Consciousness raising in foreign language vocabulary learning and reading

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

The University of Leeds
School of Education

March, 1998

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

Abstract

This study on consciousness raising in foreign language vocabulary learning and reading took place in a reading comprehension course for university students in Finland. The aim was to find out what kind of changes in vocabulary and reading strategies and related matters the students underwent during the course and to investigate what support the course can give to the changes.

The data were collected during a three-week course where I acted as a teacher and a researcher, and through interviews five months after the course. The course offered the students consciousness raising possibilities in the form of teacher-led sessions, group work and questionnaires. These activities form the main source of the data.

Two mature students were selected under closer scrutiny. The transcribed data were analysed in four ways to 1) specify the perceived changes in vocabulary and reading strategies and in related matters, 2) to establish a link between the teacher-led consciousness raising and the changes, 3) to illuminate the importance of reflection in the change and 4) to investigate the support of group work to the changes in strategies of finding out word meanings.

The findings of the study support the view that classroom learning does not take place in a vacuum. Both case study students showed changes in their perceptions about the reading process and about their ways of dealing with vocabulary. They also showed changes in their perceptions of themselves as learners. Both students, for example, articulated increasing confidence in themselves as language learners. It is likely that the teacher-led consciousness raising in the classroom and, in particular, the group work helped the learners reflect on their background and learning and, thus, change. The findings also indicate that the students' perceptions of the benefits of consciousness raising lasted at least until five months after the course.

This study gave evidence that the two active learners subjectively perceived consciousness raising as beneficial. Future studies need to pay attention to the link between consciousness raising and the possible increase in proficiency. It is also important to study students whose participation in the course is not as active as that of the two case study students in this study.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to express my warmest thanks to all the people - too numerous to mention individually - who have at various stages of this dissertation given their support to me.

In particular, I would like to thank the students in the English reading comprehension course at the Helsinki summer university, Finland, in summer 1996 for co-operating when I collected the data. My warmest thanks go to the four students, "Helen", "Rachel", "P" and "A", who supplied me with full sets of data during the course and who later came to be interviewed. Without their co-operation, I could not have carried out this study in my own teaching situation which is dear to me.

I am also indebted to my supervisors Jennifer Jarvis and Lynne Cameron at the School of Education for their guidance and suggestions. The role they played in steering and forming my thinking about the issues in this study was invaluable and much appreciated.

Many of my collegues at the Helsinki University Language Centre and elsewhere at Helsinki University were helpful when I needed to ask for advice, check details, etc. I owe lecturer Leena Koskinen a special thanks for the flexible teaching arrangements I was able to negotiate when working on this dissertation.

Lecturer Tiina Saali from the Kuopio University Language Centre (Finland) deserves warm thanks for her encouragement and comments on parts of the manuscript.

The Helsinki University Language Centre granted me generous leaves of absences for which I am grateful. I am also thankful for the financial support I received from the University of Helsinki in the first two years of my stay in England. The support from Suomen Akatemia (The Finnish Academy) and Suomen Kulttuurirahasto (Finnish Cultural Foundation) was essential in making my stay in England free of financial worries.

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1. Introduction

It is the challenges in my own teaching context that sparked off the idea to do this research. I teach English reading comprehension to Finnish university students who have had between three and ten years of English at school by the time they (have to) take a reading comprehension course. Despite the number of years of formal instruction and other exposure to English, a foreign language in Finland, the students taking my courses often find the task of fulfilling their required reading in English daunting. A lot, if not most, of their required reading is in English. The complaint the students often utter is their lack of vocabulary when reading in the course and for exams. This knowledge of a problem was the starting point for my research.

In order to find out answers, I carried out my research in a three-week reading comprehension course for social science students. I myself was the teacher in the course. The focus of my study became two female mature students whose vocabulary and reading were in need of improvement.

Initially, I was interested in training my students in vocabulary learning strategies and in seeing how their strategies would change as a result of the training. With the help of the background literature, my supervisors and my experiences as a teacher, I came to realise how limited this causal line of reasoning was and what a multi-faceted issue strategy use is. Instead of a training study, my study then became what I call a consciousness raising study. It also became a case study of two learners. It takes into account the context of the students, the context of the classroom. It is a study where the lines between the data collection instruments and classroom activities/tasks are intertwined. For example, I arranged consciousness raising sessions to introduce alternative ways of dealing with vocabulary, but at the same time these sessions are part of the data. I set group work tasks for the students to discuss meanings in texts and their own learning, and these tasks were recorded. I also asked students to fill in questionnaires which worked as data collection instruments as well as consciousness raisers.

Through the two case study participants, I discovered the richness of the language learning worlds of the students. They readily articulated about themselves as learners and persons, about their learning, about their language awareness and their strategy knowledge and use. I wanted to see if I could uncover changes in matters related to vocabulary and reading through these articulations which were collected in the three-week course and four months after it. I also wanted to find out what kind of support the course might have given to these changes. More than anything else, my study is my interpretation of the changes and the support. It is an illustration of a way of alleviating perceived problems in vocabulary and reading. The alleviation the case study students experienced took form in a network of changes, but a change in strategies, which I initially found important, constitutes only part of that alleviation.

I have divided this thesis into the following chapters. In chapter 2, I introduce the reader to the background literature which at various stages of this research influenced my thinking. The first part of the background literature gives an introduction to the thinking of researchers working within the Vygotskian tradition. In the second part of the literature review, I cover theory and studies from the field of vocabulary learning and teaching. Some of the literature forming my thinking has been presented in other chapters, if appropriate. Chapter 3 presents an overview of the context of this study. Chapter 4 describes issues about and around the data collection. Chapter 5 deals with my ways of processing the data. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 are descriptive analyses of the data, each with a different focus and different findings. In chapter 6, I step into analysis (1) which deals with the change or stability of the participants, Helen and Rachel, in key metaknowledge areas such as perceptions of language and themselves as learners. Analysis (1) also takes into account some stable features in Helen's and Rachel's metaknowledge that may have a role to play in the areas that change. In addition, analysis (1) describes the change in Helen and Rachel actually using a particular strategy and/or in claiming they use a strategy. Chapter 7 sees, with the help of analysis (2), the connection between the teacher-led consciousness raising activities and the changes detected in analysis (1). Chapter 8 follows the same line of enquiry as chapter 7, but it looks at the student-student interaction from two points of view. First, analysis (3) in 8.1 focuses on reflection in group work as a way of sharing meanings. Second,

analysis (4) in 8.2 illustrates students solving problems with vocabulary and how this problem solving may have supported the changes in Helen and Rachel. I draw together the findings of this research in chapter 9. Chapter 10 discusses the implications of this research. Chapter 11 is a concluding note.

2. Literature review

This study took shape in a university reading comprehension course where the students considered vocabulary as one of their problems. In that course, an effort was made, in the hope of sowing the seed of change, to introduce conscious ways of coping with the problems in vocabulary. Because of the nature of my study, it touches on several fields of (language) learning literature which I review in this chapter. First, in section 2.1 and 2.1.1, there is literature that provides us with a learning theory. It is followed by a section on group work in the Vygotskian framework (2.2). Then I discuss learner training (2.3) and consciousness raising (2.4).

I move on to the field of vocabulary learning. A study on vocabulary learning and reading strategies in the context of reading needs a discussion on the importance of vocabulary in reading (section 2.5), since if vocabulary was not considered an important element in reading, consciousness raising in vocabulary and reading could be redundant. The notion of vocabulary also leads to a discussion on word knowledge (section 2.6). Word knowledge has implications both on the consciousness raising that took place in this study and on the analysis of the data which shows students pondering about the continuum of knowing a word. In section 2.7, I consider vocabulary in reading with the help of four theoretical hypotheses which form a continuum based on implicitness/explicitness in learning. Section 2.8 highlights three descriptive studies on vocabulary learning, all from different learning situations, which helped me see various approaches to vocabulary, but also realise how the context of data collection and the interests of the researcher influence the data.

I then continue from the theory of vocabulary learning and the descriptive studies to teaching of vocabulary or intervening with existing strategies in a classroom setting. Section 2.9 deals with approaches to teaching vocabulary (to teaching vocabulary strategies). In section 2.10, I focus on intervention studies where the researchers attempted to teach strategies to the students, i.e. to intervene with the strategies the students had prior to the study. These intervention approaches are highly relevant to the

consciousness raising in my study, i.e. they too were attempts to change the students' approaches to a particular problem. Finally, in section 2.11, I consider students' perceptions on strategy training, a subjective area not widely covered, yet important when seeing the learners bringing their share to learning and where the affective side is regarded as important. Section 2.12 concludes the literature review.

2.1 Learning theory - general rationale

Because of the focus of this study on change in individuals and the supporting aspects of interaction on that change, I have favoured the Vygotskian approach which provides a framework that accommodates both the inter-individual and intra-individual sides. What unites the Vygotskian school and what helped me make sense of my study (where part of the data were collected from group interaction) is seeing interaction as a way of learning/bringing sense of personal meaning to a task. The works by Vygotsky himself and those by his followers, in particular, by Bruner - whose earlier works were within the Piagetian paradigm, but whose later works (1986, 1990, 1996) are his interpretation of Vygotsky - have guided me. In addition to these two main sources from the field of learning theory, I have referred to works by people writing within the Vygotskian framework about language learning, e.g. Donato (1994), Kowal and Swain (1994), Lantolf and Appel (1994), van Lier (1996). When needed, I have incorporated ideas of other scholars to my discussion in 2.1.1 which basically constructs the theoretical learning framework of this study.

It would be wrong to think that only the Vygotskian psychological approach to learning was present in my study, although it provides the general framework for it, in particular in the analysis and interpretation of the data. In fact, most of the studies reviewed after section 2.2 stem from the wide and varied field of cognitive psychology the emphasis of which is the learner's cognitive involvement in learning, i.e. the emphasis is on the intra-individual aspects of learning. I have, for example, reviewed studies focusing on memory strategies (2.8 and 2.10), as part of the consciousness raising in my study was on memory strategies. I see no contradiction in accepting an eclectic approach in my study. The Vygotskian approach/cultural psychology/social constructivism/activity

theory and the approaches within cognitive psychology concentrate on different areas and together may offer a more comprehensive picture than either line of thought on its own. Also, they may not be as exclusive of one another as one would first think, as pointed out in 2.3 and 2.4.

2.1.1 Learning theory - Vygotskian framework

To organise section 2.1.1 on learning theory, I introduce the concepts of *quest for meaning*, *consciousness* and *consciousness raising* and *the relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal meaning making* which shape Bruner's writing in particular and which all stem from Vygotsky. I am referring to these concepts throughout this study. Although a linear presentation would be neat, my presentation does not separate these concepts from one another altogether, as the separation is not possible nor desired.

Quest for meaning

Let us tackle the *quest for meaning* first. In the Vygotskian school, learners are seen as active, agentive participants of the learning process. The force driving them forward is their quest for meaning, for personal relevance or authenticity (see e.g. van Lier (1996), Bruner (1996), Williams and Burden (1997)). According to Bruner (1990: 20), "culture and the quest for meaning within culture are the proper causes of human action". Children ask questions, because they want to find out, to construct a meaning to something they do not yet know. Adults, when learning in a yet unknown area, are not unlike children. They too are after a meaning. These meanings are of different types and situated on different levels.

Bruner maintains that people assign "meaning to things in different settings on particular occasions" (1996: 3). He talks about the intra-individual side of meaning making, i.e. that meanings are "in the mind", but stresses the inter-individual side of it, i.e. that meanings stem from the culture in which they are created. The link between culture where the meanings come from and the meaning itself makes it possible to

negotiate and communicate meanings. Nobody, according to Bruner (ibid.), is able to carry out the quest for meanings without the help of culture's symbolic systems, one of which is language. In an earlier work, Bruner (1986: 122) states that "[m]eaning is what we can agree upon or at least accept as a working basis for seeking agreement about the concept at hand". It is perhaps because of the quest for meaning that each participant brings to interaction that each interaction is unique. For example, in a classroom setting, where a task has been given, the participants reformulate the task, making it into something of relevance to them, making it into an activity (see e.g. Donato 1994, Kowal and Swain 1994).

The concept of quest for meaning is important in chapters 6, 7 and 8 where I look at my students' sense making.

Consciousness

With an intention to come back to the quest for meaning and to the agentive approach of a learner, let me now review consciousness (and thereafter consciousness raising). One could ask whether the quest for meaning of an agentive person is a conscious process. First we need to decide what we mean by consciousness. The plethora of works on consciousness does not make my task easy, but I am as concise as possible for the purpose of my study. The students in my study articulated views on themselves as learners, on language learning, on language and on their use of strategies in particular situations. In addition, they showed, in action, that they were using a particular strategy, sometimes through articulation of what they were doing, sometimes it was otherwise observable. Now were these students with an agentive approach and a quest for meaning acting consciously?

Let us start with Vygotsky. He defined consciousness as "the objectively observable *organization* of behavior that is imposed on humans through participation in sociocultural practices" (Wertsch 1985b: 187). Vygotsky saw consciousness as co-knowledge which is constructed in interaction, as a sociocultural practice (Donato 1994: 38-39). Consciousness for Vygotsky had two subcomponents, that is intellect and affect

(which I come back to later), which are "dynamically interconnected, transforming one another constantly. Consciousness, then, organizes human activity - socio-cognitive activity in Vygotsky's scheme - through intellectual and affective processes." (van Lier 1996: 71). This type of consciousness, with its emphasis on the intellectual and affective processes, organises learning. The processes are set in motion by "sociocultural activity in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) [discussed earlier under Consciousness raising], the innate attention-focusing preferences of the child, and (increasingly) the autonomous, Self-regulated actor him or herself." (op. cit. 72). It could be argued that when people interact, when they share meanings, they are shaping consciousness, although, as van Lier (op. cit. 71) points out, they may not be "conscious of these activities in the sense of meta-cognition".

The interpersonal type of consciousness defined above is not the same as metacognition which for Vygotsky, according to van Lier (op. cit. 71-72), constituted another type of consciousness, "being conscious of being aware, or of attending". Consciousness defined this way is more of an intrapersonal type, although clearly not formed in isolation in any sense. According to Vygotsky (1962: 90), "consciousness and control appear only at a late stage in the development of a function, after it has been used and practised unconsciously and spontaneously. In order to subject a function to intellectual and volitional control, we must first possess it." As pointed out by van Lier (1996: 71-72), this second definition overlaps with Schmidt's categories (1994) of consciousness. In his well-known article, Schmidt (ibid.) discusses four categories of consciousness which can be observed in people's everyday speech as well as in studies about consciousness. He distinguishes between

- consciousness as intentionality (i.e. a person's aims, plans, desires, deliberateness) (op. cit. 15-16)
- consciousness as attention ("subjective awareness of the objects of focal attention") (op. cit. 16-18)
- consciousness as awareness (op. cit. 18-20)
- consciousness as control (op. cit. 20-21)

All of Schmidt's categories involve a learner capable of somehow stepping out of his or her actions and observing/thinking/talking about them.

