it like these pictures that we looked at? (Figure 6.1)
Shanuth	*I like my new class. Miss Saumya (assistant teacher) is nice and she helps me.*	*Sometimes. If I don't Miss Saumya repeats.*	*I speak mostly to Miss Saumya. I am scared of Miss.*	*It is like this (shows figure iII*
Josh	*I can now read fast. Miss says soon, I won't have to stay after school.[for the enrichment programme]*	*Nods head indicating 'yes'.*	*When I answer the questions she says 'speak loudly' then I feel shy and don't say anything*	*(Touches figure III) and shakes head indicating 'no'*
Amal	*I can copy fast now. But I have to copy a lot of notes. Teacher allows me to complete at home so I won't miss my other classes.*	*Yes. She is nice.*	*Yes. She is always telling me that I talk too much. [laughs]*	*(Shows figure I) my classroom is very crowded. We don't have room to walk. I kick bags and children get angry.*
Yadesh	*My friend Kevin is not in my class. My mother says that, that is why I finish my work. I write soon now.*	*Yes. She comes near me and checks if I have understood.*	*The other boys are mean and they laugh at me. Teacher scolds them but I stop talking.*	*(Takes figure I) We sit in rows.*
Heshan	*My puppy is big. He sits by me till I study with the tuition Miss. [thoughtfully] Amma (mother) hasn't called. When I ask Thatha (father) he gets*	*My teacher won't talk to me.*	*I only talk to my friend. Teacher is always shouting. I wait like a rat.*	*(Points to figure I) All the classes are like this. Only the art class is like (Points to figure II)*

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	very angry and shouts at me. Even Lucky (the puppy) gets scared and hides under the chair.			
Y o v a a n	*My mother checks my books every day. So I have to make sure I do all the work. If not I will be in trouble and she will stop my singing lessons.*	*We have different teachers for almost every period. Some don't even correct the books. I can understand them if the class is quiet.*	*They can understand me.*	*(shows figure I) Our classrooms are like this. The computer lab and library looks like this. (Points to figure II)*

6.10.2 INTERPRETING DATA

All students, except Heshan, are confident of their ability to learn independently. Josh, Amal, Yadesh and Yovaan are confident that they can understand their teachers although Shanuth feels that this happens infrequently. Heshan expressed his concern about being ignored by his teacher. When I focused on teacher comprehension of students conversations Amal, Yadesh and Yovaan are certain that they are understood. Feedback from Josh indicates that he finds it difficult to speak loudly as required by his teacher. Both Shanuth and Heshan expressed fear of the teacher.

Responses for Q4 indicate that the CPD programme did not see changes in classroom arrangements. This result is similar to reports from a study in Botswana (Tabulawa, 1997 in Christie et al., 2004) where despite been provided with opportunities to acquire the skill and knowledge to bring about change the deeply rooted tradition of teacher centred classrooms discouraged teachers from embracing learner centred pedagogies introduced via professional development programmes.

The overall view is that Shanuth, Josh and Heshan continue to experience difficulties due to exclusionary communication strategies that their teachers engage in. Amal, Yadesh and Yovaan are satisfied with the adult-child communication strategies their teachers employ.

6.11 ANALYSING QUESTIONNAIRES
Feedback from questionnaires is arranged on a cumulative grid for analysis.

6.11.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The number of times similar responses were received for Q1-7 is counted (Table 6.10) and percentage measures are calculated by dividing the total number of response types by the number of participants (40) and multiplying by 100. Data is then displayed on a 2-D column chart (Figure 6.5).

Table 6.10: CPD questionnaire-quantitative analysis

	Question (Q)	Not at all	Slightly	Fairly	Reasonably	Very
1	Did the CPD programme fulfil your expectations?	0	0	15	18	7
2	How satisfied are you with the level of knowledge you gained via the CPD programme?	1	1	15	19	4
3	Did you enjoy the learning activities?	0	5	12	13	10
4	Were they related to your practical work?	0	3	11	16	10
5	Was the content sufficiently challenging?	0	6	19	15	0
6	Was the CPD modules well organized?	0	0	12	17	11
7	Were the facilitators effective?	0	0	14	17	9
	TOTAL	1	15	98	115	51
	Percentage	0.4	5.4	35	41.1	18.1

	Not at all	slightly	Fairly	Reasonably	Very
☐ Series1	0.4	5.4	35	41.1	18.1
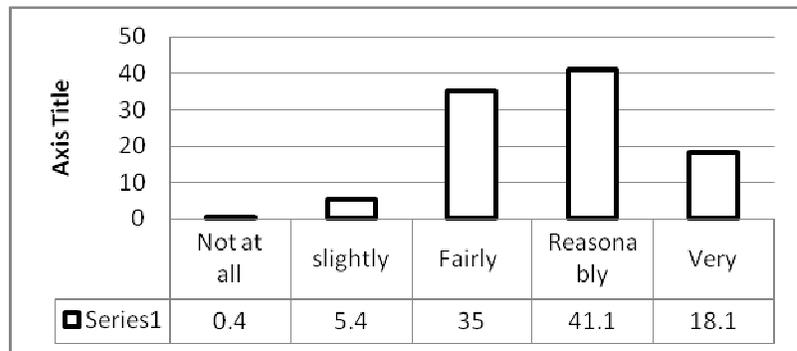
Figure 6.5: Quantitative measures for questions 1-7

6.11.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

It is argued that open ended questions generate a lot of data that needs to be sifted carefully for meaningful analysis (Cohen et al., 2007). Considering this fact a qualitative analysis (Table 6.11) is carried out for the final questions (Q 8-10), by listing all responses for each question, identifying categories and counting the total number of responses (n). Similar verbal responses are considered and one response is cited as an example in the sample responses column. The procedure is similar to that followed when analysing interview data in the pre-action stage.

Table 6.11: CPD questionnaire-qualitative analysis

		Response Category	Sample responses	n
8	What difference if any has the CPD programme made to you particularly in your knowledge & awareness?	Awareness	I am now aware of new techniques/strategies	15
			I had a very limited idea regarding inclusive education before the programme	19
		Knowledge	I want to read more	15
			I am interested in pursuing a study programme	5
9	What are you going to do differently in your classroom practice?	Personal level	I will use reflection after some lessons	17
			I will try to be careful about the choice of words and non-verbal expressions	13
			I haven't really thought about it	2
		Practice level	I will incorporate more visual and / or practical activities	14
			I will punish students less	12
10	What difference has your learning had on your	Pupils	I am more tolerant of student differences	13
			I try to be calm when I am frustrated at students	5
			I try to match my expectations with student abilities	4
			I attempt to see the root cause for student responses and correct these issues (if possible) or bring it to the notice of the grade head	7
		Colleagues	I try to educate them about differentiation	11
			I now try to correct their deficit views regarding students	10
			I don't know enough to influence others	10
			I encourage others to enrol in study programmes	9
		School	I am willing to accept a few students with disabilities if the support teachers are available	13
			I don't think I am ready to accept responsibility for students with impairments. I need more knowledge and skills.	8
			I hope the warden will give us time for collaborative teaming – they are really good learning opportunities	8
			I think I now can justify my teaching not by focusing on the macro issues but by looking at individual strengths and needs of students	11

6.11.3 INTERPRETING QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

The quantitative analysis (Table 6.10) makes it clear that from the 40 teacher-learners who followed the CPD programme, 24 [40X (41.1+18.1) %] were positively influenced, 14 [35%] were fairly satisfied and two were not very satisfied.

The qualitative analysis (Table 6.11) indicates an increase in awareness [Q8: 34 responses] and knowledge base [Q8: 20 responses] as a result of the programme. All teacher-learners, except two, identified ways in which they will make personal

adjustments and also change their practice in the future. At a personal level (Q9) 13 teacher-learners [33%] indicate a willingness to address their adult-child communication routines while 17 [43%] of them express a keenness to incorporate reflection as a tool to improve classroom practice. At a practice level teachers state that they will introduce visual and practical activities and less punishment.