All types of consciousness from above (i.e. both of Vygotsky's definitions, the second of which embraces Schmidt's categories) are of importance in my study. On one hand, I was interested in the first definition, i.e. students' consciousness in interaction, on their construction of co-knowledge - which I claim in chapter 8 helped them change. On the other hand, I was also intrigued by the notion of consciousness as it appears in everyday speech (i.e. consciousness in Schmidt's categories and Vygotsky's second definition). The students' articulations from different data collection instruments used in my study deal with consciousness as intention, attention, awareness and control, i.e. with consciousness as metacognition.

With the help of the above definitions of consciousness, we can turn back to the students who have an agentive approach and a quest for meaning. They can, indeed, be said to be acting consciously in their quest for meaning, for the quest for meaning, as observed in my study, incorporated articulated construction of co-knowledge and metacognitive articulations of areas relevant to the students' learning.

Consciousness raising

One of the key features of my study is consciousness raising. How do people change? How does their consciousness, as defined in the second (intra-individual) sense, alter? The definitions of consciousness given above may help us get started. Vygotskian thinking entails that interpersonal meaning making is a way of promoting change, i.e. consciousness as co-knowledge is seen as an important field of potential change on the intra-level. It is the concept of zone of promixal development (ZPD) that has been used as a way of explaining learning, change. Vygotsky gave this definition of the ZPD

> "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978: 86)

The help/guidance more capable participants give in interaction is often called "scaffolding" (see Wood et al 1976: 89-99). When thinking of scaffolding in consciousness raising, we are faced with a fairly easy-to-understand concept with fairly

abstract applications. Language as a tool, as a way of sorting one's thoughts out is relevant as a "scaffold" in the context of consciousness raising. What can language do to change consciousness? How can the use of language scaffold? This takes us back to agentiveness, discussed earlier under Quest for meaning, and collaboration. Bruner (1996: 92-93) sees a person as somebody with an agentive approach to problem-solving, to the world around us. But a person is not able to deploy his or her mind unassisted or unscaffolded. It is the dialogue between the agentive mind and its context that builds the scaffold.[1] The aim of scaffolding in collaboration is "to achieve not unanimity, but more consciousness. And more consciousness always implies more diversity" (op. cit. 97). Scaffolding may work through reflection. Bruner, when discussing narrative construal of reality, points out that the three classic antidotes for unconsciousness are contrast, confrontation and metacognition (op. cit. 147). Waking up and learning of the relativity of knowing by contrast and confrontation that the others may offer may work as "medicine for unawareness" (op. cit. 148). But it is metacognition (where the object of thought is thought itself or e.g. turning around to see what one has learnt) that provides a base for negotiation of meanings in interaction (op. cit. 88, 148). The studies by Kowal and Swain (1994) and Donato (1994) reported later illustrate scaffolding processes in a language learning situation.

The point of consciousness raising in a language classroom is making students more in control, aware, attentive and intentive of what they are doing, by helping them reflect on their ways of doing. This helping takes place in interaction, in the first form of consciousness. Bruner sees "thinking about thinking" as an essential tool which empowers learners in education (1996: 19). In 2.3, I take a look at the learner training approach in second language teaching which is one way of empowering learners. Learner training overlaps with what I have called consciousness raising in 2.4, although it does not stem from overtly Vygotskian framework.

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[1] Different researchers use the term 'scaffolding' to denote to different concepts. Mercer (1994) makes a distinction between 'scaffolding' and 'helping'. He sees scaffolding as coming from the teacher and, minimally, resulting in a learner independently using, say, a skill. However, Donato (1994: 42), for example, uses 'scaffolding' when referring to learner-learner interaction where "learners *mutually construct* a scaffold" out of the negotiation. This "scaffolded help" in Donato (op. cit. 51) resulted in independent performance.

Consciousness raising in an important idea in my study. Consciousness raising, thinking about thinking/doing was expected to be seen stemming from the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions through the group work interaction.

Holistic approach

I have so far outlined the most essential aspects of Vygotskian learning theory. There is, however, one more aspect of the Vygotskian theory that needs mentioning to this thesis. The Vygotskian framework is what one may call a holistic approach. The notion of a learner's context as something important and valuable implies a holistic viewpoint. 'Context' is a much used term in language learning literature, and its use is particularly prominent in Vygotskian research. In my study, I use 'context' to refer to 1) a learner's background, such as the institutional, cultural and personal contexts, 2) a learner's immediate learning situation which consists of the task, the other learners and the interaction with them. I also apply 'context' to refer to 3) the textual context in reading, such as the support of the surrounding text and prefixes and 4) those areas in one's background that help in interpreting a text, such as previous knowledge of the issue. The focus of my writing determines in what sense 'context' has been used here.

As mentioned earlier, Vygotsky regarded intellect and affect as the subcomponents of consciousness. (They can also be regarded as context in the sense of the learner's background.) Also, Bruner favours seeing cognition and emotion as part of a whole:

> ... the components of the behavior I am speaking of are not emotions, cognitions, and actions, each in isolation, but aspects of a larger whole that achieves its integration only within a cultural system. Emotion is not usefully isolated from the knowledge of the situation that arouses it. Cognition is not a form of pure knowing to which emotion is added (whether to perturb its clarity or not). And action is a final common path based on what one knows and feels. (Bruner 1986: 117-118)

There are others too, e.g. Williams and Burden (1997) who define themselves as social constructivists, and scholars in the humanistic tradition, who have stood for a holistic view of making sense, of language learning. Building a truly holistic picture of a learner would be a daunting task, as there is a great number of overlapping features that play a role - intellect, affect, background, attributions to name a few. Bruner's holistic

approach, which he calls cultural psychology, takes into account the beliefs people have of themselves and of the culture around them. Some of these beliefs are individual manifestations, some are shared by the members of the same culture. Bruner writes

> A culturally sensitive psychology (especially one that gives a central role to folk psychology as a mediating factor) is and must be based not only upon what people actually *do*, but what they *say* they do and what they *say* caused them to do what they did. It is also concerned with what people *say* others did or why. And above all, it is concerned with what people *say* their worlds are like. (Bruner 1990: 16)

The quotation shows how valuable Bruner considers metacognition and saying, which are key concepts in the analysis of my study. It also shows the agentive approach Bruner believes people have. And above all, it views people as making sense of the worlds they live in. It views people as having a context. It is the sense making and reason-giving in context which connect Bruner's views to a study carried out in Finland on everyday beliefs of Finnish students on language, language learning and language teaching. The study has been reported in Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996). The findings of the study can be linked to some of the findings in my study and illuminate some aspects of the context of language learning, language teaching and language Finnish students have and often share. This context and these beliefs are often present in the data of my study too and they are clearly important in understanding a Finnish university student with years of exposure to foreign languages, foreign language learning and teaching whose present and often future at least to some extent depends on the use of foreign languages.

Both Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996) are reporting from the point of view of Bakhtin, a contemporary of Vygotsky, who also regarded the interaction between the individual and the social as a dialogue. The research team collected the data on everyday knowledge of language using essays written by Finnish students, questionnaires, group discussions and interviews. The methods used allowed the students to reflect on their previous statements and beliefs and thus produced an illuminating picture of the students' (often changing) views. The data were analysed without preprescribed criteria, and, subsequently, the areas most prominent in the data turned out to be the participants' beliefs on language teaching, language learning and language. The writers claim that everyday knowledge of language can be separated into two fields, i.e. the body of

common knowledge typical of a group and a set of more personal knowledge, and that the sources of everyday knowledge are personal experiences, socio-cultural context and institutional context (Dufva 1995: 30, 33 Dufva et al 1996: 49-50).

Dufva et al (1996: 52-54, 56-57) found three topics in the area of language teaching which bear relevance to my study. Finnish students often talk about the error-centredness of language teaching and its detrimental effects on one's Self, they also believe languages are nowadays taught at school in a manner different from that of their schooldays and they understate their knowledge of foreign languages. In the field of language, Dufva et al (1996: 67-68) report the students considered their mother tongue very important and foreign languages often "foreign" and less easy to use as a medium of getting one's meaning across. These findings are significant to my study, as they clearly point to the common socio-cultural context Finnish students have.

Dufva (1995: 46) points out that the perspective of ordinary speakers has consequences on the speakers themselves who "seem to benefit from talk which increases their awareness of language, and, perhaps, also their language skills." (Dufva 1995: 46). In addition, Dufva et al (1996: 82) say reflection may improve the speakers confidence. I discuss both these points in chapters 6, 7 and 8. Unfortunately, the reports on the study do not clearly show the participants' progression or change in awareness or confidence, although there is evidence of reflection in the extracts. The reporting of the study leaves a slightly anecdotal impression which partly explains the lack of reported awareness increase. The ten participants have been introduced in detail in Dufva et al (1996: 38-41), but the extracts of the data presented have not been ascribed to anyone in particular. Therefore, although the beliefs in the extracts are extremely interesting, it is not always very clear how representative they are or how to contextualise them. Adding to the problems of contextualising the reporting are the extracts that do not show their origin (instrument, question/previous articulation, etc.) Despite these drawbacks on reporting, Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996) have nicely shown some common trends in Finnish students' thinking - something which may be relatively easier in a small, in many ways homogeneous country than in a big, diverse country.

In this section I have reviewed the concepts of quest for meaning, consciousness and interpersonal and intrapersonal meaning making. I have also looked at the holistic view provided by the Vygotskian school. I carry these concepts and ideas to the rest of my study, as they help us in conceptualising and constructing it.

2.2 Vygotskian framework - group work

Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996), as shown above, have highlighted the importance of context in the sense of background, affective factors and socio-cultural factors to language learners. Let us now view how the Vygotskian approach is applied to research in a language classroom and how the concept of context finds a realisation there. Interpersonal communication is an innate element in the thinking of Bruner and the Vygotskian school. As interpersonal meaning making, which precedes intrapersonal aspects of meaning making, is one of the overarching features in this study, it is apt to consider research on group work in second language research/practice.

Group work as a language classroom practice has an appeal and is often taken for granted in the Western world, including Finland, for several reasons. For example, communicative language learning and more recently task-based learning with their orientation to group work have had their effects on the classroom practices. In recent years, the Vygotskian framework (approaches such as "activity theory") has started to gain a fairly prominent position in second language research. As explained earlier, Vygotskian thinking entails interpersonal communication as a key feature. Often the interpersonal plane is understood as communication between people who are physically at one place at the same time, although other forms of interpersonal interaction exist, e.g. a learner in interaction with a text (see Coughlan and Duff 1994: 174).

Two articles that stem from the Vygotskian framework (Donato 1994, Kowal and Swain 1994) have been influential on my study, in particular on the analysis of the data of my research. Both articles are mainly descriptive - about the "substance of the interactions" (Kowal and Swain 1994: 74) rather than discourse as counting turn taking etc. They report on group work in a language classroom as a way of influencing the L2 learning

process and tackle the construction of a given task by the students in their preferred ways (thus making it an activity), but the foci of the articles are different. I first review Donato's article on collective scaffolding in second language learning and then move on to Kowal and Swain's work on collaboration as a way of promoting students' language awareness. Both articles view student articulation on language as consciousness. The quest for meaning aspect in the studies lies in the students' quest for form and meaning in language production, in their attempt to produce language in an appropriate way.

Donato's research (1994) on collaborative scaffolding underlines the importance of the social context, of the collaborative nature of meaning making. Donato is interested in the variability of activity, i.e. "the interrelationship of motives, goals, and operations" (op. cit. 37) and internalisation, i.e. social interaction as a means of having the expert help the novice develop (ibid.) or as a means of having learners mutually scaffold each other in an activity (op. cit. 42) (scaffolding was discussed earlier in section 2.1.1). These concerns have often not been taken into account in second language research which until recently has paid more attention to the intra-individual side of language learning. The purpose of Donato's study was to "illustrate how students co-construct language learning experiences in the classroom setting" and to "uncover how L2 development is brought about on the social plane" (op. cit. 39). Both of Donato's aims are highly relevant to my research which, among other things, deals with group work as a supporting device to changes in articulations of students.

Donato carried out his study on third semester students of French at an American university who had been working on small group projects for ten weeks before the data were collected. In other words, the group members knew each other well and they had "a collective orientation to problem solving" (op. cit. 40). In the activities presented in the article, "the students helped each other plan what they anticipated they would need in order to participate in the oral activity that would take place during the next class" (ibid.). Donato's protocols show how students define the activity (or redefine the task set by the teacher) on the basis of their goals (see 2.1.1 under Quest for meaning). Donato states that "when students have the opportunity to help each other during nonstructured tasks and on the basis of internal goals for activity, they are observed to

create a context of shared understanding in which the negotiation of language form and meaning co-occur" (op. cit. 43).

The protocols in Donato's study give us an indication of what Donato calls *collective scaffold* (op. cit. 46) which means students acting as individually novices and collectively experts. They solve linguistic problems (focus on form in the protocols Donato has chosen to expose), point out discrepancies in the production and the perceived ideal solution and lower frustration levels by relying on the group as a collective (op. cit. 45) (again issues which I get back to in chapter 8). Donato shows that, at least in his data where learners knew one another and enjoyed the group work, instead of an expert-novice scaffolding process, a collective scaffolding process took place where no one and everyone is an expert as well as a novice. In the first protocol, "correct knowledge is subsequently secured from incomplete and incorrect knowledge" (ibid.), an issue relevant to the episodes I analysed in chapter 8. In the third protocol, one of the students is shown to ask for help, realising help is available, which, according to Donato (op. cit. 50), initiates a disinhibition process of the student, a process which makes it possible for "a novice to begin or maintain pursuit of the task goal and control frustration." (ibid.). Donato seems to be talking about a similar trait to what I have coined "confidence" in my analysis.

Donato's study also monitored the use of the forms constructed collectively afterwards in the activity that the students had prepared themselves for. Although Donato's main emphasis is on the scaffolding in the group work, the carry-over of the forms constructed collectively to an individual's speech (and not only to the individual who was "scaffolded") is what makes the study even more interesting. Donato reports (op. cit. 51) that in 32 cases of scaffolded help documented, "all but eight of the scaffolded utterances were used during the performance portion of the activity". If we are to use group work in the classroom, there need to be well-founded reasons for it. Donato has shown two reasons, i.e. the students' collective scaffolding and a student's independent use of the forms after the group work. The issue of independent use or knowledge after group work is touched upon in 8.2.

Although Donato's study gives us convincing information, we know not all language use situations in groups (in and out of classroom) are as supportive or scaffolding as the collective group work in Donato - think, for example, of a group that does not seem to have the incentive ("motive") to communicate for personal reasons, for lack of common ground, etc. So Donato's findings are indeed very context dependent and show how finely tuned the group work setting is. In an ideal case, the group members are inclined to participate in what is often involved in group work (asking, helping, asking for reinforcement to their ideas, not showing outright all they know, remembering because of what was said before) - even in some cases when in possession of appropriate knowledge of the task. Also, Donato does not state how the students in his study used language independently before the recorded group work. This information on a point of comparison would have added another dimension to the article, as his reporting is longitudinal only in the sense of showing the group work which was followed by independent language production.