Further, a majority of teacher-learners indicate the belief that their learning made a difference in their pupils' lives (Q10). A quarter of them said that they cannot influence colleagues while three quarters of the teacher-learners explain that they create awareness, eliminate the deficit view and encourage others to enrol in training programmes. A majority [32/40=80%] of teacher-learners' are willing to be responsible for disabled students, work collaboratively and to consider them as individuals with a unique set of strengths and needs. Some teacher-learners [8/40=20%] request for further training to teach disabled students with confidence is identified as a benefit to the school.

6.12 ENGAGING IN CRITICAL REFLECTION: POST ACTIONC2 - DECEMBER 2008

With the partial conclusion of actionC2 in December 2008 it was necessary to critically reflect on the suitability of the chosen approaches to solve the problem of adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN.

6.12.1 SELF-REFLECTION

We met as a group in the first week of December 2008 prior to school vacation. The teachers were presented with the data analysis grids from D5 (Appendix 7) for self-reflection. The process of comparing dialogue and identifying implementation of communication strategies selected by the teachers (Table 6.7), performed as an individualised activity, lasted for approximately 45 minutes.

6.12.2 COLLABORATIVE CRITICAL REFLECTION

We teamed up thereafter for collaborative critical reflection. Teachers unanimously agreed that they focused on the CPD programme while paying minimal attention to IIP targets (Table 6.7). All the teachers except Josh's teacher agreed with Heshan's teacher's view.

> *"I tried to incorporate ideas from the lectures. I knew I could not handle both. So I did not focus on the IIP targets."*   *[Field, notes, December 2008]*

Josh's teacher was convinced that Josh could work independently without her meeting the IIP targets. She therefore, did not consider or implement any chosen IIP targets.

Upon reflection I felt that my reduced focus through monthly meetings in actionC2, rather than weekly meetings organised during actionC1, may have encouraged fewer teachers to alter adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN. As I voiced this thought the teachers agreed that,

> *"We felt that since you were not insisting on seeing results that we could overlook this commitment."* [Field notes, Yovaan's teacher, December 2008]

When the discussion turned to the effects of the research on student participants, the teachers reported the following.

Shanuth: *"Having seen Shanuth benefit in the first round I was not surprised with the way he moved on; especially in interacting with peers."*

Josh: *"Peers don't laugh at Josh any more for his slowness and in fact include him during the interval in their games. Not having to stay in class and finish his work during the interval has made a big change in his life."*

Amal: *"It's funny to see Amal chosen as umpire because earlier the boys used to complain that he cheats. Finally, he is eager to finish his work on time"*

Yadesh: *"Yadesh has learned to be less clumsy after my constant reminders. I don't have to deal with too many accidents in class now. So, the other kids are also less complaining about Yadesh."*

Heshan: *"Heshan's books are now more full than empty. I must say the other boys have been supportive."*

Yovaan: *"Yovaan is quiet. I don't have to punish him that often now."*

[Field notes, December 2008]

6.13 ENGAGING IN CRITICAL REFLECTION: POST ACTIONC2 – APRIL 2009

6.13.1 SELF-REFLECTION

As actionC2 came to an end, the teachers grouped for the final time prior to the Sinhalese and Tamil New Year holidays in April 2009. The respective data collection grids for D6 (Appendix 7) were distributed to them. Teachers spent approximately 45 minutes reflecting on the communication strategies they used to include the new student participants.

6.13.2 COLLABORATIVE CRITICAL REFLECTION

As we regrouped for collaborative critical reflection, the teachers were presented with the quantitative analysis of data which focus on whole classroom exchange types (Figures 6.2, 6.3), time distribution (Figure 6.4) and patterns of communication (Table 6.6). Considering the data the teachers explained that the 25% increase of the total number of turns in communication, teacher and pupils, the 1% decrease in patterns of

communication from actionC1, the 4% or 1.2minutes increase in pupil initiation, the 7% or 2.1minutes decrease in pupil response and the 3% or 1.9minutes increase in teacher feedback were because they relinquished the tight control of their classrooms, reduced asking routine questions and encouraged students to initiate conversation while also providing feedback, which encouraged further communication.These changes were attributed to new learning acquired as a result of the CPD programme. However, as the following comment suggests the transformation process was not easy.

> *"Allowing students to speak freely was very difficult because we are always asking our students not to speak unless spoken to. It made our classrooms noisy. But since all the teachers were involved in the training programme we were more confident that we could implement these ideas without negative reactions."*
> *[Field notes, Amal's teacher, April 2009]*

The quantitative measures also proved to be an assurance to the teachers of their learning. They were pleasantly surprised with the results as the following vignette demonstrates.

> *"This means that we actually learned and changed our practice when teaching all students. I was sometimes very tired when I attended the workshops – but they were interesting I must admit. So, in the absence of an exam [chuckling] this is a good indicator for me that I actually learned. [Field notes, Yovaan's teacher, April 2009]*

When reflections turned to individual students and the absence of inclusionary practices in adult-child communication directed at the newly acquired student participants in all classrooms except Heshan's (previously Yovaan's teacher) on D6, the teachers offered the following explanation.

> *"Teaching a whole class in a similar way is easy even if we are using new strategies. Changing what we are doing just for one child takes so much of effort and time and practice. We haven't got their yet."*   *[Field notes, Josh's teacher, April 2009]*

Most teachers agreed that they had gained from the individual modules contained in the CPD programme and requested the programme to continue into the future. However, they voiced their disappointment regarding the level of direct support given by the administration so that learning can be practiced in the classroom.

> *"Even as we appreciate the opportunity to learn, it seems a useless effort if we can't practice the skills we acquire. The administration must understand this and give assistant teachers for all classrooms and also free some time in our timetables for us to talk like this and decide at least on one little thing we would do."*   *[Field notes, Shanuth's teacher, April 2009]*

Finally we discussed the research journey. All teacher views are similar to those of Amal's and Yadesh's teachers.

"When we began the research I was not sure what was happening. But as you supported me I began to realise the purpose of the study. I wish I had paid more attention to the team meetings. But still I have learned much. Even my husband says I am now more patient with our kids."   *[Field notes, Amal's teacher, April 2009]*

"I think being part of the research showed me that students with speech and language difficulties can actually learn in the classrooms and succeed. This has been a good learning opportunity for all of us I think."
                                    [Field notes, Yadesh's teacher, April 2009]

By the end of the critical reflection process it was unanimously agreed that student support ought to move into the classrooms but with the necessary human resources, more planned and consistent training opportunities for the teachers and support from administrators for collaborative teaming.

6.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter opened with critical reflections on actionC1 viewed as a self-reflective and collaborative exercise. Reflections revealed that teachers implemented some adult-child communication strategies and other strategies expected to have an indirect impact on communication.

Within action research the next step was to consider the suitability of continuing with the current action plan or opt for change. A two-pronged process was settled for. The first, continuation of the IIPs with necessary amendments according to student needs for the final school term in 2008. The second, the implementation of a CPD programme by taking into account the concerns that arose regarding teachers' limited knowledge and understanding regarding the concept of inclusive education, speech, language and communication difficulties and the challenges students with the label of SLCN face in the regular classroom. The CPD programme targeted the entire teaching staff of the primary section of the school because the administrators agreed with the view that student support ought to move into the classrooms and also because it is a more cost effective alternative. The modules for the CPD programme was selected by listening to the voices of the administrators, teachers and student participants, thus preserving the democratic nature of action research. The programme was designed to span five months, straddling two school years, 2008 and 2009. This decision brought a new dimension to the research as teacher participants were exposed to broader learning opportunities with their non-participant colleagues.

During the monitoring and evaluation phase data was collected through a triangulation exercise. Data pertaining to transformed adult-child communication practices due to the CPD programme was collected through a single classroom observation in November 2008 as the student and teacher participants remained the same as in the pre-action stage and actionC1. A second observation was carried out in the new school year, February 2009, with the same teacher participants who had acquired new student participants. Feedback from adult and student participants and test scores for language were also gathered to evaluate the manner in which students learning, self-esteem and social relationships improved. A questionnaire was designed to obtain feedback concerning the CPD programme.