As stated earlier, the study by Donato (1994) and that by Kowal and Swain (1994) share the same framework, but have different foci. The study by Kowal and Swain concentrates on collaborative language production tasks to promote students' language awareness. The learners in question were teenage intermediate learners of (immersion) French in Canada who were collaboratively involved in a text reconstruction task. The students were expected, in pairs, to produce a text they had heard read out, on the basis of the notes they had taken. They had some experience in the type of task from before. The task was used because of "its potential for encouraging participants to focus on both creating meaning and paying attention to the way in which their meaning is expressed" (Kowal and Swain 1994: 78). What is also noteworthy about the task used is that the students redefined the goals of the teacher (discussion about the present tense) and instead brought about many more topics. This redefinition of a task also took place in Donato's study.

According to the writers (op. cit. 78), the text reconstruction task results in extended student output. One of the functions of student output is noticing the gap in their own knowledge, the other is consciousness raising, i.e. "awareness of forms, rules and their

relationship to the meaning" and "control over learning by providing content to be reflected on, understood and controlled" (op. cit. 75). In other words, through mediation with others, consciousness is raised (see the concepts "control" and "awareness" in Kowal and Swain when talking about consciousness, concepts which were under scrutiny earlier in 2.1.1).

In their study, both the "filling a gap" and the consciousness raising function could be observed. The students became, indeed, aware of the gaps in their knowledge (op. cit. 81) and when wrong suggestions were made, the group continued the construction of their sentences, helping one another. However, sometimes the resulting construction was not correct, and at times, the students lacked the metalanguage to talk about the problem they had (op. cit. 82-3). The problem with the lack of metalanguage may have been caused by the use of French (as presumed by the writers) or the age of the students, but, all in all, this lack is important to notice as it may have implications to the actual process. If language as a mediator or a tool has a profound effect on the students' consciousness raising - as claimed in the Vygotskian school - then surely the lack of metalanguage acts as an inhibitor in the consciousness raising process. (This observation was taken into account in the design of my study where the students were allowed to use their mother tongue.)

Kowal and Swain made a few observations on the heterogeneous/homogeneous nature of pairs and the effects of them on the scaffolding process. They raise a fundamentally important issue when noting that in one of the heterogeneous pairs in their study scaffolding did not take place, as "neither student's needs were within the zone of proximal development of the other's" (op. cit. 85-86). They also point out that personality traits may play a role here too (op. cit. 86). The dysfunction of a group is something all practitioners are aware of. It seems Kowal and Swain's diagnosis of the problem in their dysfunctioning heterogeneous pair does not help us in classroom practice. Even if we are to avoid heterogeneous pairs/groups, how do we know about personality traits unless through trial and error. Kowal and Swain also show that the more homogeneous pairs in their study exhibited more collective scaffolding - this would suggest that homogeneous pairs are close enough in their development to allow

for true collective scaffolding where both (all) are able to bring something to the solution, to help in the quest for meaning. In my study I set out to use heterogeneous groups (suggested by Kohonen 1996). Implications of this are discussed in chapter 10.

The focus of Kowal and Swain's study is on the awareness raising of the students. According to Kowal and Swain (op. cit. 87), "verbalisation of the problem allowed them [the students] the opportunity to reflect on it and better understand it." In Vygotskian thinking this awareness raising that was mediated through pair interaction should give rise to better independent functioning, i.e. better production of forms and meaning tackled in the task. Kowal and Swain's study, unfortunately, does not touch on the subsequent intra-level.

2.3 Learner training

Next, I bridge the learner training approach and the Vygotskian consciousness raising approach. They are different from and yet similar to one another. What unites the two is, more than anything else, the need to raise the learner's consciousness/awareness in order for the learner to change. How this is done varies to an extent in the two approaches. It can be claimed that the learner training approach in general tends to put stress on the intra-individual aspect, although it is clear there is the expert there; the expert in the form of a teacher or, in some cases, in the form of other learners. The Vygotskian approach is more interested in the inter-individual side. Both approaches talk about strategies, skills, consciousness, awareness. In most cases, the learner training approach does not pay as much attention to the learner's background, to the learner's agentive approach as the Vygotskian approach. In learner training, the learner is seen as someone to be trained, to be passed information on.

Let us see what the learner training approach entails and how it has influenced my study. In the past few years, a great deal has been written about learner training or awareness/consciousness raising in second language acquisition (see e.g. Wenden and Rubin 1987, Willing 1989, O'Malley and Chamot 1990, Oxford 1990, Nunan 1994, Cohen et al 1995, McDonough 1995). The underlying goal of learner training in these

works is to give language learners a more active and responsible role in language learning and language use processes in order to enhance learning. This change of roles is seen as taking place through the use of appropriate strategies. Therefore the potential benefit of learning strategies is the autonomy gained by the learners, in particular by the less effective ones, most importantly through the use of metacognitive knowledge about one's own learning and about the task demands (Zimmerman 1990). *Metacognitive* knowledge is understood as

> 1) knowledge about cognitive processes, and
> 2) regulation of cognition or executive control or self-management through such processes as planning, monitoring, and evaluating" (Rubin 1987: 23).

The metacognitive in this definition is seen from the intra-individual angle. It is also more or less the same as consciousness as control and awareness according to Schmidt (1994), discussed in 2.1.1.

In Chamot and O'Malley's (1987, 1994) categorisation of learning strategies, metacognitive strategies are one fundamental group of strategies, but there are others as well. A number of *cognitive* strategies are believed to assist the learner, too. *Cognitive* strategies "refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials" (Rubin 1987: 23). Cognitive strategies are in this definition seen as interaction between the learner and the materials. *Cognitive* strategies regarded as fruitful approaches to language (and vocabulary) learning are, for example, elaboration (integrating existing knowledge to new information), inferencing, note-taking and imagery (Chamot and O'Malley 1987: 243-5, 249). The third major group of potentially useful strategies in Chamot and O'Malley's categorisation of language learning strategies consists of socio-affective strategies such as co-operation (Chamot and O'Malley 1987: 244-45, 1994: 375).

Other authors have devised systems in many ways similar to or overlapping with Chamot and O'Malley's categorisation, Oxford's categorisation (1990) being perhaps the most well-known. Although these categorisations are clearly useful from the point of view of knowing what one may teach, they are somewhat arbitrary. There is an attempt

to separate language learning and language using strategies, although in many cases the two overlap or, indeed, are the same. For example, when a learner infers a word meaning, he or she is using a language learning and using strategy. In addition, the categorisation comes from one (mainly American) situation and may as such not apply to another situation, although it is likely there are similarities at least in most Western situations. In the categorisation systems, there is heavy concentration on strategies, without acknowledging the context of the learner.

The notion of autonomy, the goal of learner training, has several psychological and educational underpinnings. It involves the inter-individual aspect, namely it suggests a new role for the teacher as a facilitator of learning and a new role for the learner as an individual with new learning techniques, a new psychological attitude and skills to critically reflect his or her own learning (see e.g. Holec 1980 for an early work). Learning is seen as a life-long process (see e.g. Knowles 1970 for another early work). Following from this, a learner training programme should equip learners with skills that not only make them "more efficient at learning and using their second language but also more capable of self-directing these endeavours" (Wenden 1987a: 8). In training in vocabulary learning in a reading class, successful training will, ideally, result in "the autonomy of the active learner and the effectiveness of their metalinguistic knowledge in inferencing and deep processing and mediation" (Ellis 1994b: 256).

In order to set up a learner training programme or session, "autonomy" as a target is only one of the necessary premises. It also needs to be considered what the learners need to be made aware or conscious of and how the process of becoming or being aware is related to learning. Clearly, when attempting learner training, one needs to believe in the positive relationship between awareness raising and "improved" strategy use, on one hand, and between awareness raising and improved language use, on the other hand. In much of the learner training literature, in particular in experimental studies, one cannot help noticing the notion of somebody causing something to happen in somebody else with the help of strategies. Other changes in the learner are not accounted for, although cultural differences etc. are sometimes brought up as explaining why a learner has not started using a strategy. In other words, it is believed that training in strategy x either

improves that strategy use or not, but possible other effects are normally not the matter of discussion. This is an important point in section 2.4 on consciousness raising which allows for wider perspectives, and also in chapter 9.

The four categories of consciousness (i.e. intention, attention, awareness, control) mentioned by Schmidt (1994) are relevant to learner training too. In second language acquisition literature, many researchers "hold that attention to input is necessary for input to become intake that is available for further mental processing" (see Ellis 1995a:124). (Consciousness is seen as attention here and "intake" to me seems to be related to a learner's quest for meaning, "intake" being the input which makes sense to the learner.) Schmidt (1990: 149), for example, suggests that "intake is what learners consciously notice". All aspects of language, including lexicon, are subjected to the requirement of noticing (ibid.). Indeed, the acceptance of conscious learning processes is an essential premise of learner training. (However, accepting conscious learning does not eliminate the possibility of unconscious learning; both conscious and unconscious processes are present in second language learning (Rubin 1987: 16; Schmidt 1990: 131; Ellis 1995a).)

The learner training approach mainly stresses the role of the teacher as the facilitator, the trainer who helps learners become autonomous, and learner training suggestions often define the contents or the areas of training, but suggestions on how the training should be carried out are not very explicit. Nor is the role of the learner very pronounced. When considering the classroom applications of learner training, the road to successful language learning via beneficial learning strategies could lead the learner and the teacher who is seen as the facilitator of learning through the following five steps (see e.g. Chamot and O'Malley 1987, Willing 1989, Oxford 1990, Oxford and Scarcella 1994, Cohen et al 1995):

1. identifying learner needs
2. identifying learning strategies used by the students, most importantly, by good students, in the context in question
3. training learners in the strategies which are considered important
4. helping learners experiment with strategies and see their potential
5. facilitating the continuing use of the strategies independently

However, each of the above steps as well as the whole notion of learner training are laden with problems both practical and theoretical in nature, not unknown to the proponents of learner training (see e.g. McDonough 1995 for a critical view). For example, the concentration on strategies and distinguishing between good and bad strategies is prominent. This, in turn, does not leave room to the learner's background context. When considering learner training in my teaching, I was aware of the following problems which seem fairly universal and stem from the part the learner plays in training in strategies:

- How do I identify learner needs in a heterogeneous group?
- Should I focus on the least proficient learners in the group?
- How do I know the strategies of good students are worth 'implanting' in the less effective students, if it is known that it is not only the strategy that matters, but rather the ability to combine the task demands and the strategy use?
- What is the best way to teach students, explicit or implicit?
- How do I make the learners experiment? Experimenting can surely not take place unless there is motivation.
- Is there a way to help students continue using the strategies presented in class?

The identification of the above problems started to bridge the gap between learner training with a focus on strategies and consciousness raising which takes a more holistic view of the learner. I tackle these problems in 4.1. (evolving nature of research questions), 4.3 (design and description of data collection) and 5.5 (research questions).

2.4 Consciousness raising

Let us continue bridging the learner training approach with consciousness raising. The problems presented at the end of section 2.3 above are mainly concerned with the decisions the trainer needs to take before embarking on a set of training sessions. They stem from the tradition of training which at least at times has overlooked the learners, their contexts and their quest for meaning.[2] They are therefore clearly not the only

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[2] It needs to be pointed out, however, that "training" is used in different ways in different fields of discipline. For example, in sport psychology which concentrates on understanding sportspeople and "training" them, the sportsperson or the team are seen holistically, i.e. the physical skills are not seen in isolation from the psychological side of the learner, and training is not considered a one-way process with an "outsider" or trainer solely in control (see e.g. Morris and Summers 1995).

questions arising, when attempting to bridge the Vygotskian approach and the learner training approach. The questions given above do not, for example, tackle interpersonal meaning making from the point of view of a learner with other learners. In what I have called consciousness raising (through teacher-led sessions and through group work) in my study, I have taken into account the idea of interpersonal meaning making quite explicitly. Although I am proposing consciousness raising may stem from teacher-led sessions like in most learner training literature, I have also included group work as a potential and likely source of "training". Also, I see the notion of learner relevance in the sense of making something one's own as an important element in the process of consciousness raising. The following quotation from van Lier on the learner's choice to choose from strategies and approaches proposed in an interactional setting is illustrative of my approach

> The concept of learning presupposes that one continues to improve. This is only possible when one is not yet perfect and when there are problems in one's engagements with the world. It is also useful, of course, that the learner *wishes* to improve, though natural curiosity [...] is also a powerful initiator of learning, as is the ordinary activity of getting through one's days as best one can. In a sense, then, students do not really need to learn how to learn, rather, the desire to learn must be awakened or reawakened, and sustained. Once that condition obtains, there should not be a need to go through a predetermined regime of learner training; instead, learners can be guided in the exploration of their own and each other's ways of learning. (van Lier 1996: 91)

van Lier does not talk about group work in the above extract, but he clearly implies that other learners play a role in a learner's learning. There are researchers in learner training too who explicitly propose group work as a way of "training" students. O'Malley and Chamot's CALLA approach (the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) (1990) incorporates co-operative group work and group discussions to the learner training programme. Williams and Burden (1997), whose approach is social constructivist, refer to a learner's personal authenticity as an important factor in strategy training. They propose that

a crucial aspect of strategy training is that learners develop a sense of *personal relevance* or *personal authenticity*. Rather than asking them to use particular strategies simply because the teacher tells them to, we feel it is more beneficial to help individuals to discover and develop those that are most significant and personally relevant to them. Within this process, the learner's metacognitive knowledge, in its broader context of knowledge of the self, feelings and emotions, personal aims and motivation, are significant in discovering personal authenticity in how to learn. (Williams and Burden 1997: 164)

It is easy to see now that bridging the learner training approach with the Vygotskian approach or with an approach that takes the learner's context into account does not simplify the idea of consciousness raising. A learner's quest for meaning and personal relevance in learning can complicate planning of consciousness raising sessions and the group work tasks, as in heterogeneous groups personal backgrounds vary. However, different contexts can also act as a fertile ground for reflection. Also, a learner's quest for meaning and personal relevance can act as true propellers of change. In particular, when talking of quite motivated adult learners as is the case of my study, one would expect that the learners are capable of finding personal relevance to their learning and they have, indeed, already found a lot of it, as they have proceeded so far. In other words, their quest for meaning can be fulfilled in them finding personal relevance to their learning through teacher-led consciousness raising, group interaction and conscious articulation.

It is the Vygotskian approach that has prompted a few more questions relevant to consciousness raising in classroom setting, in addition to the questions given on page 23. For example,

- Can the teacher "predetermine" the outcome of consciousness raising, considering the learners all have an agentive approach and they come from different contexts?
- What is the role of other learners in the consciousness raising process?
- What is the role of the learner's socio-cultural background and affective side in consciousness raising?

These questions further highlight the dimensions of consciousness raising in general and also consciousness raising in foreign language vocabulary learning and reading which was the focus of my study. Repercussions of these questions can be observed in 4.1, 4.3

and 5.5 in which I write about the evolving nature of the research questions, the design and description of data collection and the research questions.

2.5 Importance of vocabulary in reading

Having reviewed a general framework of learning theory to this study and some issues arising from the fields of learner training and consciousness raising, it is time to move on to the importance of vocabulary in reading. There is a growing and important literature on collocations and lexical phrases available (see e.g. Nattinger and DeCarrico 1992) which I have largely omitted, since it is not possible to incorporate everything here. I have, therefore, relied on sources which mainly handle words as word units. Learners often, and certainly in my context, rate vocabulary one of the biggest problems in reading. They claim, on one hand, they do not know enough words to understand texts and, on the other hand, they believe they should read more in order to learn more words. In what ways is vocabulary important in reading according to researchers?