Subsequent analysis using a mixed methods approach indicates the following. Even as the traditional classroom interaction style prevailed and teacher talk dominated two-thirds of interaction time, good learning time improved by 1%. Pupils were given greater autonomy to express their views and teachers provided more feedback encouraging further communication; therefore the total number of turns in classroom communication increased by 25% and the IRF pattern of communication increased by 2.5%. The reduction in pupil responses and increase in pupil initiation from actionC1 also highlights that teachers avoided asking too many routine questions with predetermined answers and instead gave the students more opportunities to initiate conversation and express their views. Hence, the total number of combined patterns of communication; IR, IRE and IRF, dropped by 1% from actionC1. The teachers attributed these changes to the CPD programme. Thus, it is evident that professional learning communities can be created even in traditional school environments to ultimately benefit the school system, individual teachers and students.

Whilst the quantitative data presents an overview of changes that occurred during actionC2 in six classrooms, qualitative data indicates the individual teacher's struggle to incorporate inclusionary practices in adult-child communication when communicating with students with the label of SLCN. The teachers articulated the view that they were more at ease making changes that encompass the whole classroom rather than continue to implement communication strategies designed to include a single child. On D5 Shanuth and Amal's teachers' implemented communication related strategies while Amal, Yadesh and Yovaan's teachers implemented indirect strategies. Josh's teacher explained that Josh no longer requires altered communication since he is able to meet teacher expectations.

On D6 as teachers were given the responsibility of including new student participants and the freedom to choose communication strategies they would employ Josh, Yadesh and Heshan's teachers ignored their students Shanuth, Amal and Yadesh while Amal's teacher engaged in exclusionary strategies twice with Josh and Yovaan's teacher used a combination of inclusionary and exclusionary strategies when communicating with Heshan. Hence, adult-child communication directed at students with the label of SLCN continues to be a problematic area that teachers need to work on.

Qualitative data and quantitative measures of test scores for language of individual student participants however, indicate that they benefitted from the multi-pronged approach of actionC2 and made gains in the areas of learning, self-esteem and social relationships. The students also displayed their ability to take responsibility for their learning by making gains in test scores even when they were not supported via an individualised programme in 2009. Student views, especially Shanuth, Josh and Heshan, endorse the continued difficulties in adult-child communication. Amal Yadesh and Yovaan however, are satisfied with current adult-child communication practices.

As the critical reflection process ended the teachers offered some suggestions for the future. They agreed with one voice that student support ought to move into the classrooms but with support from the administration through the provision of human resources, planned and effective training programmes and opportunities for collaborative teaming.

ActionC2, as deemed at the outset, signifies the end of the action research cycles. The next chapter discusses the ways in which the research reflects or challenges current theories and findings, the manner in which research aims are met and the research question answered, the limitations of the research, directions for further research and recommendations.

CHAPTER 7
LOOKING BACK

7.1 INTRODUCTION

I present this final chapter as a unique and important contribution to understanding and developing inclusive educational practices within schools in Sri Lanka for students with the label of SLCN.

In the preamble and chapter one, I set out the background of the research, explained the significance of the research and stated the research questions and aims. In chapter two I discussed the theoretical frameworks which guide the research while chapter three deals with emergence of a methodology that gave me the freedom to engage in a process of research and action. Chapter four describes how I arrived at understanding the current situation surrounding adult-child communication and the problems involved through a process of data collection and analysis. Chapters five and six discuss my attempts to reflect on my practice, critique it, understand it and transform it by engaging in a participatory action research process consisting of two action cycles.

The final discussion that follows begins by restating in brief my vision for students with the label of SLCN, which led me to conduct the research. Next is a detailed analysis of the three topics which provide the overarching framework for the research; inclusive education, including students with the label of SLCN through inclusionary practices in adult-child communication and the action research process. The manner in which the research aims are met and the research question is answered is explained. Recommendations and a formula for inclusion for Sri Lanka are suggested thereafter. Limitations of the current research and directions for further research are stated finally.

7.2 DISCUSSION

I set out to write a thesis to tell the story of including students with the label of SLCN in primary classrooms in Sri Lanka. I believe in social justice and equality for all. My beliefs inspire me to follow a vision of advocating for students with the label of SLCN to be treated fairly and nurtured with respect in inclusive school settings by their teachers.

The research was intended to break the silence surrounding teachers' attitude towards students with the label of SLCN reflected in the ways they communicate with their students. By breaking the silence I hoped to inspire teachers to engage in more

inclusionary communication strategies and avoid exclusionary communication strategies in their classrooms. Communication has been identified as an important factor that needs to be transformed for schools to be inclusive (Moore 2011; Slee, 2011; Schwartz, 2005; Corbett and Slee, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). It has also been reported that inclusionary practices in communication directed at students with the label of SLCN enhances their learning, raises their self-esteem and improves social relationships for them (Rhymes 2008; Hassan, 2007; Salend and Garrick 1999 in Berry, 2006; Nayak, 2004; Martin and Miller 1999; Fleming, Miller and Wright, 1997; Pignatelli, 1993).

Because I didn't want my vision to remain at a conceptual level, as an independent practitioner who works in multiple settings, I elected to conduct research in a private school in which I was employed as a consultant. The focal school was ideal as a trial case for inclusion because of the presence of both inclusive and exclusive elements as discussed in chapters one and four. The whole school attitude of non-discrimination of race, religion and language is considered as inclusive. Exclusionary practices include encouraging the members of staff to follow the medical model of disability (Slee, 2004) by locating problems within the children and expecting parents to seek outside help to make their children fit for life in the classrooms (Zaleita, 2004). Other factors which challenged inclusion at Palmyrah College, similar to studies conducted in different contexts include, a highly competitive school environment (Moore, and Slee, 2011) with formal examinations held every term and limited provision of professional training opportunities (Hamstra, 2004 and Kershner 2007 in Pijl and Frissen, 2009).

My belief in human's potential to change propelled me to embark on an action research project with the aim of achieving a transformative influence on adult-child communication and the outcomes of students with the label of SLCN.

7.3 KEY TOPICS

Three topics provide the overarching framework in this thesis; inclusive education, including students with the label of SLCN by focusing on adult-child communication and action research.

7.3.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education demands that 'all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions' (UNESCO, 2001) be educated with their

peers alongside their nondisabled peers (Schwartz, 2005) and receive 'equal recognition, respect and treatment regardless of difference' (Armstrong, 2008, p12). I interpret inclusive education as a means of making even the opportunities ALL children receive without discrimination to learn and succeed in schools and in their communities. This point of view has been influenced by several publications (Slee, 2011; O'Hanlon, 2003; UNESCO, 2001).

North-South debate

To arrive at the above definition I studied a range of literature from across the globe. As discussed in the preamble I attempted to look at different contexts by categorising them as countries of the North and South. I drew a distinction between wealthier industrialised countries by referring to them as countries of the North and economically poorer countries as countries of the South (Peters, 2003). However, as the literature review progressed and I moved through the research cycles, I became aware that these distinctions did not reflect the interpretation of 'inclusive education', its progress or challenges faced by the individual countries, in their move towards inclusive education. Further, as the world economic outlook report states (IMF, 2011), the wealth distribution of the world is shifting rapidly and distinctions such as North and South are taking on new dimensions. Countries once considered as countries of the South such as India and China are now classified as newly industrialised countries. Hence, they belong to the category of countries of the North, similar to Australia and New Zealand, despite their geographical location in the global south (ibid).

However, research indicates that all countries designated as countries of the North do not view or practice inclusive education in the same way (Slee, 2011). A classic example is India which despite its move towards becoming a country of the North due to economic prosperity records a growth in special schools (Miles and Singal, 2010), thus defying the philosophy of inclusive education. Even in UK, a country considered as a country of the North for centuries, it is reported that although there are examples of good practice inclusive education is not endemic to the entire education system (O'Hanlon, 2003; Armstrong, 2008). Hence, as I write this concluding chapter of my thesis I now possess a more pragmatic view regarding global divides. I believe that instead of attempting to categorise views or processes by following widely accepted global demarcations; geographical or economic, it is better to focus on learning lessons from individual countries by considering the period of time and conditions within the country when

inclusive education germinated, interpretations were made and systems were established. By following such a course of action I believe it will be easier for researchers to develop recommendations for a model of inclusion which is suitable for their individual countries.

Sri Lankan perspective

From a Sri Lankan perspective, explained in chapter one, the National Education Commission (1992) and the Salamanca Convention (1994) were first to endorse the adoption of the concept of inclusive education (UNICEF, 2003). In 1997 'The Compulsory Education Ordinance' emphasised its support for the philosophy and practice of inclusive education (MoE, 2004; Hargreaves et al., 2001). Subsequently, a Parliamentary Act (no: 28, 1996), the National policy on disability (2003), the National Education Commission (2003) and the constitution of Sri Lanka (MOE, 2004, p1) purport to ensure equal opportunities for disabled persons (ADB, 2002). However, because the Ministry of Education is not clearly articulating policies that schools ought to follow or giving concise directions to embrace inclusive education and displaying a reluctance to introduce compulsory provisions to the entire education system, (National policy on disability 2003) schools which are interested in incorporating inclusive ideals such as the focal school follow their own interpretation of inclusive education.

Palmyrah College

The administrators of the focal school, Palmyrah College, as chapter one describes, considered enrolling a few students with widely known impairments and placing them with their peers with little or no supports provided, as inclusive education. They interpreted inclusive education as a feature that can be added on; an attitude explicitly discouraged as noted in literature (Clough, 1999). Hence, they were content to identify a section of an existing building, refer to it as a "Support Unit", allocate staff and advocate the practice of what is described as physical and social integration (Wolfensberger and Thomas, 1983 in Thomazet, 2009). Such a stance, contradicts the philosophy of inclusive education and the social model of thinking which rejects exclusionary practices that disable individuals (Slee, 2011; Tregaskis, 2004; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). However, a whole school policy of inclusion is practiced by considering race, religion and language.

7.3.2. Including students with the label of SLCN by focusing on Adult-child communication

Speech, language and communication difficulties, as chapter one demonstrates, is not well known amongst the general public in Sri Lanka perhaps due to the fact that speech and language therapy is a relatively new profession (Gomesz, 2010). In the absence of prevalence data, by considering the number of students who receive support at Palmyrah College it is estimated that around 7-10% of students display speech, language and communication difficulties in this school, similar to an earlier estimate in the UK (Gascoigne, 2006).

The students with the label of SLCN, selected for the research, as chapter four highlights, displayed a range of characteristics other than those related to speech, language and communication difficulties. These are similar to features discussed in other studies including lowered self-esteem (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2000), learning difficulties (Wiig and Semel, 1984, in Patterson and Wright 1990; Crystal and Varley, 1995; Stackhouse, 2001; Rose, 2006; Campbell and Sharuku-Doyle, 2007; McCormack, McLeod, McAllister and Harrison, 2009; Lindsay et al., 2010) and emotional and behaviour problems (Gerharz, et al., 2003 and Law and Garrett, 2004 in Markham, Laar, Gibbard and Dean, 2009; Botting and Conti-Ramsden, 2008; Stevenson, 1990 in Miller and Roux, 1997). Data analysis also highlighted that they had poor social relationships (McCormack et al., 2009; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Martin and Miller, 2003) and that they were subjected to bullying (Bonica et al., 2003 in Beitchman and Brownlee 2010; Conti-Ramsden and Botting, 2004).

Although students at Palmyrah College were challenged in many ways, as the discussion in chapter one articulates, the global trend of placing responsibility for students with the label of SLCN on teachers and speech and language therapists (Korth et al., 2010; McCartney, Ellis, Boyle, Turnbull, and Kerr, 2010; Brinton and Fugiki, 2006; Rizman, et al., 2006) was an absent factor in this school. Further, students with the label of SLCN neither received direct intervention through pull out models (Korth et al., 2010) or indirect intervention through the classroom based model (Martin and Miller, 2003). Instead since 2006, the administrators sought to follow indirect intervention through the consultancy model a relatively new phenomenon in speech and language therapy, even at a global scale (Wegner, et al., 2003).

The administrators understanding of a consultant was based on the medical perspective of disability prevalent in Sri Lanka (Mittler, 2000; MoE, 2000). Therefore they sought medical diagnosis and placing the onus to cure the child in the hands of parents. This perspective contradicts the philosophy of inclusive education and the social model of disability that I advocate. Therefore, as the consultant speech and language therapist, I elected to transform practices via an action research project.

7.3.3 ACTION RESEARCH

Action research is considered useful when studying the social world to bring about change (Neuman, 2006). Action research with its roots in democracy seeks to empower and liberate people (Neuman, 2006; Armstrong and Moore, 2004) by blending the academic world of research and actual practice (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). These ideals coincide with my own beliefs of social justice and equality for all. Further, my first hand experience as an action researcher, acquired as a Master's student (Wickremesooriya, 2004) also influenced my choice of research methodology.

Due to my interest in students with the label of SLCN I decided to engage in a research project at Palmyrah College by targeting a single aspect, adult-child communication, that a school must aim at reforming, to achieve inclusive education (Moore 2011; Slee, 2011; Schwartz, 2005; Corbett and Slee, 2000; Armstrong and Barton, 1999). I set out to conduct the research as an insider by inviting a range of participants as equal partners; teachers, students, parents and administrators who had hitherto not been involved in a research project. My aim was to maintain a participatory, democratic process.

I selected two action cycles considered the minimum required to witness change (Kember, 2000) and by acknowledging the time-cost factor involved in conducting action research (Grant, 2007). Time was of specific importance as explained in chapter one, due to the tensions that existed at the time of the research caused by an internal war raging between the two main ethnic groups, Sinhalese and Tamils, of Sri Lanka.

Prior to embarking on the action cycles I opted to show the current situation as it is, free from bias and preconceived ideas. Hence, I chose a process of data collection by interviewing research participants and observing classrooms. Data was analysed using a mixed methods approach. This stage which lasted for almost one school term as detailed in chapter four was considered the pre-action stage. Since it involved a single phase in my

model of action research cycles (Figure 3.1) I refrained from presenting this extensive phase as an action research cycle.

During actionC1 and C2 I listened to the voices of participants, articulated their views in the thesis and acted on their views.

Teachers

I selected a few teachers by focusing on ten students between the ages of six and twelve years. A smaller group was preferred because I believed that it would give me a better opportunity to understand teacher views and perceptions, cultivate positive attitudes in teachers towards inclusion, improve their knowledge regarding speech, language and communication difficulties and inspire them to engage in inclusionary adult-child communication practices that benefit students with the label of SLCN. Critical reflection, collaborative teaming and a CPD programme was initiated to inspire teachers to move away from the physical and social integration model that they were familiar with, towards practicing an inclusive model of education independent of my presence, in the future.

Students

An important development of inclusive education is the global view of the key role the voices of children play in organising inclusion (Wertheimer, 1997). Article 12 of the UN convention of rights of children states that 'respecting them, making it possible for them to express themselves and giving their opinions and views due weight' (UNICEF, 1989) is of absolute importance. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) and the UN Standard Rules (1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997) also places a similar emphasis. Even though Sri Lanka is a signatory to these documents as discussed in chapter one, student voices as agents for change is not considered at Palmyrah College. However, having convinced the administrators of the importance of gaining student views, I listened to the voices of the students at each stage of the action research process, to demonstrate my personal commitment to the ideals of inclusive education. As reported by other authors (Bercow, 2008; Wertheimer, 1997) and as the discussion in chapter four reveals, I was challenged while attempting to access students' views. I overcame the struggles I faced by using alternative ways to access their views including storytelling (Lewis and Lindsay, 2000, in Moore, 2000) and gathering information informally (Tangen, 2008). The insights gained influenced the planning phases of actionC1 and C2 (Chapters 5 and 6). Students' self-

esteem improved as they became aware that their opinions mattered and were acted on, similar to reports from another study (Finn, 1989 in Gillies and Carrington, 2004).