Current interactive approaches to the reading process argue that in successful reading there is interaction between both bottom-up processing (i.e. processing at the word level) and top-down processing (use of prior knowledge) (Coady 1993: 6). In interactive models of reading, word identification plays an important role. Foreign language learners are usually less able to identify words automatically, and, according to Coady (1993: 8), only by multiple exposures to words will they achieve a large enough sight vocabulary, i.e. the ability to recognise and understand words automatically and quickly. The benefit of good enough sight vocabulary is that it enables the reader to free attentional resources to interpreting the context which, in turn, will help the reader to understand new words. Basically, with the help of recognition of words, one understands the message. Without words there is no meaning, and the meaning comes from the reader's interpretation.

According to schema theory, one of the interactive models, interaction takes place between top-down knowledge structures, schemata, and bottom-up word forms in the text (see e.g. Rumelhart 1980). Schemata are stored away in the long-term memory and

are activated when the reader automatically recognises word forms. Thus already existing schemata will then interact with other words and their schemata. This interaction will facilitate the comprehension of the text (Coady 1993: 10-12). In order for vocabulary learning/teaching to be effective, the new word form should be associated with the schemata the learners already have, an idea which is congruent with the depth of processing theory mentioned in 2.10 and which has significance to personal relevance talked about in 2.4.

The interactional models cater for inter-individual and intra-individual meaning making. They credit the context of the reader in at least two ways. First, they see the reader as using both top-down and bottom-up processes in reading. Second, the reader is seen as using his or her own background in interpretation of words. The implication of interactional models to this study are many. First, words are worth tackling, as they are important in the process of reading. Second, overreliance on subskills (such as skimming and scanning) in reading does not necessarily work and is not what the learners usually want. Third, personal meaning making in its importance stems from what the learner already knows and is learning in a context.

2.6 What is it to know a word

In the previous section, I used expressions "recognising" and "understanding" a word which are both part of knowing a word. To make further sense of them, let us consider what it is to know a word. The concept of quest for meaning is relevant here too, since it would seem unlikely that a learner would know a meaning of a word without being interested in it or without looking for a meaning of either the word itself or of the context where the word occurs.

Knowing a word is a type of continuum. Most authors tackling the question provide us with a long list of conditions that could be placed along this continuum. According to Ellis (1994a; 1995b: 12), the minimal condition of knowing a word is for the learner to recognise it is a word and enter it into his or her mental lexicon. In reading English, the visual input lexicon must learn to recognise an orthographic pattern. The learner must

also learn the word's syntactic properties, its relations with other words, its semantic properties, and its conceptual underpinnings. Finally, the learner must learn the mapping of input/output specifications to the semantic and conceptual meanings.

In a similar fashion, Nation (1990) discusses knowing a word too. His point of departure is the distinction between receptive and productive knowledge of a word which more or less overlaps with Ellis's input/output channels. Knowing a word receptively

> involves being able to recognize it when it is heard [...] or when it is seen [...]. This includes being able to distinguish it from words with a similar form and being able to judge if the word form sounds right or looks right. Receptive knowledge of a word also involves having an expectation of what grammatical pattern the word will occur in. [...] Knowing a word includes being able to recall its meaning when we meet it. It also includes being able to see which shade of meaning is most suitable for the context that it occurs in. In addition, knowing the meaning of a word may include being able to make various associations with other related words." (Nation 1990: 31-32).

Productive knowledge of a word extends receptive knowledge:

> "It involves knowing how to pronounce the word, how to write and spell it, how to use it in correct grammatical patterns along with the words it usually collocates with. Productive knowledge also involves not using the word too often if it is typically a low-frequency word, and using it in suitable situations. It involves using the word to stand for the meaning it represents and being able to think of suitable substitutes for the word if there are any." (Nation 1990: 32).

In my study, Nation's receptive knowledge is perhaps most relevant, as the students in a reading comprehension course and in their studies are mostly required to read in English and talk about the text/answer exam questions in their mother tongue. In other words, they are not required to, say, pronounce the words. However, when looking at the issue from the students' point of view, it is clear they are interested in not only what Nation calls receptive knowledge, as they do use English in a variety of situations and often orally. There are students, too, who find it utterly important to know the pronunciation as a way of recognition also when reading. Nation presents productive knowledge as adding on to receptive knowledge, although the issue may not be as clear cut as that.

In his writing about mental lexicons, Meara (1984: 231) presents the simplest model of the lexicon. In it, each lexical entry looks like a dictionary entry. Each entry consists of

two parts: "a phonological (or orthographical) code which identifies the basic form of a word, and a semantic entry which specifies the meaning of the word in so far as it is known." (ibid.) Meara gives us an example of a learner who recognises a word but no longer remembers what the word means. In its simplicity, this everyday event in the life of a language learner exemplifies one aspect of the continuum of knowing a word.

Accepting that vocabulary is an important aspect of reading, we also need to remember that readers know words in all the shades of the continuum. These different ways of knowing a word have enormous implications to an active learner learning in a specific setting, with specific goals. Some words may not be important enough for a particular learner to know at all levels, and, in fact, some may only require a minimal knowledge. Then again, certain words are worth investing in, i.e. knowing certain words well will help the reader immensely. What the words are that are worth knowing well/what the words are that are worth a conscious effort or strategy, is a difficult question which is brought up in 2.9 (see e.g. Coady 1993). Perhaps even more important from the point of view of my study is finding ways of approaching words in order to develop an appropriate knowledge of them. Both the learner's personal goals and personal relevance in learning need to be taken into account in learning vocabulary and vocabulary strategies.

2.7 Vocabulary learning in second language reading

As discussed above, knowing a word is a multi-faceted issue. Related to it is vocabulary learning. Vocabulary learning is seen as an important, but widely neglected component of foreign language learning (e.g. Cohen and Aphek, 1980; Meara, 1980, 1984; Bensoussan and Laufer, 1984; Carter and McCarthy, 1988; Nation, 1990). Many researchers agree that reading is an important, if not an ideal medium for L2 vocabulary learning (Krashen 1989; Ellis 1995b). And most significantly, only written texts expose learners to important low-frequency words. (But see Nagy and Herman (1987: 24) who maintain that for children as first language learners written context is usually not as rich and helpful as oral context.) However, underneath this consensus on the importance of vocabulary learning in reading, opinions vary in how learning in reading actually takes

place. The differences in opinions mainly stem from the idea of consciousness in learning.

To squeeze the slightly confusing literature on vocabulary learning reviewed under labels, I have chosen to present the different positions on vocabulary learning using Ellis's four alternative hypotheses explaining vocabulary acquisition. Ellis writes about the following hypotheses:

A strong implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis
A weak implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis
A weak explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis
A strong explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis (1994b, 1995b: 12-13)

Later, in 2.9, I consider the implications of the four hypotheses on how to teach vocabulary.

Strong implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis

The strong implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis which has sometimes been coined as the natural way of learning words or incidental learning paradigm, i.e. learning without conscious intention to learn, basically entails the idea that learning takes place naturally from context (e.g. Nagy et al 1985 on first language context; Krashen 1989 on second language context). "Implicit learning is coming to learn the underlying structure of a complex stimulus environment by a process which takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operations" (Ellis 1994b: 214). This hypothesis holds that word meanings are acquired "unconsciously as a result of abstraction from repeated exposures in a range of activated contexts" (Ellis 1995b: 12-13). Krashen (1989: 440) suggests we do not know we are acquiring language and that our conscious focus is on the message, not form. Some proponents of incidental learning claim that learners should be exposed to a word at least 10-12 times in order to retain the word (see Huckin and Haynes 1993: 295), though there are suggestions of incidental learning possibly taking place through a single exposure to a word (Nagy et al 1985 on first language context).

Weak implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis

The weak implicit vocabulary learning hypothesis takes into account the fact that it is not possible to learn a word without first noticing that it is a new and unknown word (Schmidt 1990). By paying attention to words, the learner's implicit learning mechanisms in the reading input environment are tuned to regularities in orthography and phonology, to high frequency words over low frequency words, etc. (Ellis 1995b: 15). The more the learner reads, the more he or she is exposed to words and the more he or she learns. The Latin saying "Repetio est mater studiorum" encapsulates both implicit learning hypotheses in that the more patterns are repeated, the better the learner learns them. Priming studies on word recognition and word naming support the view on implicit learning; for example, word identification is faster if the learner has seen that word within the last day (Ellis 1994b; Ellis 1995b: 15). According to Ellis (1995b: 16), the input and output lexicons acquire the word forms and the regularities of the language automatically - the meaning component is learnt consciously.

Both the above approaches leave relatively little room for the active mind of a learner. The idea of quest for meaning is present in both in the sense that the learner is seen to make sense of the world around him or her, but this sense making does not allow for much conscious processing. The following two hypotheses do make room to more conscious processes.

Weak explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis

In contrast to implicit learning, "[e]xplicit learning is a more conscious operation where the individual makes and tests hypotheses in a search for structure" (Ellis 1994b: 214). *The weak explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis* "holds that there is some benefit to vocabulary acquisition from the learner noticing novel vocabulary, selectively attending to it, and using a variety of strategies to try to infer its meaning from the context" (Ellis 1995b: 13). It entails that it is possible for the learner to teach himself or herself vocabulary by noticing, attending, and inferring. Although this type of learning takes place through both listening and reading, reading allows the learner to study the context

and infer word meanings best, because the (con)text does not escape the learner as is often the case with listening (Ellis 1994b: 218-219; Ellis 1995b: 12). (Guessing, inferring and inferencing are all used in the literature reviewed interchangeably, so when using any of them I am referring to the same phenomenon.)

In general, vocabulary learning from context through inferring is concerned with the meanings of words. According to Ellis, it is the meaning component of vocabulary learning that is learnt explicitly. "The mapping of I/O [input/output] to semantic and conceptual representations is a cognitive mediation dependent upon explicit learning processes" (Ellis 1994b: 268; Ellis 1995b: 16). Ellis (1994b: 225-226) bases his view on studies of priming and amnesia. He argues that lexical identification is affected by exposure and frequency. However, in experiments that require elaborate processing of the word, i.e. analysis of meaning, explicit memory of words is affected by the depth of processing which means integrating new knowledge to old knowledge (see 2.10), an idea that is consistent with schema theory, referred to in section 2.5 and to the contextualised approach of Vygotsky and his followers.

Learning from context is seen as taking place through the effort a learner engages himself or herself in when making guesses/inferences about the meaning of the text, sentence or word (see e.g. Bialystok 1983, Palmberg 1987, Nation and Coady 1988, Huckin and Bloch 1993). The process of inferring has been documented in studies that have used think-aloud protocols which only can show conscious or explicit processes. This inferring is made possible by contextual cues, prior knowledge and the analysis of word forms with the help of prefixes, suffixes, etc. (Sternberg 1987 on first language context). We could say that the supporters of inferring see vocabulary learning as a function of the task which is to make sense of the text.

It has been pointed out that explaining vocabulary learning with inferring is highly problematic, since the guesses of learners are frequently incorrect due to context lacking enough right kind of cues, etc. (Pressley et al 1987, 122, Hulstijn 1992: 114, Huckin and Haynes 1993: 290). Laufer (1997 check), for example, discusses 'deceptive transparency' as one of the difficulties in the process of inferring (e.g. that L2 word

meanings might not always be possible to infer correctly because of 'false friends', i.e. word somewhat similar in form in L1 and L2 but different in meaning, a not-so-frequent problem between Finnish and English, or because of idioms). In other words, it is difficult to see how successful learning can occur if learners take in wrong word meanings. However, when considering that learners learn words over a long period, it is easy to see how they get chances to correct their misinterpretations.

Strong explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis

The strong explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis is based on the idea that

> the application of a range of metacognitive strategies strongly facilitates the acquisition of new vocabulary: (a) noticing that the word is unfamiliar, (b) making attempts to infer the word from context (or acquiring the definition from consulting others or dictionaries or vocabularies), (c) making attempts to consolidate this new understanding by repetition and associational learning strategies such as semantic or imagery mediation techniques. (Ellis 1995b: 13).

(Here it should be pointed out that strategies (b) and (c) are, according to Chamot and O'Malley (1987), *cognitive* strategies.) So explicit vocabulary learning is concerned with having opportunities to notice words, with inferring (or other ways of finding out the meaning) and with repeated exposure. Additional cornerstones of the strong explicit learning hypothesis are learning with the help of mnemonic devices, such as associations with sounds, images, etc. and with elaboration which involves deep processing of the word meaning as a result of inferring or giving a word a context in the learner's mind, i.e. as a result of paying attention and further processing the word. According to Levin, mnemonic techniques "involve physically transforming to-be-learned materials into a form that makes them easier to learn and remember" (Levin 1981: 65). Semantic/deep processing (i.e. elaboration), on the other hand, falls into the category of "general memory strategies", along with rehearsal and clustering (word families, etc.) (ibid.).

Some proponents of explicit or direct learning approaches see vocabulary learning taking place through given meanings (teacher, dictionary, peers) which are then actively processed by the learner (Cohen and Aphek 1980, 1981, Cohen 1987, Pressley et al

1987) and mainly concentrate on the task of devising memory-aiding strategies. However, many also believe that

> the distinction between remembering and inferring is important because we emphasize that effective vocabulary-inferring processes and effective vocabulary-remembering strategies are complementary vocabulary acquisition components, with one's strength being the other's weakness, and vice versa. (Pressley et al 1987: 107-8).

Strategies such as associations (which are one form of deep processing - see Ellis 1994b: 254) which rely on imagination have been suggested as useful in the process of learning problematic words (Cohen 1987: 52), and in speeding up the process of learning (Cohen 1991: 114). These associations can be regarded as mediation, as tools provided by culture/people around us. The keyword technique[3] (see Atkinson 1975 for the original suggestion) which combines the visual image of the meaning of the new foreign word with an image of something that resembles the new word in sound in the native tongue of the learner is the most promoted of the associational approaches. (An alternative keyword method, verbal as opposed to imaginary, is to make use of a mediating sentence, the reminding power of which should be strong. The following is an example of the visual keyword technique.) The English verb "irritate" may remind a speaker of Finnish of the Finnish noun "irvistys" (a grin) and this association may evoke a mental image where someone who is irritated is grinning. (See Meara 1980 for the

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[3] Since the use of the keyword method is widely promoted and since its claimed benefits often come from laboratory studies, let us consider laboratory studies for a few moments. Often the participants of these studies are not actual learners of the language, and they are presented with wordlists or individual words out of context which is only one possible way of approaching learning in a real learning situation. Also, an individual's possible unwillingness to learn the words in the expected way in the experiment might not be respected. In many laboratory studies, the keyword mnemonic technique has been found to yield better (mostly short-term) results than many other methods such as rote learning in retaining vocabulary items (see Cohen 1987 for a review). However, contrary to widely held expectations that "when initial performance is boosted by use of the keyword mnemonic, this advantage will continue to be observed after extended delays of 1 week or more" (Wang et al 1992: 526), two studies (Wang and Thomas, 1992; Wang et al 1992) have suggested that experimenter-supplied mnemonic images, such as the keyword, do not aid long-term retention, i.e. in their context a week or more (I would not call this long term). This may suggest that the learner may benefit from using his/her own context in making associations and that the experimenter's context is difficult to adopt. There are other aspects of the keyword method. In an interesting research article by Ellis and Beaton (1993) on keyword associations it was noticed that nouns are easier to learn through keywords than verbs as were highly imaginable items. In foreign to native language learning, the acoustic similarity of foreign word and keyword is important. This may be of significance when considering learners of English whose native language is Finnish, since the two languages are not as close acoustically as, say, English and German.

drawbacks of the keyword technique). Appendix 2 gives an idea of the keyword method used in the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions of my study.