Parents

Inclusive education as practiced in UK and USA (Lindsay and Dockrell, 2004) recognises the importance of parent knowledge of the child. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), to which Sri Lanka is a signatory specifically states inclusion of parents in the decision making process. However, chapter one suggests that parents were not included in the decision making process at Palmyrah College. Defying this practice, as chapters four, five and six reveal, I obtained permission from the administrators and encouraged parent participation in the research by providing them a platform to present their views concerning student support and adult-child communication. These views were not merely listened to but taken into consideration at different points in the research. Further, by considering suggestions (Moore 2011; Meijer et al., 2007; Martin and Miller, 2003) I involved parents in a collaborative team effort, to support their children and make gains themselves as they enabled their children to succeed; an essential feature of inclusive education.

Transformations

Chapters five and six unfold the manner in which the action research process transformed administrators' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions, regarding including students with the label of SLCN. Administrators accepted that student support must involve classroom teachers. Teachers agreed that students with the label of SLCN can be included into their classrooms but with support from the administrators, necessary human resources, opportunities for collaborative teaming and planned and consistent training opportunities for them.

Challenges faced

The action research process, as other researchers who have negotiated the dual roles of practitioner and researcher have discussed (Nutt and Bell, 2002 in Coy, 2006) was filled with tensions. I encountered tensions negotiating the multiple roles of consultant, researcher, interviewer, observer, reflective coach and teacher trainer. One ethical dilemma that I encountered was when writing the thesis I had to identify and separate conversations that took place between the research participants and me, some of which were highly confidential. I was cautious when sharing qualitative data obtained from

students and parents with the teachers, by considering the power imbalance between the teachers and students. This caution was necessary to prevent teachers from feeling threatened and to avoid a possible backlash on the students which was a concern parents voiced during the pre-action stage interviews described in chapter four. I also had to ensure that teachers recognised that their level of commitment to the research did not affect my relationship with them as a consultant during the day-to-day operations of the school. Pulling the two roles apart, consultant and individual undertaking research as a doctoral candidate, was sometimes difficult as teachers would engage me in discussions regarding other students in their classrooms during time allocated for research meetings. However, because I wished to uphold my integrity as a professional as well as preserve the reliability of the project I managed these roles through a continuous reflexive process.

I was also challenged when accessing student views, participants showed a preference for the manual recording method during interviews and for classroom observations, encouraging teacher reflection both as an individual and collaborative exercise, empowering teachers to plan for personal change, gaining support to continue with actionC2 and locating teacher trainers for the CPD programme. Further, by attempting to stay true to the democratic process in action research which permits participant intentions to take their course I travelled on paths that were sometimes beyond my comfort zone. School expectations and constraints imposed such as term examinations, also disturbed the emergent nature of action research. In addition, the chaos created by the sudden departure of the warden and the schools inability to replace the position thereby appointing an acting warden, taught me to acquiesce to outcomes as they emerge.

Data

The action research generated qualitative and quantitative data. Whilst the quantitative data projected interpretation of adult-child communication practices within six classrooms in concise and precise numeric figures, the qualitative data provided intricate and intimate details of individuals and their actions. Both quantitative and qualitative data provided the basis for reflection. During the critical reflection phase in actionC1 the quantitative data failed to convince teachers of changes in communication as a result of action, whilst the qualitative data played a pivotal role in convincing them that they should embark on actionC2. However, in actionC2 the teachers, perhaps because they had warmed up to the action research process, were quick to identify the reasons for change by analysing quantitative measures while also being convinced through qualitative data

that students with the label of SLCN ought to be included in their classrooms. Hence, it is concluded that the mixed methods approach as envisaged at the outset of the research provided different and useful perspectives (Axinn and Pearce, 2006) which enriched the decisions and outcomes of the research.

Action research for change
Having concluded the action research project I embarked on an independent reflexive exercise to understand the role of action research in stimulating synergy amongst teachers, pupils, students and the school system. My reflections led me to the conclusion that despite the challenges faced during the research cycles, action research if conducted with sensitivity has the potential to bring change even in the most challenging educational settings, because the process is designed to draw people together towards a common goal. However, from a Sri Lankan perspective the lack of initiative to conduct action research within school settings needs to change for such a process to be implemented.

7.4 REACHING AIMS
The aims of the research are twofold;
- ➢ Learning to be an effective consultant speech and language therapist
- ➢ Providing empirical evidence to Sri Lankans regarding the manner in which schools can initiate the process of becoming more inclusive

7.4.1 LEARNING TO BE AN EFFECTIVE CONSULTANT SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST
I aimed at becoming an effective consultant speech and language therapist because it will help me to achieve my vision of advocating for the rights of students with the label of SLCN within educational settings. I also believed that by learning to become an effective consultant I will be able to exert more influence to change systems, pedagogy and attitudes at Palmyrah College and subsequently in Sri Lanka.

I started out as a researcher with particular skills, a knowledge base surrounding the topics discussed and perspectives influenced by my own life experiences, values and beliefs. Personal transformation was fuelled through learning that was consciously attempted due to my belief that learning is central to good decision making. The critical engagement with literature and research studies resulted in the thesis containing, in-depth discussions of a range of issues. The study of pertinent material was not restricted to a particular time of the research process but continued throughout the research as new ideas emerged,

problems surfaced and decision making demanded innovativeness and flexibility in thinking.

Further, contact with my supervisors played a key role in my learning to attain excellence as a researcher and practitioner. They encouraged me to maintain my individuality, problematise my practice and investigate in depth by listening to my experiences in a setting far removed from theirs, posing questions and making suggestions. I learned by listening to their perspectives, visiting different settings in the UK and reflecting on varied views and observations. My conversations with them also sharpened my skill to explain my thoughts, present my arguments and justify my actions in a systematic and coherent manner. Their remarks tinged with encouragement urged me to think beyond and refine my work. The many discussions surrounding research methodology helped the evolution of my epistemology. While writing the thesis I was constantly advised to maintain a critical engagement with my practice, experiences and values. The many revisions necessary to gain clarity of thought and values, also witnessed a growth in the art of written communication. Hence, my learning was maximised as experienced by another researcher by 'being' and 'doing' (Grant, 2007).

Through the action research process I am claiming that my knowledge and understanding regarding inclusive education, students with the label of SLCN and adult-child communication improved. I also acquired skills that will help me to be an effective consultant. The areas in my life that witnessed change are identified as, an enhanced understanding of 'me' as an individual and a professional, becoming a better communicator and forming a personal view of the role of a consultant within educational settings in Sri Lanka.

Understanding of 'me' as an individual and as a professional improved
Reflection which is an integral part of an action research journey compelled me to look inwards at my personal and professional life. This was a daunting task as explained by others (Dadds and Hart, 2001) because it required a high degree of professionalism to handle the personal and public criticism that ensues.

Since I firmly believe that knowledge of oneself enables greater productivity, despite being challenged by the personal nature of the task and feelings of vulnerability at publishing my life data, I forged ahead with this task. I am rewarded for my diligence

with a heightened awareness regarding my own beliefs and values, my strengths, skills that can be expanded and attitudinal changes required, to further enhance my practice.

I became a better communicator

The research involved communicating with different people; administrators, teachers, students and parents, whilst preserving the democratic nature of action research. Hence, as an action researcher I was compelled to work cordially with all participants, treating all individuals equally with respect while at the same time holding all information gathered, as strictly confidential. Further, I had to find ways of convincing people from different walks of life to consider my vision for students with the label of SLCN while remembering, as it has been suggested, not to impose my views on them and to appreciate complexities present in different contexts and cultures (Armstrong, 2003).