Implications of the four hypotheses

The implications of the four hypotheses given by Ellis to my study are many-fold. The strong implicit hypothesis as a way of explaining how word recognition develops does not explain how learners get the meaning component and how the learners actively seek meaning in all levels, on message level (as Krashen proposes) and on the level of word meanings. The weak implicit hypothesis incorporates the active mind of the learner more. Swain and Lapkin (1994, quoted in Kowal and Swain 1994), when talking about consciousness as focusing or intention, discuss learners noticing a gap in their knowledge which will prompt them to work a solution to the problem **or** which will prime them to notice the problem (e.g. lack of word knowledge) in the future input. It is this noticing aspect of the weak implicit hypothesis that brings in the active mind. The options given by Swain and Lapkin also expand to the direction of a continuum, i.e. the learner does not necessarily do only one thing, but has options which depend on the situation.

The explicit vocabulary learning hypotheses are less exclusive than the implicit ones. They allow us to see learning as a situated activity and a learner with different approaches which depend on the context, although some promoters of, say, the keyword method make their method sound a universal solution to word learning which it is not. Accepting that learning can take place in different ways, it is important to offer learners different options and acquaint learners with tools/strategies to vocabulary learning they may not be familiar with.

Implications of this section to teaching vocabulary are covered in 2.9.

2.8 Descriptive studies on vocabulary learning strategies

Several descriptive studies on a convincing range of vocabulary learning strategies and approaches have been carried out over the years. I briefly review three studies which all are relevant to my interests. One comes from the context of reading out-of-classroom (Parry 1997), one deals generally with vocabulary learning approaches (Sanaoui 1995), and one concentrates on associations as a strategy to commit word meanings to memory (Cohen and Aphek 1981). These studies illuminate what learners in different contexts do or claim they do in order to tackle vocabulary. They all stem from the explicit/conscious field of learning: the learners are reporting on approaches they are aware of. Although quite likely driven by their personal quest for meaning, the learners are reporting because of the prompts of the researchers which brings in one aspect of interpersonality when studying learning.

Parry (1991, 1993 and 1997) carried out a series of longitudinal case studies (EFL college students in the USA learning vocabulary via reading academic texts out-of-classroom). I shall concentrate on her 1997 report on two students, a Greek student called Dimitri and a Korean student called Ae Young. Parry first tested the students' vocabulary with a standard vocabulary test. Then she asked them to keep lists of difficult words in their required text books. The lists consisted of the words and page references, their guesses of the meaning and a dictionary definition if the word was looked up. After six weeks of list compiling on their own, the students did a think aloud of a text while compiling a list. Two weeks later they translated extracts of the text on which the think aloud was based. At the end of the term, the students were asked to translate their own words a) in isolation and b) in the context of a sentence where they originated (post-test). As the students paid attention to the unknown words and made inferences, the vocabulary learning in Parry's study mainly falls into the explicit field.

The above method of data collection "provided, first, a broad, though necessarily incomplete, view of each student's vocabulary and of its development through the anthropology course and, second, a detailed, though also incomplete, picture of the students' strategies as they dealt with the new vocabulary and of the accuracy with

which they were thereby interpreting the text." (Parry 1997: 56). Although it is true that the picture Parry's case studies gives us is not complete, Parry's study has its strengths. The combination of methods used provide a fuller picture of her cases than any study I have seen. Moreover, the longitudinal aspect of her study is something unique; tracing a student's vocabulary development over a period of time allows us to see the student in context. However, it would be wrong to think that what the students reported is what they would do unprompted - the idea of context has to be understood as the context of the study, not only as the context of the students in real life. The effects of being a case study participant may vary between people and the more enthusiastic ones may do things to please the researcher, for example, take more notes than they would normally.

Comparing the data from Dimitri and Ae Young is interesting reading. Dimitri read more during the data collection, found fewer words difficult and was relatively successful in his guesses. However, in the post-test, Ae Young performed much better. Parry suggests they employed "quite different strategies, which are effective in different ways and for different kinds of comprehension." (op. cit. 58). For example, Dimitri, when encountering an unknown word, tended to "interpret the larger unit in which it appears" (op. cit. 60), whereas Ae Young favoured giving as a gloss a single word. Dimitri's style was "holistic", Ae Young's "analytic" (ibid.). Dimitri would not stop for single words, but tried to get an idea of the text. Ae Young's approach was much slower: stopping at the word, working it out, using the dictionary, checking the context again. This slow, painstaking depth of processing could explain why Ae Young was good at remembering word meanings, but Ae Young's analytic approach meant her being able to read less and encounter fewer words. Dimitri's approach gave support to his good knowledge of relatively frequent words.

According to Parry, both approaches lack something. Dimitri's holistic approach does not provide an exact enough base to understand specialised academic terms; Ae Young's strategy made her slow and unable to ever learn many frequent words. Parry (op. cit. 67) implies that "both approaches are necessary but that neither is appropriate at all times." Parry calls for flexibility, for instruction in classroom which will help students tackle vocabulary in different ways. It is this call for varied and appropriate

ways that seems important in my situation too. The Dimitris and Ae Youngs in Finland may well benefit from each other's approaches. What is also interesting in Parry's study is the lack of development or stagnation in the students' approaches over a period of time. If Parry's study can be generalised at all, it would seem that learners have their preferred ways of approaching a task and may not change unless prompted. This, of course, does not mean that they cease to progress, since both approaches reported by Parry supported different kinds of developments.

Cohen and Aphek (1981) investigated American university students' vocabulary learning strategies when learning Hebrew during a year abroad in Israel. The students were of different proficiency levels. Cohen and Aphek wanted to identify and describe strategies that "easify" the learning process (op. cit. 221). The methods used in the study were as follows. Seventeen students - whose selection process is not explicated - took part in the study which Cohen and Aphek call longitudinal (about 100 days). The initial task they set for the students was to explicitly learn words from a reading passage, using associations if possible. The teacher supplied the English gloss for the words asked by the students. The next step was for the students to supply English glosses for the words (in text) they had originally identified as to be learnt. A few days later, the students reviewed the result of the previous step and they were to give glosses to the same words presented in a list form. Again a few days later, they reviewed results of the glosses given to the words in list form. About three months later, the students were given the same individualised lists of words and asked to provide English glosses again. It seems Cohen and Aphek were interested in 1) the effects of the initial association (if used), 2) the effects of repeated exposure and feedback (not commented on) and 3) unidentified exposure to the words out of class (which they comment on and which they tried to trace by asking the students if they had seen the word out of class) - all this in a classroom with tasks with perhaps little representativeness to real classroom tasks. For example, the teacher under normal circumstances would not be in the position to supply glosses to all unknown words. Also, the prompt to supply associations may have intervened with what the students would naturally do (a point brought up by Cohen and Aphek).

The findings of the study concentrate on the use of associations and on the words memorised with the use of associations. Cohen and Aphek's findings suggest that some students tried simply to memorise the words (or at least they did not explain what they did), some students wrote both the Hebrew word and the English gloss down, some students used associations. These associations varied a lot (the 13 reported associations fall into 11 categories), but students using associations retained the words successfully over time (about three months). Cohen and Aphek's study gives an idea of the richness of associations students may use when requested and of the potential of associations. When thinking about the long-term measures of this study, the effects of possible subsequent encounters with the word memorised with the help of associations has to be taken into account, i.e. encountering a word after the initial contact will, in fact, reinforce retention and, thus, the retention cannot be claimed to be solely the result of the association created.

The implications of the study by Cohen and Aphek to my study are two. First, associations are perhaps not naturally used by some learners and these learners not using associations may benefit from their use, in particular, in certain circumstances when a word and its meaning prove difficult. Second, learners using associations in committing word meanings to memory are successful in giving the word meaning in the long run, but we need to remember that the initial association is not the only aspect that counts. These ideas from Cohen and Aphek's study complemented the directions I took in the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions (see 4.3.1) where I presented associations as one, potentially beneficial way of committing word meanings to memory, in particular those difficult to remember. It is clear the use of associations cannot accommodate for all vocabulary learning.

Sanaoui (1995) reports on a series of studies which focus on conscious vocabulary learning approaches. The first, exploratory study on 50 ESL students in Canada pointed a direction to her further studies, as it was observed that students can roughly be split into two categories based on their approaches to vocabulary. The two groups were the structured group which was good at setting goals, at studying independently and engaging in a variety of vocabulary learning activities and the unstructured group which

was more vague about its aims, spent little time in independent study and reported on few vocabulary learning approaches. Prompted by this information, Sanaoui investigated through four more detailed case studies in an ESL vocabulary course how the students proceeded in their approaches to vocabulary. This study also supported the categorisation suggested.

The final study on eight adult learners' approaches to vocabulary in a French as a second language course in a predominantly English-speaking part of Canada is the most relevant of the reported studies to my context. The participants were people in full-time employment, with an age range from 22 to 41 who were enrolled in a French conversation course that met for a total of four hours weekly. The students were asked to document their vocabulary learning activities daily over a three week period. For an additional two weeks, they were also asked to document mnemonic procedures used to retain vocabulary. After each week, the students were interviewed, with the help of their notes. The researcher also made clarification questions on the rationale of the students and on the frequency of the strategies etc. A final interview was given after all the data had been collected where the students and the researcher clarified certain points of the data. The methodology of the study was very much of inter-individual nature, a point which Sanaoui refers to in the implications of her study. However, she sees the inter-individual aspect as benefiting the students' awareness, but she does not acknowledge that as a data collection instrument, a weekly interview is likely to affect the results or findings of the study. Therefore, Sanaoui's study is not only descriptive, but also a note on consciousness raising. It is also important to remember that with the methods used Sanaoui only tapped approaches the students were able or willing to document, something which is inevitably an integral part of an descriptive study on vocabulary learning which relies on student reporting.

Sanaoui's study on the adult French as a second language learners gave further support to the notion of unstructured and structured approaches of learners. The structured group engaged in more independent study out of class, took extensive records of lexical items, reviewed and practised them. The unstructured group is in Sanaoui's opinion the one most likely to benefit from guidance in developing effective approaches to vocabulary

study (Sanaoui 1995: 25) - a suggestion which contradicts Parry's (1997) idea above that both a holistic reader (with perhaps a slightly more unstructured approach to reading and learning) and an analytic reader (with perhaps a slightly more structured approach to reading and learning) would benefit from instruction. Sanaoui claims learners in yet another study with a structured approach were better at retaining vocabulary learnt than learners with an unstructured approach (ibid. 26) (just like analytic Ae Young in Parry's study), but does not explicate whether their overall performance was better too. The structured approach with a lot of note taking and attention to vocabulary which Sanaoui favours is perhaps better from the point of view of vocabulary learning, but we do not know how the unstructured learners coped in tasks which were not vocabulary oriented. (Also, Sanaoui does not attempt to reveal how some of the unstructured learners in the study had managed to become proficient learners despite their approach.) It would seem likely both approaches have their pros and cons, and when measuring only one aspect of language learning, one might not see the balance. Also, Sanaoui's suggestion that unstructured learners may benefit from instruction and awareness raising more than the structured learners does not facilitate classroom practice where all learners, ideally, should benefit from instruction, all in their own way.

2.9 Teaching vocabulary

After having reviewed literature on the theories/hypotheses of learning vocabulary (section 2.7) and descriptive studies of vocabulary learning (section 2.8) which have highlighted some of the aspects suggested in the hypotheses, it is time to consider the relationship of learning with teaching. Since the different hypotheses on vocabulary learning (see section 2.7) are reflected in the implications on how to teach vocabulary, I present these implications in this section. The first, natural position or *the strong implicit position* is not tackled here, as it cannot be taught explicitly. The only suggestion it provides is to offer the students as much exposure to language as possible and as much comprehensible input as possible. In my study, exposure and comprehensible input are likely to have been present, but they were not part of the design as such.

According to *the weak implicit learning hypothesis*, attention of the learner can be geared towards words, perhaps through task demands (Schmidt 1990: 149). "What learners notice is constrained by a number of factors, but incidental learning is certainly possible when task demands focus attention on relevant features of the input" (ibid.) Schmidt (ibid.) adds "Incidental learning in another sense, picking up target language forms from input when they do not carry information crucial to the task, appears unlikely for adults." In addition to attention, repeated exposure to language and words is vital in this approach. Spaced repetition is the most useful form of repetition according to Baddeley (1990: 150-158); a new word should be recalled within a few minutes after it was first met, then an hour or two later, then a few days later, then a month later for successful learning to take place. To make use of weak implicit learning, the teacher should safeguard e.g. that the same vocabulary is repeated in tasks which steer the students to focus on words. The noticing aspect was clearly present in my study because of task demands and students' interest in words/personal relevance they found in words.

The weak explicit hypothesis takes into account noticing, attending and inferring of word meanings. Some researchers in the field of vocabulary concentrate on inferring as the means of learning and thus suggest explicit teaching of inferring the word meaning successfully. They are in a sense mostly interested in finding out the meaning of the word through guessing (and in factors such as frequency, word class, valency) (Sternberg 1987: 92-94; Scherfer 1993: 1147-8), i.e. both the weak implicit and the explicit points of view are presented. Approaches to teaching contextual guessing usually include the component of checking the meaning from the dictionary, if necessary (Clarke and Nation 1980). The importance of the weak explicit hypothesis is carried over to the design of my study, in particular to the teacher-led consciousness raising.

What distinguishes *the strong explicit vocabulary learning position* from the other positions above is that it not only includes the premises of repetition and inferring, but also imaginary techniques and deep processing (it needs to be remembered, however, that inferring is one of the possible deep processing methods). Being so extensive and inclusive, the strong explicit vocabulary learning position is perhaps easiest to apply to

practice. For example, imaginary techniques on selected words which are not part of the other positions can potentially provide both entertainment and success to all age groups. My study made use of the strong explicit vocabulary learning position.

A feasible way to approach vocabulary teaching and learning is a balanced combination of the approaches discussed above (i.e. more or less what the strong explicit learning position holds), best described in the suggestions on how to teach vocabulary (Nation 1990, 1994, Anderson 1994, Oxford and Scarcella 1994, Schmitt and Schmitt 1995). This combination approach is likely to accommodate for what learners on the whole do and gives more options to the learner in the context of teaching. Ellis (1994b: 268) offers the building blocks of successful vocabulary learning. These are exposure to language, depth of processing (through inferring) and imaginary techniques. Also Coady et al (1993) propose that learners should be taught to master a core vocabulary of a few thousand words (automaticity in word-level processing). In fact, Coady believes that "[t]he ability to automatically recognize the highly frequent words in a language is absolutely crucial to success in L1 and L2 reading" (Coady 1993: 16). But, for less frequent vocabulary, students need some instruction in using context clues, in particular global clues (Huckin and Haynes 1993: 293-4). Also, second language learners appear to benefit from instruction in how to use morphological analysis and syntactic clues (Huckin and Haynes 1993: 294). Finally, based on explicit teaching approaches, the learner may benefit from learning (difficult) words explicitly.

The approach of combining various ways of teaching vocabulary would appear most logical - learning a word must be considered a continuum in two ways. First, different approaches to learning a word (i.e. finding out the meaning through different routes and memorising it) must be seen as complementary processes rather than processes exclusive of one another, and, second, learning a word in the sense of acquiring knowledge of the use, meanings, connotations, etc. takes place gradually, starting from not knowing anything about the word and succeeding to knowing much more (all there is to know?) about the word.

2.10 Intervention studies

Following from the opinions supporting teaching vocabulary and vocabulary strategies, studies have been carried out to see if learners benefit from the instruction in strategies in general and in vocabulary strategies, in particular. It has been claimed that the difference between good and poor language learners lies in their use of metacognitive strategies (Chamot and O'Malley 1994: 381) - poor learners are believed to "lack the metacognitive knowledge of the task that would allow them to select more appropriate strategies for the task" (op. cit. 380). Also, "[m]ore effective students appear to use a greater variety of strategies" (op. cit. 379). How is it possible, then, to assist (poor) learners in becoming better?

In the field of intervention studies, work has been undertaken to assist learners in changing their behaviours or ways of approaching learning. Before reviewing intervention studies, we have to ask what intervention studies are. Basically, any study where an attempt is made to change participants' behaviours or ways of approaching learning is an intervention study. I review only studies which explicitly state in their research questions an attempt to intervene, although it has to be pointed out that collecting material in the field of strategies, for example, can prompt the learners to change their behaviour, i.e. it can intervene with the process as it would be in natural circumstances (see Cohen and Aphek 1981).

McDonough (1995: 97) points out three main questions that are of interest in the field of intervention. These questions are

- Can strategies be taught?
- Do students use the taught strategies?
- Do students who use the taught strategies perform better (than previously or than other students not so taught)?

These questions are of importance, although they do not really tap all important aspects of intervention and learning. For example, how do learners learn strategies, i.e. how is their consciousness of strategies raised so that they start using new strategies? And, why

do some learners' contexts allow for admittance of new strategies and some not? Is the point of intervening to make performance better or is it enough to raise awareness?

First a few words on intervention studies not dealing with vocabulary learning (see e.g. O'Malley (1987), O'Malley et al (1985b) in speaking and listening and Carrell et al (1989) in reading). These seem to suggest that metacognitive strategies such as planning, controlling and monitoring one's learning often provide the basis for good learning, but a host of factors (e.g. cultural background, individual learning styles) are at play when training students who are not in the state of a tabula rasa at the beginning of the training. Here we can see how the results of experimental training studies are starting to bridge the gap towards consciousness raising which takes a more holistic view of the learner as its initial premise. In other words, knowing what is good in many contexts does not easily translate to other contexts.

Although metacognitive training can be helpful and is often seen as paramount (e.g. Sanaoui (1995) claims that metacognitive awareness plays an important role in vocabulary learning), some intervention studies have been carried out in the field of vocabulary learning, but none of them concentrate on metacognitive strategies. The studies I review all stem from different contexts and pay attention to different aspects of vocabulary learning. Together, they provide us with a fuller picture of the learning/training process. I first turn to the study by Kern (1989) (inferencing, a cognitive strategy for finding out the meaning and committing word meanings to memory), then move on to Cohen and Aphek (1980) (associations, a cognitive strategy for committing word meanings to memory) and, finally, to Brown and Perry (1991) (keyword and elaboration, cognitive strategies for committing word meanings to memory).

Suggestions for teaching inferring have been documented widely, but studies on the actual effects of training in the L2 context are difficult to encounter. Kern's experimental study (1989) in a classroom reports on one of the few training studies on inferencing in the second language context. Kern's aim was to evaluate the effect of instruction in reading comprehension strategies "on intermediate-level French students'

reading comprehension and inferential ability" and to "determine what type of learners derive greatest benefit from the instruction" (op. cit. 135). (Kern refers to inferencing as a reading strategy, whereas in my study I call it a strategy dealing with finding out and committing a word meaning to memory.)

The method of Kern's study was quite complicated. He used two experimental groups and three control groups which were taught by different teachers. This as such undermines the credibility of the experiment. However, he perhaps got as near to an experiment as one possibly can in a classroom. The twenty six American students in the experimental groups were given explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies. Among the strategies was inferring the meaning of an unknown word with the help of word analysis and context. The data were collected in the form of a reading task interview, a type of think-aloud. The students were asked to read a French text which was presented sentence by sentence so that the previous sentences were present all the time. The researcher prompted the students with questions such as "What are you thinking as you read this?" (op. cit. 138). The students inferred the meaning of the text (prompted and unprompted) and they were also asked to state the main idea of the passage. The data available were looked at with a comprehension measure and word inference measure. The word inference measure targeted the product of the process, i.e. whether the guess was correct. The data were then analysed statistically. Two points need to be taken up about the methods. First, the idea of reading one sentence at a time and only being able to check what came before in the text is bound to distort a natural reading process which is not necessarily always linear. Second, teaching inferencing as a strategy and then measuring correct inferences is difficult to understand. It is possible one has improved in the strategy itself, but simply does not reach the right answer.

Let us concentrate on the findings of the word inference measure. The results suggest tentatively that the training had a positive short-term effect on the participants' skills to infer word meanings, although no statistically significant effects could be noticed. Also, there is tentative evidence that the low proficiency group benefited more than the middle and high proficiency groups, perhaps because of the low proficiency group's motivation to try out and improve. Kern does not report on long-term effects of the

retention of the strategy use which would have been an interesting addition, as what takes place in the classroom should have an impact on the language using and learning life afterwards.

The implications of Kern's study - which was an experimental study with an interest on a group of students - to my study - where "training" or consciousness raising was given to the whole group of students and where the interest lies in two students - is mainly on the justification of a training approach. Even a tentative suggestion that the learners became better at inferring (and in reading comprehension too) gives support to the approach I took.

A study by Cohen and Aphek (1980) in which 26 adult learners were given training in generating associations, i.e. a cognitive strategy, is of relevance to my study. The possible associations suggested were taken from the 1981 study by Cohen and Aphek reviewed in 2.8., and there are similarities in the methods used. Cohen and Aphek regarded it as essential to let the students determine their own associations instead of giving them researcher-generated associations. They wanted to find out - with the help of self-reports - if students used the initial associations when later asked to recall and what role the training in word associations played in vocabulary recall.

The study took shape in five weeks. At the end of the first week, the students were given a short training session (10-15 minutes) and a list of associations. In the second week, the students were administered a reading passage in Hebrew, the teacher read it out loud, the students underlined words unknown to them, the researcher gave translations of the words. Then the students were asked to select the maximum of 20 words to memorise. If they used an association, they were asked to report it. Several days later, the students were given their list of words and asked to provide an English gloss and the association they used in recall, if any. Yet a week later, the students were given the text they had had at the beginning of the course, with the underlined words. They were asked to translate the words and give the associations used in recall, if any. In the fifth week, the students were requested to self-report how often they had come into contact with the words outside the context of the study. The method used relied heavily on self-

reporting. As Cohen and Aphek admit it is not clear how accurate the self-reports of the students were. Also, the method takes it for granted that students wanted to learn the words they identified as unknown. In a real life situation, students are likely to come across several words they could identify as unknown which they then ignore. If they were prompted to learn those words, the motivation would be very external.

Cohen and Aphek found that "students most frequently reported using the association that they had originally generated in order to recall the word in subsequent tasks, and that their performance when using this aid was the best" (1980: 227). However, for students who used no associations the correct recall rate was almost as good as when they used associations. The question of the type of learner benefiting from training is thus left open. The most popular associations used by the learners were non-mnemonic (i.e. they noted the structure of part or all of the word) which might again point to the difference between what is found to be good in many laboratory-like studies and the real classroom where learners can choose their preferred ways of learning and where they, perhaps, have a tendency to follow previously used strategies. In other words, though laboratory studies find mnemonics (i.e. strategies which "involve physically transferring to-be-learned materials into a form that makes them easier to learn and remember" (Levin 1981: 65)) useful, their use does not fall naturally on many students who prefer to shun the use of mnemonics in real learning contexts. However, it must be remembered that the participants in the 1980 study by Cohen and Aphek only received ten minutes of training which cannot logically be long enough to change strategies learnt over a period of several years. Also, non-mnemonic techniques might be successful in the retention of most words, whereas mnemonic techniques can be considered the last resort when other techniques fail (Cohen 1987: 52).

Brown and Perry (1991) compared three learning strategies for EFL vocabulary. Their study involved three Arabic speaking treatment groups, i.e. groups that received instruction in 1) the keyword method (explained in 2.7 and shown in appendix 2), 2) semantic processing, and 3) keyword-semantic processing. Semantic processing is defined as follows in the study: "[f]ocus must be on the meaning of the new word, and the learner must act upon the meaning of the new word in a way that is considered

integrative in relation to already existing semantic systems" (op. cit. 656). In other words, semantic processing is consistent with the idea of relating words to other words and the learner's own experiences, consistent with the depth of processing theory (see next paragraph). All learning approaches were administered to the groups in classroom situations. Forty words were taught using the three approaches described above with teacher-supplied ways of processing the word. For example, the keywords were given without the students being able to influence on the type of associations (clearly we do not know what went on in the students' heads in reality). The students received four days of instruction. Their learning was measured with tests on recognition of words (multiple choice) and with tests on recall. The effects of the instruction were measured immediately after the instruction, after one day and nine days. When considering real classroom applications and implications of the idea of depth of processing (of which Brown and Perry are very knowledgeable), the drawbacks in the design of the study are the researcher-supplied ways of processing (in other words, the strategy was not taught but a preprescribed application of it to some words), the relatively short-term effects measured and the possibility that the recall and recognition may have been affected by other factors such as the students encountering the words after the initial exposure.

Some differences (not all statistically significant) between the groups could be detected: the keyword-semantic group outperformed the semantic group which, in turn, was better than the keyword group. Brown and Perry's findings are consistent with the depth of processing theory (Craik and Tulving 1975): when information is processed semantically (semantic group) as well as visually and acoustically (keyword group), memory traces are most powerful. In many ways, depth of processing seems possible when the learner who already has a language learning context (plus several other contexts that may have on effect on the preferred ways of learning) incorporates the to-be-learned material with something that bears a meaning to him or her. It is the importance of the "making the word one's own" that Brown and Perry's study points to which I wanted to accommodate for in my study. (See also Crow and Quigley (1985) for support for the semantic approaches against no instruction in vocabulary learning and Hulstijn (1992) for support for depth of processing theory whereby inferred word meanings are retained better than meanings given to the learners.)

2.11 Students' perceptions on strategy training

Chamot's (1993) study addressed students' perceptions on strategy training, an area that has not been reported widely. Her study gives room to a dialogue between the learners and the researcher and allows the learners to speak about personal relevance. Unlike many studies, it is not concerned with the improved performance of the students as measured by researchers or teachers. The study stems from American high school and college students who were given learning strategy instruction as part of their language learning. The data were collected in the form of a questionnaire where the students were asked to report whether or not they used the learning strategies taught in class and the reasons why they used or did not use them. A questionnaire of this type is bound to evoke different types of answers. Students may, for example, articulate differently about their reasons. Nevertheless, the study is a good attempt to highlight the important opinions/feelings of the students.

Chamot's findings suggest that strategies taught were used in class, but not at home to the same extent. Strategies were used to assist the learning process, learning outcome, and for affective or personal reasons. Among reasons for not using strategies were ineffectiveness of strategies, difficult ways of presenting the strategies in the instruction and affective or personal reasons. In addition to these findings, a majority of the students saw strategies as having a positive effect on their learning. Chamot's study is interesting in that it tackles the issue of learner training from the subjective point of view of the learner. It also clearly points to the importance of the learner's context in all its multitude and, therefore, shows that the idea of learner training is a complicated issue. Also, the fact that many students found learner training positive (even if they did not start using the strategies taught) is worth a notice. The potential of positive feelings in a classroom may be very valuable in the construction of the students' self-esteem as language learners and may indirectly boost the students' learning.

2.12 Concluding remarks to literature review

Chapter 2 provides the ground on which my study was built. The Vygotskian framework with its emphasis on dialogue and a learner's active mind as well as the learner training approach with its valuable findings (the first half of chapter 2) are built in to the rest of the study. The work on vocabulary learning/teaching reviewed in the second half of chapter 2 is equally important to the design, analyses, findings and implications of my study. I have opted for consciousness raising in vocabulary learning and reading with which I intended to reach answers to the questions presented in 2.3 and 2.4 and, in particular, to the research questions in 5.5.

3. Context of study

The aim of this chapter is to familiarise the reader with the general context of the study briefly presented in the introduction, i.e. the general trends in the linguistic background of Finnish university students and the language requirements set upon them. I also introduce the specific context of the study, i.e. the course in which the data were collected.

3.1 General background to linguistic beliefs and language requirements

To put this study in context, I need to start further than the immediate institutional context of the study. It is relevant to consider concepts Finnish students have of languages and language learning and teaching - an area studied by Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996). An overview of the study by Dufva (1995) and Dufva et al (1996) is presented in the background literature (2.1.1 under Holistic approach) and it is later referred to in chapter 6. Finnish university students are claimed to share certain beliefs from the areas of language, language learning and teaching, and the two students at the core of my study are no exceptions. Finnish students seem, for example, to have positive attitudes towards foreign languages and learning of foreign languages. They appreciate knowing foreign languages because of the communication value of these languages to them as speakers of a non-Indo-European language. Also, such areas as the shift of the Finnish language from the language of the oppressed to the language of the educated that started more than a hundred years ago are said to be present in the students' everyday beliefs; Finnish is an important source of personal identity, part of us. This relatively recent history lives in the students of foreign languages, too; the teaching methods of Finnish in the past put a lot of stress on error-free production of this fairly recently established language and may have influenced an awareness of the "right" kind of Finnish - an idea which, in turn, may go hand in hand with the idea of error-free production of a foreign language. Also in foreign language teaching, avoiding errors seems to have been a prevalent feature. Finnish students are, at least partly because of

the above, often anxious about using foreign languages in public and critical towards the teaching methods in foreign language classrooms.

Although learning/using languages is not considered easy and teaching methods are a target of criticism, knowing foreign languages is held in high regard not only by students but also by curriculum designers in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Because of the value foreign languages have been allocated, foreign language teaching has had a stronghold in the Finnish school system for decades. It is at least partly because of these requirements in schools that the two cases who are the focus of this study have been exposed to languages other than their native language for considerable spells of time in an institutional context, even before entering the university.