As I listened to the administrators and realized that even though their personal values and beliefs might dictate a magnanimous approach towards inclusive education the ground reality prevents implementation of ideas based on these beliefs, I learned to negotiate with patience and tact. As I observed classrooms and identified adult-child communication practices that contradict the philosophy of inclusive education, my realisation that part of the real problem was not with the teachers but with the wider school system made me more assertive with the administrators. I challenged them to take note of the existing system for student support and give priority to decisions that required immediate attention. Therefore encounters with the administrators sharpened my communication skills as I sought to promote the ideal of inclusive education and gain support for the process of change that is required at a systems level, by assuring them that proposals are made based on recent theoretical perspectives, research findings and professional consensus.

The research involved inspiring teachers, to discard long held practices that they were familiar with and to engage in a process of transforming their communication. Introducing change it is reported often makes people, especially teachers resistant to even the best ideas (Day, 2002). As descriptions in chapters five and six reveal, I had to keep this in mind and play the role of an ambassador with discretion and diplomacy by being flexible, innovative and approachable.

By including students as research participants my intention was to carry out the research with them, rather than for them. Despite being a mother of two sons, when I attempted to access the students' thoughts, as described in chapter four, I realized the difficulties faced when entering the world of boys who were suspicious of adult motives, as they consider them adversaries rather than allies. Improvements in my communication are visible in the discussions contained in chapters four, five and six, when the students began to trust me and to share their thoughts, subsequent to the initial interviews.

Parent meetings taught me to appreciate the immense struggle they face as schools emphasise on exam success, to the exclusion of recognizing children as unique human beings. The parents' battle to bridge the gap between ability and disability with little support inspired me to use meetings, as occasions to empower them with knowledge to courageously advocate for their children.

Hence, I claim that each encounter with varied individuals involved listening to others views, negotiating, creating awareness and educating. This led to developing my communication skills, essential for successful consultancy.

I formed a personal view of a model for consultancy, within educational settings in Sri Lanka

Although it has been cautioned that the consultancy model is not the panacea for the provision of speech and language services in schools (Law et al., 2002), the research provides evidence that it is a suitable model for countries such as Sri Lanka, due to the low number of speech and language therapists when compared with country needs.

The model

Each individual consultant I believe must be allocated a cluster of schools and encouraged to consider a rotational model (Wren, et al., 2001), as described in chapter two. The benefit of following such a model is that the level of presence in individual schools will differ for each school term.

Hence, during the first term in the school consultants can focus on assessing students and providing teacher training (Lindsay et al., 2002 in Mercow et al., 2010; Dinnebeil, et al., 2009; Gascoigne, 2006; Keltchtermans, 2004). The second term can be a time when teachers identify goals for change, draw up plans, implement and monitor progress with

the active involvement of the consultant. As demonstrated in this research targeting a single or few areas for change, I believe will give the teachers the confidence required to continue with change even when the consultant's input is minimised. The withdrawal of consultants' involvement can be phased out in the third term, according to a preset plan suitable for each individual school. The period of time suggested must be altered to reflect the context and needs of the population.

Even as such a model will help the consultants to monitor students' response to intervention it will also be an opportunity to provide feedback to teachers and engage teacher commitment and interest to be part of the students' developmental process (Dinnebeil, et al., 2009). This is especially important in Sri Lanka where the culture demands supervision for better outcomes (Gunasekera, 2008).

Personal qualities

From a country perspective, the title consultant evokes images of an expert who therefore must be the ultimate receptacle of knowledge within the specialized field of work. However, I am in agreement that such a role is detrimental towards promoting inclusive education (Hartas, 2004). Hence, the primary role of speech and language therapists who take on the role of consultants within Sri Lanka is to discourage these expectations from stakeholders within schools; administrators, teachers, parents and past pupils, by themselves believing in the social model of disability. Consultants can follow a more liberal view by practicing and advocating the reciprocal consultancy model (Hartas, 2004) which places teachers and professionals on an equal platform with both groups learning from one another through 'cross fertilisation' (Watts, et al., 1997). They can also advocate for transdisciplinary teams and promote the virtues of collaborative teaming.

Responsibilities

By considering the lack of awareness and knowledge concerning speech, language and communication difficulties consultants ought to take on the responsibility of teacher training as suggested by several authors (Lindsay et al., 2002 in Mercow et al., 2010; Dinnebeil, et al., 2009; Gascoigne, 2006; Keltchtermans, 2004). Instead of merely focusing on technical details, the training programmes ought to be opportunities for debate and discussion (Moore and Slee, 2011; Mittler, 2000). Consultants can also introduce cleverly organised questions to generate conversation that will lead others to arrive at their own decisions and solutions (Hanko, 1999). Such an approach I believe will

further enable consultants and teachers to share a mutual understanding and respect of each others' roles and responsibilities (Daines et al., 1996 in Wren et al., 2001). Consultants must be actively involved in organising the different ways in which students will be supported by identifying, recommending and obtaining the necessary resources; human and material, to facilitate successful inclusion.

Consultants are also in a unique position I argue to convince school management to work in collaborative teams, involving parents (Moore 2011; Martin and Miller, 2003; UNESCO, 1994) and students (UNESCO, 1994; UN standard rules 1993 cited in Wertheimer, 1997; UNICEF, 1989) in the decision making process. Further, they must advocate for the provision of time for teachers to attend team meetings (Friend & Bursuck, 2002, Friend and Cook, 2003 and Idol, 2006 in Rizman, et al., 2006) and inclusion of parents, students and other professionals to develop effective services for students with the label of SLCN.

By presenting these details, I claim that by accessing a wide range of information, conducting discussions with my supervisors and engaging in an action research process I learned to be an effective consultant.

7.4.2 PROVIDE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FOR SCHOOLS TO INITIATE THE PROCESS OF BECOMING MORE INCLUSIVE

My desire to share my knowledge and skills with a wider audience prompted me to select this aim. Three pieces of evidence emerge from the action research process.

Firstly, teachers will consider including students with the label of SLCN when school administrators are willing to review their ethos, provide teacher training and resources. Schools can employ consultant speech and language therapists to support their efforts.

Secondly, students with the label of SLCN can succeed in regular classrooms when their teachers transform adult-child communication to reflect more inclusive practices and provide other identified supports.

Thirdly, inclusive education can become a reality if the Ministry of Education spearheads the process through unwavering commitment and active involvement. Interest groups,

parents, professionals, students and general public ought to actively campaign with one voice for such a result.

Disseminating evidence

Disseminating evidence has been an ongoing activity at different stages of this research. It has also been directed at diverse segments of society in the belief that awareness and understanding ought to be at all levels in a society.

Current efforts

Information was shared with the administrators of the focal school; the warden, sub-warden, headmaster of the primary school and sectional heads, from the inception of the research. As they lived through this process and witnessed the outcomes, the previous attitude of shying away from committing to in-class support changed. Hence, I consider that the empirical evidence convinced the administrators of the suitability of collaborative teaming with teachers to actively support students with the label of SLCN.

The school under consideration with its leadership role amongst the Christian Missionary Schools (CMSs) in Sri Lanka is in a unique position to influence other such schools present in every province, to embrace inclusionary practices. The acting-warden invited me in 2010 to discuss my research with the board of governors of the missionary schools and thus, initiated the process of creating awareness and understanding amongst this cluster of schools. The board of governors agreed to study the findings, prior to taking it to the national stage. Considering the empirical evidence, one missionary school in rural Sri Lanka embarked on the process of training its teachers in small groups as its commitment to become more inclusive.

I took several initiatives in the past year via the print and electronic media. In addition, live workshops were hosted in city and rural communities to create awareness and understanding regarding speech, language and communication difficulties while stressing on the role of adult-child communication to successfully include these students. I also sought to make public individual success stories after gaining permission from my clients because I believe that a growing body of evidence is a great inspiration for people who think that inclusion compromises education for the 'normal' child.

Additionally, by conducting community education programmes targeted at reducing negative stereotyping of disabled children, I attempted to create more positive attitudes

towards disability. This programme is planned through the teacher training institute I am affiliated with, as a continuous endeavour to uplift rural communities by educating teachers and creating awareness regarding inclusive education.