The current university language requirements were introduced in the late 1970's. They were a backlash to the then existing requirements based on tests in translation - an approach deemed highly inadequate and inappropriate considering the needs of the students. In the Zeitgeist of the 1970's, the current requirements - which were devised to better respond the needs of the student community - draw on the skills approach to language teaching. Language centres in most Finnish universities thus offer, among other things, reading comprehension courses and oral skills courses in foreign languages in order to help students fulfil their language requirements. (Naturally, each university in Finland has slightly different ways of having the students fulfil their language requirements which themselves also vary a little between different universities.)

3.2 Language requirements - social sciences/social policy

As the specific context (discussed in 3.3) of this study was an English reading comprehension course for the students of social sciences and as the two students studied in greater detail were students of social policy/social work, it is apt to start moving the discussion from the general sociocultural background to the institutional context of the language requirements.

Figure 1 illustrates the language requirements set for students of social policy at the University of Helsinki.

Figure 1: **Language requirements/social policy**

second official language: Finnish or Swedish (depending on the students' native language)	+	foreign language: English, Spanish, French, German or Russian (most often English chosen)
all skills: 3 credits[4]		reading: 2 credits oral skills: 2 credits
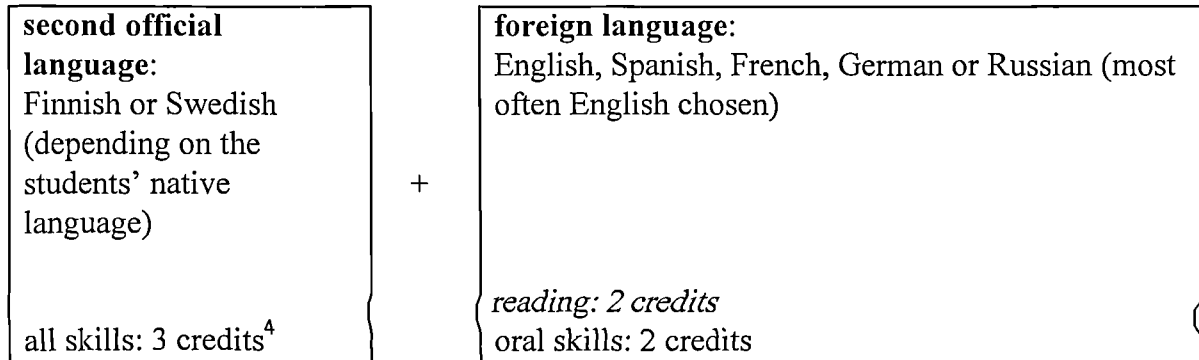
Without going into details of all the language requirements, let us take the reading requirement in English (the language chosen by the students in this study) as a case in point. In reading comprehension, the students are assessed on a pass-fail scale. The students are allowed to try the test twice before "having to" take the course. The social policy/social work students have several ways of fulfilling the requirement, as illustrated in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: **Fulfilling the English reading comprehension requirement**
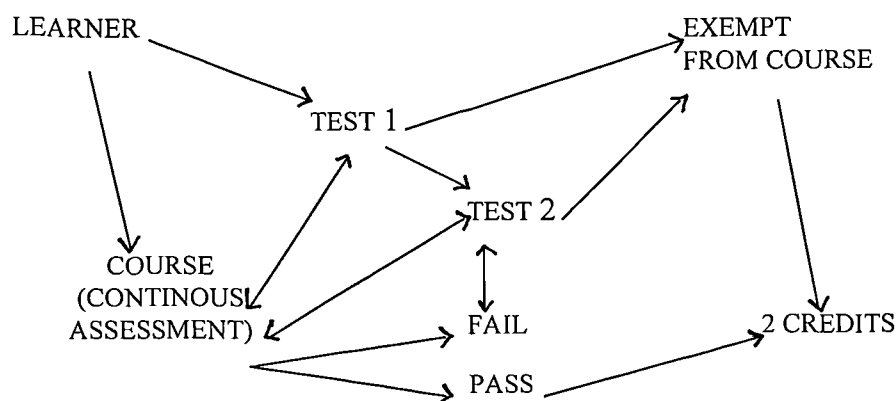
In my study, the interest is in the students who either have to (as is the case normally) or choose to take a reading comprehension course. Roughly one third of all students taking

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[4] one credit = 40 hours work

the reading comprehension test fail it, and this one third takes part in the course. In addition, a few students volunteer to take the course. Thus the proficiency level of the participants in reading comprehension courses is lower than among university students as a whole, but the students are by no means beginners. In most cases, they have had between three and ten years of English at school.

With this short discussion on the general sociocultural and institutional background, I have wanted to highlight an important aspect of my study, namely that the students in question live in a climate that, generally speaking, values foreign language skills. However, many of them *have to* fulfil the requirements set for them by having to take a course. Most of the ones failing in the test regard language learning and knowledge of languages as important, but may not initially like the idea of having requirements forced upon them.

3.3 Specific context of study

The English reading comprehension course for the students of social sciences in this study was organised by the Helsinki Summer University in 1996. The Summer University offered the course approved by the University of Helsinki for university students as well as for non-university students. Because of this approval, the students of the course got their credits transferred to the University. Although the course at the Summer University and those at the University proper were compatible, there was one crucial difference to the "mood" of the courses. Students on the Summer University course paid a fee and were eager to fulfil the course requirements, whereas on ordinary University reading comprehension courses (no fee) the "mood" is sometimes more forced and the drop-out rate is slightly higher. Despite the comments in section 3.2 on forcing the requirements on the students, the atmosphere in the 1996 course was mostly relaxed, rewarding.

The aim of the course was to equip the students with skills and language they need in their studies as well as after their studies, taking into account the varied backgrounds of the students - the most imminent need for most students was the ability to read their text

books, as most text books for most social science students are in English (or not in Finnish anyway). The approach was to tackle the problems students in reading comprehension courses normally have, e.g. slowness in reading, lack of vocabulary, lack of reading skills in English (based on my experiences and the pilot study carried out in summer 1995).

The participants of the course in 1996 were mainly university students. Many of them were part-time students with full-time jobs and they attended the course in their holidays. Like most students, the two students of interest in this study had taken a reading comprehension test, but having failed it, attended the course.

The course lasted for three weeks. There was instruction on four days per week, 4 x 45 minutes each day, totalling to 48 teaching hours.

4. Data collection

This chapter deals with the various aspects of the data collection. I start off with explaining the evolving nature of the research questions, i.e. what was in my mind before and during the data collection (the final research questions took shape only after the data collection). I then present my rationale for the use of Finnish in the data collection and proceed to the design and description of the data collection. I thereafter discuss the relationship of course work and data collection which is followed by considerations on reliability and validity.

4.1 Evolving nature of research questions

At the data collection phase, I had a set of research questions in mind, but since my own thinking has been in a process of change while doing this research, I have refined those questions several times. In the hope of presenting the data collection phase so that it makes sense to the reader, I step back to the areas I was interested in when collecting the data. Bringing together these areas of interest, the final research questions are portrayed in section 5.5, in connection with the procedures for the analysis of the data. The initial areas of interest were

- strategies in vocabulary learning, mainly memorising of word meanings
- consciousness in vocabulary learning in general and committing word meanings to memory in particular
- the influence of group work
- an individual's change - why, how, etc.
- the possibility of training students - causing something to happen

Looking at these areas of interest, it is evident that many of them draw on consciousness, the quest for meaning and the relationship of the interpersonal and intrapersonal meaning making, all covered in the background literature in chapter 2. However, they mainly stem from the non-Vygotskian field of literature presented from section 2.5 on. They mainly target the intra-individual aspect, although interest in group work and training bring in the aspect of interpersonality. This relationship between my

initial areas of interest and the three overarching areas presented in the background literature was present, albeit not clearly formulated in my mind, when planning the data collection, and the relationship has become more pronounced in the course of analysing the data, so much so that in the actual research questions the relationship is quite explicit.

Let me now reflect on the three fundamental areas - consciousness, the quest for meaning and interpersonal/intrapersonal meaning making - at the design stage of this study. The notion of consciousness was particularly mind-provoking to me as without conscious processing and the acceptance of getting to the students' conscious processing, this study with its explicit consciousness raising could not have been carried out. The very premise of the design was to collect articulations of the students, i.e.

- their conscious articulations of retrospective nature (metalevel, on their "Selves" and on their strategies)
- their conscious articulations of the current state of affairs (metalevel, on their "Selves" and on their strategies)
- their conscious? articulations in group action (on "concurrent" strategies)

These articulations were to be either in written or spoken (taped) form and are mainly "conscious" in mainly the second sense of consciousness covered in 2.1.1, i.e. consciousness as metaknowledge. Seeing construction of co-knowledge as consciousness evolved later. (The notions of "Self", "metalevel", etc. are explained in 5.7 and 5.8.)

The idea of the quest for meaning - as discovered in the background literature - is interesting from two aspects. My own quest for meaning was the driving force behind my study, i.e. I wanted to find out about the relationship between teaching and learning in my teaching situation. However, it was the quest for meaning of words, texts and learning of the students that made the study possible. The quest for meaning of the students was designed to be looked at from three points of view. First, the group work tasks designed to prompt students to talk about how they go about finding one meaning in the text (i.e. the writer's) and about their vocabulary processing. Therefore, the quest for meaning was towards one way of understanding the message of the text and towards

understanding the text on word level. Second, it was also assumed the students would engage in metalevel talk about their learning etc. in the group work tasks where the group was encouraged to talk about their success in learning words. Third, the quest for meaning of one's learning was expected to be present in the answers to questions (interview and questionnaires) that were geared towards vocabulary and reading.

The interpersonal/intrapersonal meaning making, discussed in the background literature (2.1.1 and 2.2), was of great interest. Ideally, the students - who in many ways were in control of their doing and learning already at the beginning - were to evolve into more autonomous students. Interpersonal meaning making as conceived in the Vygotskian framework was not incorporated in the design stage, but the importance of interpersonal meaning making was vaguely present. Thus the course was designed to have a lot of group work which, it seems clear now, is only one of the forms of interpersonal meaning making. More of these other forms of interpersonal meaning making in 5.4, 6, 7 and 8.

4.2 Use of Finnish in data collection

One decision I needed to take was the language of data collection. From the beginning, it was clear that the data from students would be collected with instruments in Finnish and that I would give the consciousness raising sessions in Finnish. To an outsider, not using the target language in the data collection might seem contradictory, and I therefore briefly explain my rationale for the use of Finnish.

- Although all the texts in my reading comprehension classes are in English, a great bulk of the course work is in Finnish, as this to me seems to resemble the situation of the Finnish university students outside the classroom, e.g. required reading is often in English, but exam questions and answers are mainly in Finnish. In other words, the Finnish student's quest for meaning of the text takes place in a bilingual or multilingual context. Following from this, the use of Finnish in the data collection formed a continuum with what the students were already doing "out there".

- The use of Finnish made it more likely that the students had a chance to interact with what went on and with the others. Much of this conscious "going on" was on metalevel and not necessarily easily expressed even in one's mother tongue. It is quite likely that the students had not often talked on metalevel about language,

language learning and themselves as learners of foreign languages in English, and the combination of the lack of expressions in English and the somewhat difficult topic could have resulted in little or less reliable data. (Dufva et al comment on the importance the participants of their study put on expressing one's ideas better in Finnish (1996: 67-68) and Kowal and Swain (1994: 83) deplore the lack of metalinguistic terms their adolescent students had.)

- Bearing in mind that Finnish students hesitate expressing their ideas in a foreign language as well as in Finnish and taking the view that talking is a social form of thinking (Bruner 1996), I needed to consider what happens if this social form of thinking is inhibited by the use of a foreign language, fear of mistakes, etc. I concluded that with Finnish university students, using Finnish would offer a less stressful climate. To talk on a conscious metalevel, the students needed to be less conscious of the tool they were using, i.e. the language the function of which was to raise awareness of thinking and learning a language.

4.3 Design and description of data collection

The data were collected throughout the three-week course and five months after the end of the course. The design in table 1 gives an overall picture of how the data collection was phased. (Section 5.2 on participants is closely connected to the design of the data collection in that it explains how the design - a somewhat abstract plan - worked in practice.)

All the 35 students who took the course also took part in the study. All the students, whenever present, filled in questionnaires and they all participated in tasks A.1, B.1, A.2 and B.2 (see 4.3.3), but only the work of the originally selected two groups was taped. During the data collection it was not clear whether the focus of the study would be on several students or on only a few.

The consciousness raising activities/data collection instruments (this double nature discussed in 4.4) during the course fell into three groups, namely, 1) teacher-led consciousness raising, 2) open-ended questionnaires 1 and 4 and 3) group work tasks tied with questionnaires 2 abc and 3 abc. In addition, four students were interviewed after the course and asked to fill in questionnaires 2d and 3d. I describe the functions of the different data collection instruments/consciousness raising activities in 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 after table 1.

Table 1: Design of data collection

	consciousness raising activity/data-collection instrument		
	questionnaire (all students)	teacher-led conscious-ness raising	group work - two groups of four
week 1 day 1	1	session 1	
week 1 day 2	2a		task A.1
week 1 day 3	2b	session 2	task B.1
week 1 day 4		session 3	
week 1 day 5, 6, 7	no classes		
week 2 day 8		session 4	
week 2 day 9	2c		
week 2 day 10	3a (repeat of 2a)		task A.2 (repeat of A.1)
week 2 day 11	3b (repeat of 2b)		task B.2 (repeat of B.1)
week 2 day 12, 13, 14	no classes		
week 3 day 15			
week 3 day 16			
week 3 day 17	3c (repeat of 2c)		
week 3 day 18	4		

	data collection instrument		
five months later	interview	questionnaires 2d + 3d	

4.3.1 Teacher-led consciousness raising

The aim of the teacher-led consciousness raising was to raise awareness in the students' approaches to reading and vocabulary, a point of view which has been gaining ground (e.g. Carter and McCarthy 1988, Nation 1990, 1994, Oxford 1990). (The focus was on vocabulary items, not on lexical phrases as presented in Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992), although lexical phrases were covered elsewhere in the course). The consciousness raising was carried out in an explicit manner, mentioning the possible benefits of certain strategies/approaches, but stressing the options an individual has. The motto could be said to have been "Try this out and see if it suits you!" The rationale for the teacher-led consciousness raising derived from my practical experiences when helping students solve problems in reading more than anything else, but some evidence of similar problems of a Finnish student are presented in Valtanen (1995). Problems such as "being stuck with words" easily prevent the students from using strategies they use in their native language, e.g. different forms of selective reading. Most students in my teaching situation are good readers of Finnish, with a considerable amount of background information and ability to respond on different levels to what they read, but they seem unable to do the same in English. Not being able to decipher the linguistic code in order to respond and interact adequately is a source of frustration for them and is quite likely connected to the inability to read selectively, if needed. In section 2.5, I have provided background to the importance of vocabulary in reading.

I initiated the topics or areas covered in the consciousness raising, but following from this initiation, some new topics were raised in the class discussion. The pre-planned consciousness raising was spread out to four sessions, but the topics originally covered in these sessions were often brought up in later sessions and, indeed, practised in different types of tasks. I give a short presentation of the contents of the four sessions. Although the focus of the consciousness raising was on vocabulary, some reading strategies were also covered because of the interrelatedness of reading and vocabulary strategies.