Future endeavours

Future endeavours include meeting with officials at the National Institute of Education (NIE) and presenting my findings. Due to my affiliation with the NIE as a guest lecturer for the special education programmes the officials are aware of and continuously display an interest in the research. They have also proposed that I publish the data in local dialect upon completion. Further, I have received an invitation to present a paper at an international conference on psychology and allied professions to be held in December 2011, in Sri Lanka. I am also open to suggestions to share my learning with Sri Lankan officials and global community. Hence, I will seek and pursue any such opportunities in the future.

In conclusion, I claim that the research evidence has begun to make waves in the Sri Lankan society. As I strive to improve my practice and disseminate findings in the future my sincere wish is that more schools and early childhood centres beyond the city of Colombo, its suburbs and major towns will be influenced to become more inclusive. It is also my sincere wish that as schools move towards inclusive education, more speech and language therapists will become interested in working in school settings in trans-disciplinary teams and thereby promote the social model of disability.

7.5 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question focused on inspiring others and read as;

> "How do I as a consultant, inspire teachers to be genuinely interested in employing adult-child communication practices which promote active learning, enhance self-esteem and improve social relationships of students with the label of Speech, Language and Communication Needs?"

The action research process focused primarily on ensuring that the research was conducted as a participatory democratic process for the purpose of empowering teachers and students. Hence, the action research cycles contained phases such as critical reflection and planning when teachers and the researcher worked as a collaborative team to identify problems and find solutions. Further, a CPD programme was launched by recognising teachers' limited knowledge regarding inclusive education and speech,

language and communication difficulties. The qualitative and quantitative data reveals that when teachers changed their communication practices and made the necessary provisions for students with the label of SLCN, as other studies have shown, they succeeded in facilitating learning and communication (Martin and Miller, 1999), boosting egos, raising self-esteem and fostering social relationships (Rhymes 2008; Hassan, 2007; Nayak, 2004; Fleming, Miller and Wright, 1997; Pignatelli, 1993) for these students.

Hence, I am claiming that action research and CPD programmes which stimulate debate and discussion (Moore and Slee, 2011; Mittler, 2000) and generate conversation through questions (Hanko, 1999) while providing background knowledge and skills are suitable tools to inspire teachers to think afresh about adult-child communication strategies they practice and attempt to include more inclusionary strategies while abstaining from practicing exclusionary strategies.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations arising from lessons learned during the action research process are offered to different individuals because the research demonstrated that the onus to support students with the label of SLCN is not the sole responsibility of the classroom teacher. I wish to emphasise that these recommendations stem from my understanding of findings that emerged from a research conducted in a school which displayed some inclusionary practices and its administrators were interested following more inclusive ideals. Hence, they are tentative suggestions that arise from a situation rather than the conclusive truth.

Speech and Language Therapists
- Become more involved in school communities
- Embrace the social model of disability and avoid pull out programmes that endorse the medical model
- Provide knowledge and awareness to the school community, to ensure inclusive educational practices that maximise benefits students can derive, are implemented
- Organise transdisciplinary teams in school settings and involve parents, students and teachers
- Provide indirect services by working through others in school settings

Consultant therapists

- Elect to pursue the reciprocal model of consultancy (Hartas, 2004) for students to benefit from the combined knowledge and skill of speech and language therapists and teachers
- Advocate collaborative teaming
- Follow the rotational model (Wren et al., 2001) and serve several schools simultaneously. Consider the length of each phase according to the number of teachers and the number of students with the label of SLCN.
- Engage in teacher training activities

School administrators

- Acquire knowledge regarding the philosophy of inclusive education and specifically provisions laid out in policy and legislature concerning inclusive education in Sri Lanka
- Organise with other Christian Missionary Schools to foster inclusive ideals as a way of life
- Change the existing school ethos to reflect inclusive ideals. Do not be satisfied with marginal and superficial changes to merely create a market image
- Consider ways of changing attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders to regarding inclusion
- Provide staff training opportunities required to transform pedagogy, communication, assessment and the environment; physical, emotional and temporal, to expand teacher capacity to respond to ALL students
- Make available resources, human and material, required to move the school towards inclusion
- Consider collaborative teaming as an important aspect of inclusion. Identify team members and allocate timetabled hours
- Include parents and students in the decision making process
- Encourage reflective conversations which will lead teachers to become more accountable for their practice and find new ways of addressing problems
- Promote action research to enrich teaching practice

Teachers

- Acquire the necessary knowledge and skill for inclusive education
- Let your practice reflect the philosophy of inclusive education

- Plan ahead to include ALL students
- Request time from administrators for collaborative teaming and reflective conversations

Support Unit staff
- Consider ways of working collaboratively with teachers, parents and students
- Create awareness regarding inclusion
- Advocate for inclusive practices at all times
- Acquire knowledge and skill on a continuous basis

Parents
- Study the legal provisions and policies in Sri Lanka
- Form parent support groups and collectively advocate for your children to receive quality inclusive educational services
- Actively campaign to create awareness and to ensure the rights of your children are met

7.7 FORMULA FOR INCLUSION FOR SRI LANKA

The research clearly indicates that the journey towards inclusion if advocated by authorities as a compulsory act and supported can become a reality. By considering this outcome I suggest a formula for Sri Lanka to make strides towards achieving inclusive education. The top-to-bottom approach which I envisage requires that the Minister of Education

- ➢ Invite professionals well versed in the philosophy of inclusive education, within and outside government service, to formulate a vision for inclusive education that is suitable for Sri Lanka
- ➢ Create public debate regarding the adequacy of existing policies and legislature
- ➢ Engage experts to both plan for inclusive education including identifying a suitable timeframe
- ➢ Identify resource gaps, human, financial and material and find avenues of acquisition
- ➢ Make inclusive education compulsory in all schools, government, private and international at preschool, primary, secondary and college level
- ➢ Provide a framework for change for schools in a clearly set out document, with targets that involves time targets

- ➢ Emphasise on collaborative teaming especially inclusion of parents, students and professionals in the decision making process
- ➢ Ensure continuous training for administrators at zonal level
- ➢ Plan and implementing continuous training for teachers from all schools, at zonal level in the three dominant languages, Sinhalese, Tamil and English
- ➢ Organise follow up sessions with school administrators to ensure implementation of targets
- ➢ Design a structure to assist administrators to assess teacher commitment to change
- ➢ Encourage action research to facilitate transformation within schools
- ➢ Provide an arbitration system for parents to report exclusionary practices

7.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Several limitations of this research deserve mention.

The first limitation concerns the research setting and the ability to generalise evidence to the wider education system in Sri Lanka. The research was set in a private fee levying school, a setting different from the government schools which dominate the education system in Sri Lanka. Student to teacher ratio and the percentage of trained teachers in private schools is lower than reported in public schools while majority of students are from a higher economic stratum in society. Hence, the consultancy model suggested although applicable needs to be adapted to suit the conditions of individual schools.

The research was also conducted at a time of war and uncertainty. The psychological trauma and tensions experienced by myself and the research participants who represent the multi ethnic community, influenced the outcomes of the research. Since the research participants will to survive was greater than the commitment to research, the action research process required to be rejuvenated from time to time, to counteract the impact of the many disruptions that hampered the smooth flow of research activities periodically and caused a loss of momentum. Should a similar research be conducted at a time of peace the outcomes may be different.

The research was also influenced by the changes in administration. Decisions for each action cycle were endorsed by different individuals, as wardens changed in quick succession. Should the same warden have remained throughout the research process, the direction of the research would have been different.

7.9 DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

When considering possibilities for future research an aspect not given priority in this research; the non-verbal element in adult-child communication needs to be explored. I am stating this fact because non-verbal communication as discussed in the literature review (Mathieson and Price, 2003) is as or more important than verbal communication.

There is also a need for future research pertaining to inclusion of students with the label of SLCN to be carried out in a public school setting with a larger sample of teachers. Considering the multicultural nature of the Sri Lankan society engaging in research which focuses on the manner in which teachers from different ethnic groups engage in adult-child communication when teaching students with the label of SLCN will be useful to generalise the study to a larger population.

Further, research is required to gauge the full impact of the consultancy service in clusters of schools as suggested in the model envisaged for future practice.

7.10 CONCLUSION

The thesis is my contribution to a more balanced knowledge of the delivery of inclusive education and understanding of speech, language and communication difficulties, in Sri Lanka and to a greater appreciation of the power of action research to transform practice. It is 'my story of their stories' (Birch, 1998, p182 in Coy 2006, p427) formulated as a result of my association as a consultant and an action researcher in the context in which the narrative was enacted and told.

As I conclude my 'story' I am satisfied that by learning to be an effective consultant I have broken the silence surrounding teachers attitudes towards students with the label of SLCN as reflected in their communication. Teachers have been inspired through the use of tools including action research and teacher training to engage in communication practices which are inclusionary whilst refraining from exclusionary practices. The lessons learned from the action research process provided empirical evidence regarding the manner in which Sri Lanka can initiate the process of becoming more inclusive. It is hoped that the recommendations given for each category of research participants and the speech and language therapy profession, will spur further thought and action that will bring Sri Lanka closer to boasting of an inclusive education system available for ALL children without exception.

Despite the limitations of the research and challenges faced, many lives have been touched and people have been inspired to think anew. Evidence suggests that the collective effects of the research although yet not quantified has reached beyond the school boundaries. What remains for me is to move into the future with confidence never ceasing to improve my learning and practice to uplift students with the label of SLCN. From the perspective of Palmyrah College, commitment to continue with the process already begun by considering the recommendations will ensure the building of a truly inclusive school in the future.

EPILOGUE

As I am putting the final touches to the thesis I received two telephone calls; one from the North of Sri Lanka and another from the Maldives Islands. This story is relevant to indicate the awakening in society regarding educating disabled students in inclusive settings, in the South Asian region. It also reflects the growing need for professionals, to guide schools towards the goal of inclusive education.

With the long war ended and life slowly returning to normal, the citizens of the northern peninsula in Sri Lanka have sought approval from the ministry of education to seek my services. Their enthusiasm makes me believe that my learning and experience gained especially in the last four years will be of immense benefit. However, my knowledge and skills I believe will be tested and new learning will emerge as I work with people who have lived through the horrors of war and have come out with hope.

The request from the Maldives was initiated by a client's parent; an official at the government teacher training unit in that country. She relocated her family in Sri Lanka for six months to avail of my services as a speech and language therapist for her son. Realising that the support services in the existing school system in the Maldives is insufficient to ensure inclusive educational experiences for her son and able to influence teacher training programmes, she is now spearheading the designing of a programme to train teachers in the philosophy of inclusive education and associated pedagogy. She seeks my professional services for this endeavour.

My exposure to date, to the work ethics of Maldivians make me realise that this will be an experience with much contrast to the experience I will have in the north of Sri Lanka. The learning curve will be different as I will have to slow down my natural pace to match the easy tempo of living enjoyed by the Maldivians.

I am looking forward to these projects in diverse contexts with diverse groups of individuals, whose cultures, religions and languages differ from mine. Both experiences I am certain will enhance my learning, improve my skills and mould a whole new range of characteristics within me.

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4.8 CUMULATIVE DATA ANALYSIS GRID: PRE-ACTION

Code	Shanuth		Josh		Amal		Yadesh		Heshan		Yovaan		Sajeeve		T	Σ	%
1	2	0	0	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	0	1	3	2	22		
2a	7	0	2	11	1	2	0	3	0	0	1	6	2	2	37		
2b	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	1	4	3	27		
3a	8	2	4	3	3	8	5	4	6	0	8	1	3	13	68		
3b	5	5	2	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	1	6	2	3	31		
4a	2	9	1	1	4	3	1	7	3	3	4	2	2	3	45		
4b	2	8	8	3	10	4	8	4	4	3	2	3	0	6	65		
5a	3	0	1	1	0	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	0	2	16		
5b	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	3	0	9		
6a	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	5		
6b	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	2	0	1	12	127	19
7a	3	3	0	0	0	1	4	2	2	1	2	0	2	2	22		
7b	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	10		
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	371	56
9a	3	1	0	2	2	0	3	1	3	2	3	6	3	4	33		
9b	1	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	1	4	2	0	0	18		
9c	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2		
9d	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2		
10a	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	7		
10b	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4		
11a	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	5		
11b	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	1	2	0	3	1	1	0	13	84	13
12a	8	2	3	2	2	0	8	3	7	15	7	7	4	9	77		
12b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2		
12c	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	9		
12d	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3		
12e	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
12f	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	5		
12g	0	1	1	0	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	12	108	16
13	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	1	9		
14a	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	10		
14b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1		
15a	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	0	5	2	2	0	19		
15b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
16a	0	0	0	1	2	5	0	6	1	1	2	1	1	1	21		
16b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
17	0	0	3	4	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	6	4	2	24		
18	3	0	1	0	1		3	4	1		1	2	2	0	18	102	15
T	47	42	41	40	40	37	50	50	51	51	62	52	48	58		669	100

Code	Shanuth		Josh		Amal		Yadesh		Heshan		Yovaan		Total	Σ	%
1	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	11		
2a	2	8	4	3	4	5	7	3	2	11	2	10	61		
2b	7	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10		
3a	0	3	8	6	4	5	2	2	3	1	1	3	38		
3b	6	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	11		
4a	4	2	6	4	5	3	2	4	5	6	4	3	48		
4b	3	5	3	4	5	1	1	3	5	3	3	2	38		
5a	0	0	0	3	0	3	2	4	4	0	7	10	33		
5b	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2		
6a	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2		
6b	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	93	18
7a	1	1	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	10	19		
7b	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4		
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	285	55
9a	0	3	2	2	0	2	7	4	1	1	3	2	27		
9b	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6		
9c	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	4		
9d	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1		
10a	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	5	14		
10b	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		
11a	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	5		
11b	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	7	66	13
12a	1	7	8	5	1	4	8	3	6	11	5	14	73		
12b	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	4		
12c	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	1	7		
12d	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
12e	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		
12f	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5		
12g	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	8	98	16
13	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		
14a	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	6		
14b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
15a	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	10		
15b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
16a	0	0	2	2	4	6	0	4	4	1	2	0	25		
16b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
17	3	0	1	0	4	1	2	4	6	3	0	1	25		
18	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	75	16
T	29	40	46	48	37	44	41	45	42	44	38	69	523	523	100

Code	Shanuth		Josh		Amal		Yadesh		Heshan		Yovaan		Total	Σ	%
1	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	1	2	2	3	1	15		
2a	8	10	20	4	4	7	2	6	5	1	9	9	85		
2b	5	3	4	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	3	19		
3a	7	4	7	9	5	5	11	4	5	10	6	1	74		
3b	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	6		
4a	3	11	6	7	4	4	10	2	6	4	2	6	65		
4b	2	2	0	0	2	6	5	5	2	0	6	6	36		
5a	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	3	0	13		
5b	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	8		
6a	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	6		
6b	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	6	113	17
7a	2	4	0	0	2	1	4	1	0	1	0	2	17		
7b	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	13	363	55
9a	3	0	0	2	3	0	0	1	1	0	5	3	18		
9 b	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	4	13		
9 c	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5		
9 d	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3		
10 a	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	6		
10b	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	0	0	10		
11 a	0	2	4	1	1	2	2	4	4	6	4	0	30		
11b	1	0	0	0	1	8	0	1	4	0	0	1	16	101	16
12 a	6	2	4	1	5	2	3	3	0	7	3	2	38		
12 b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	6		
12 c	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	5		
12d	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	6		
12 e	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1		
12 f	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	9	15		
12g	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	73	11
14 a	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	4	2	5	4	4	24		
14b	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
15 a	3	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	5	2	1	1	20		
16 a	3	7	4	3	3	10	4	3	4	2	3	2	48		
17	1	4	0	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	4	23		
18	0	0	1	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	7	120	18
T	51	62	55	33	43	62	49	56	49	58	63	74	655	655	100