Session 1

The first session covered (see 2.5)

- an introduction to general reading strategies such as skimming and scanning and their context-relatedness

Skimming and scanning as well as intensive and extensive reading were tackled as issues of choice - they were not treated as keys to understanding all texts and text types, but as useful tools in many situations.

Session 2

The second session focused on strategies of "finding out the meaning of an unknown word". It consisted of

- a short review of the relationship between reading and vocabulary (see e.g. Carter and McCarthy 1988, Kern 1989, Arnaud and Béjoint 1992, Huckin et al 1993, Coady and Huckin 1997)
- an introduction to affixes which the students were to self-study (self study material from Olsonen et al 1994)
- a discussion between the students and the teacher on what the students tend to do when they encounter an unfamiliar word in a text (this covered the use of contextual cues such as textual context, similarities with other languages, use of affixes, use of dictionaries, help from others)
- a look at self-reports of four successful language learners on how they treat words (appendix 1) (see e.g. Wenden and Rubin 1987 and Oxford 1990 for the use of successful learners as "models")
- a discussion between the students and the teacher on inferring the meaning of an unknown word (transparencies which demonstrate that one needs to know about 90 % of the words in order to be able to comprehend a text) (see e.g. Nation and Coady 1988)
- some exercises on inferring from a fairly limited context of one sentence.

Session 3

The third session focused on committing meanings of words to mind and recalling them. The main line of thought was to show that involving oneself, making the word one's own, connecting the word to what one already knows is worth the effort which often

leads to better committing and subsequent recall (see e.g. Craik and Tulving 1975, Levin 1981, Cohen and Aphek 1980, 1981, Cohen 1987, 1991, Brown and Perry 1991, Ellis 1994a, Beaton et al 1995, Tinkham 1997). This session consisted of

- the keyword method (example in appendix 2)
- associations in general (example in appendix 2)
- the use of word families in a mind map (such as thematic and semantic clustering) (example in appendix 2)
- making a new sentence with the word (example in appendix 2)

and

- a discussion where the focus was on strategies typical to Finnish students in reading comprehension courses, such as writing a translation of a word on top of it and looking up all the unknown words. These practices were questioned.

The students were then requested to practise the first four methods in groups, using the words the meaning of which they had inferred in a text.

Session 4

The fourth session was a further exercise on committing meanings to memory and recalling them. It consisted of

- a "let's see what I can remember" review on transparency of the words from the text in session 3 which the groups had consciously practised, i.e. the students were once again given the ten words and asked to recall the meaning they had consciously tried to memorise four days earlier. A short discussion on the success of the students followed.
- a further review of the keyword method, associations in general, word families, making a new sentence with the word (see session 3).

4.3.2 Open-ended questionnaires 1 and 4

The intention of both questionnaire 1 and questionnaire 4 (appendix 3) was to collect information on matters related to reading and vocabulary as well as those related to the

participants' background, motives, etc. These questionnaires were intended to reveal of the conscious side of the students and were likely to act as consciousness raising tasks.

Questionnaire 4 was originally longer than the one seen in appendix 3, consisting of a closed-end Likert-scale part and an open-ended section. The closed-end section could not be used in the analysis, as several students had difficulty filling it in. In particular, they found it difficult to state whether a particular strategy was used, for example, often or quite often. This difficulty was raised by the decontextualised nature of the questions. So using the whole questionnaire would have made the findings less reliable. These problems with having to discard part of a questionnaire were caused by the time constraints which prevented me from piloting the whole of the questionnaire, i.e. the Likert-scale part.

4.3.3 Group work tasks A.1, B.1, A.2 and B.2 and questionnaires 2 and 3

The aim of the two types of group work was to monitor how the students together negotiate the meaning intended by the writer in a text (tasks A.1 and A.2, see appendix 4) and how they reflect on their processes of paying attention to words (B.1 and B.2, see appendix 4). These tasks were tied with the sets of questionnaires 2 and 3 which were designed to act as prompts to discussion and reflection (appendix 5). Questionnaires 2 and 3 were made of very limited use as data collection instruments, as their focus was only on remembering words (finding out, committing meaning to memory, recalling). I only used them as data in analysis 4 in 8.2 when tracing the recall of words discussed in the group.

As is revealed in chapters 6, 7 and 8 (where I report the findings of the analyses), the students' perceptions of the task somewhat differed from mine (similar types of detection are to be found in, e.g. Donato (1994) and Kowal and Swain (1994).) As a result, in addition to the intended outcome, the tasks made students reflect on their learning on a wider spectrum than expected. The consciousness raising function was

greater than I originally intended. Therefore, the group work served as a data collection instrument and very much as a consciousness raising activity.

4.3.4 Interview

The function of the interview was to have the students elaborate on the conscious issues they had reported in questionnaires 1 and 4 and in the group work. The agenda for all the interviews was the same which resulted in semi-structured interviews. The information gained was to be more in-depth than in questionnaires 1 and 4. With its time lag, the interview was to add a longitudinal element to the study.

Although I use the interview only as a data collection instrument in this study, it is likely it acted as a consciousness raiser too, but that consciousness raising was beyond the scope of this research.

4.4 Relationship of course work and data collection

I collected the data for this study during an English reading comprehension course of which I was the teacher myself. Acting as a teacher and a researcher had several repercussions for the collection and the subsequent analysis of the data. What is of most importance at this point is the intertwined nature of the data collection instruments and consciousness raising activities - the two were in most cases one. This was not my original conscious intention, as, roughly speaking, I saw the teacher-led consciousness raising activities more or less like "the cause", the questionnaires as reporting "the effect" and the group work acting as "the cause and the effect". My double role as a teacher and a researcher in the classroom (e.g. my good working relationship with the students, ability to hear students' comments after the instruments) facilitated detecting the intertwined nature of the data collection and the consciousness raising activities. Clark and Ivanic (1991: 183) comment on this intertwined nature of some classroom activities.

4.5 Reliability and validity

As stated in 4.4, a lot of the work on the course was for the purposes of data collection as well as for those of teaching/learning. In the pilot study that I carried out the previous summer, I had piloted many of these methods. I now talk about the issues of validity and reliability of this study. In the following discussion I have mainly used Nunan (1992) and Robson (1993) as my guides.

When collecting the data, I needed to do joint plans for both the teaching and the data collection, and, indeed, in many cases the two would merge into one from the point of view of the teacher and, I would assume, from the point of view of the students. For example, all the tasks taped, reported in 4.3.3, formed a natural flow of the course work. It was only the taping that made the task special and part of the data collection. Also, the beginning-of-course questionnaire and the end-of-course questionnaire, discussed in 4.3.2, were clearly a part of the course, although designed to be used as a part of the data. In addition, the teacher-led consciousness raising, although, once again, a pre-planned activity, was not for the sole purposes of the study. However, questionnaires 2 abc and 3 abc on word recall (see 4.3.3) had more data collection features, not in their purpose to raise consciousness, but in the number the students filled in. The post-course interview was, from the point of view of *this* study, the only instrument that did not integrate data collection and teaching/learning.

The integration of the data collection instruments and teaching/consciousness raising is a very curious phenomenon. The interwoven nature of the course work and the qualitative data collection steered the study to some circularity. In some cases, for example, an instrument was supposed to let me know of the current state of a student's consciousness and by asking it, I was, perhaps, raising the very consciousness (this dialogue was also noted in Dufva et al 1996). The merging of research instruments and acts of teaching/consciousness raising, however, is often an integral part of teacher research and does not necessarily decrease the value of the study. In fact, I would claim the data collection as it was carried out made the study more representative of what can take place in real classroom and could take place in another of my classrooms, even if I

was not to collect data (i.e. the "instruments" could be used in the consciousness raising function). This presence of real life representativity added to the construct validity of this research (Robson 1993).

The triangulation of data collection methods also added to the construct validity, i.e. it was possible to approach the issues under examination from different angles. The internal validity of the study is not an issue here, as I am not claiming what was done in the classroom directly had an effect on the students' thinking and "Selves" etc. (Although one of the initial interests was on causing something to happen - see 4.1 - there was no intention to look for cause-effect relationships.) The external validity, i.e. the study's generalisability is not high, as is often the case with action research or teacher-researcher research (see Nunan 1992). However, the study was not intended to yield high generalisability, as it clearly was a study in a particular situation. The results may still give an indication of the value of something similar taking place in a similar situation (if two situations are ever similar).

Let us now consider reliability. The external reliability of my study is difficult to assess. There will never be another context exactly like the one discussed in this study, but, if there were, it is likely the study could be replicated in some form. The internal reliability of the study is more of an interest. The intrarater reliability in the analyses was checked by my repeated counting, rechecking and correcting of the codings and the rethinking of the analyses. The pilot study carried out before the actual study added to intrarater reliability. It was also reinforced by the following. When analysing the data, the teacher-researcher identity gave me valuable insight into the worlds of the students. In addition to collecting "formal" data in the sense explained in the previous paragraph, I had written field notes and had access to students' thoughts after a taped task or after a questionnaire. These comments by students allowed me to reflect on the instruments used and, in fact, prompted me to discard the closed-end parts of questionnaire 4. I also had access to the test results, which, although not part of the study, could be used to monitor the "result" or "product" side of the students' learning which could guide me in my interpretations of the data. My supervisors and a colleague helped with the interrater reliability checks of the codings and analyses. They were given extracts of transcripts

and asked to code them according to the coding system in analysis 1 (chapter 6). When discrepancies arose, I changed my codings, if the supervisors and the colleague presented a better rationale than I could provide. All in all, a few subsequent alterations were made to the coding system itself and to the way it was applied to the extracts and to the rest of the transcripts. I also negotiated analyses 2, 3 and 4 with my supervisors and often made alterations according to the suggestions.

There is one additional concern about the trustworthiness of my study. Relying on self-reports (both written and oral) on one's perceptions of one's learning etc. - an established field of enquiry in SLA research - means accepting that students are capable of talking about issues related to learning. My intention is not to claim the students' reports are right or wrong, comprehensive accounts or not. Rather, my study moves within the rich domains of self-reporting which, in my opinion, is a good complementary approach to other types of approaches. (See Ericsson and Simon 1984 and Nisbett and Wilson 1977 for argumentation for and against introspective methods.)

5. Procedures for analysis

The aim of this chapter is to highlight the different steps taken in analysing the data. I first write about the initial steps in the analysis, then move on to introducing the participants of the study, in particular the two case study students. I also talk about the general trends in the data of these two case study students. This leads me to the actual research questions. After the research questions I explain the episodes of analysis and the organisation of the data.

5.1 Initial steps in the analysis

To start with, all the data I had taped needed to be transcribed, i.e. the Finnish audiotapes needed to be transformed into Finnish transcripts. The transcripts were kept in as simple a form as possible. Of the many conversational features, only long pauses have been marked. The following simple symbols can be found in the extracts:

? = inaudible
" " = words discussed (English or Finnish), quotations from the text in English, comments in English
( ) = translation
[] = explanation

This is an example of a transcript in Finnish - the same appears in translation in the following example. This transcript comes from task A.1 where group II (see 5.2) is discussing the word "analysis".

extract 1

A: täält tulee esiin se että on olemas sellasia, miten se suomeks käännetään, "authors", jotka ovat eri mieltä siitä
H: niin niin, "authorities", siis viranomaisia tai jotain tän tyyppistä
A: mä sanoisin että se on kirjeenvaihtaja
J: niin
A: ? tietoo siihen että miten
HE: ja ne väittelee täs kappaleessa
J: jos on sitten sellasia tieteitä missei voi hirveesti
HE: voi olla pelkästään
J: ne voi olla niin laajoja ettei kaikki psykologit oo samaa mieltä joka asiasta, ja kaikki sosiologit

HE: kirjoittaja, tekijä, kirjailija, alullepanija, isä, elikä juu [sanakirjasta]
A: alullepanija vois olla tässä
H: no sillee vois
A: sillai vois aika moni ?
H: joo-o
J: nii
HE: oisko se siinä

After transcribing, I translated all the data the four students who took part in the after-the-course interview (see 4.3.4) had provided me with, as at that stage it was not clear to me who the two cases I would focus on would be. The translations follow the same unelaborated style as the original transcripts. The translated extracts displayed in this study were made more readable by inserting commas where there could be a short pause in talk in English.

I have tried to maintain the same informal style in the translations that clearly mark the original recordings - a task not easy. Showing the informal style and the "punctuation" applied, this is the translation of extract 1 from above.

extract 1 (translation)

A: it becomes clear that there are, how do you translate into Finnish "authors", who have a different opinion of
H: yes yes, "authorities", well, "viranomaisia" or something like that
A: I would say it is "kirjeenvaihtaja" ("correspondent")
J: that's it
A: ? knowledge on how
HE: and they have a dispute in this paragraph
J: if there are fields of study in which you cannot awfully
HE: you may only
J: they may be so extensive that not all psychologists agree on everything and all sociologists
HE: "kirjoittaja", "tekijä", "kirjailija", "alullepanija", "isä", so yes [from the dictionary]
A: it could be "alullepanija" here
H: well, it could in a way
A: then quite many could ?
H: yes
J: that's it
HE: have we got it now

The translation process was necessary to make the data available to various people I shared them with in the course of doing this research, but when analysing the data, I tended to use the transcripts in the original language, although not always. Both the

transcribing and the translating, although arduous, gave me insight into the data and their characteristics.

5.2 Participants

After the translation and transcription processes, it was time to decide on whom the focus of the study would be. As mentioned in 4.1 and in 5.5, my initial interests were in a few areas of which an individual's change was only one. In what follows I describe the selection process of the two, starting from the very beginning of the data collection/course.

The initial participants of the study were thirty five students who took part in the English reading comprehension course explained in section 3.3. Whenever there was a data collection session, all the students present supplied me with data. At the onset, I thought I would perhaps make use of the wide data of the whole group, but in the end, however, the focus of the study became two of the students in the course (more of this process in 5.5). The case study approach turned out to have the advantage of generating such in-depth data that the more superficial data from the whole group did not need to be studied in great detail. But the availability of the data from the 35 students facilitated the process of doing research, when I was in need of a point of reference. The stories the 35 students tell in their questionnaire 1, for example, point to the sociocultural similarities in the background of the Finnish students but also to individual differences. The selection of the two case study students out of the 35 was a multi-step process which is presented in simplified form in table 2.

Table 2: **Selection of the two cases**

type of activity	number of participants
beginning-of-course proficiency test	35 students
group task A.1	heterogeneous group I: **4** originally selected students + heterogeneous group II: **4** originally selected students
group task B.1	heterogeneous group I: **3** originally selected students + heterogeneous group II: **3** originally selected students
group task A.2	heterogeneous group I: **2** originally selected students + heterogeneous group II: **3** originally selected students
group task B.2	heterogeneous group I: **3** originally selected students + heterogeneous group II: **3** originally selected students
end-of-course situation	**5** originally selected students with full data
interview	**4** originally selected students
closer analysis	**2** originally selected students

As mentioned, the number of students in the course was 35 to start with. These students were given a proficiency test (Olsonen and Monni 1996) on the basis of which they were put to mixed ability groups of three or four - all the groups had one student with a low score, one or two with a medium score and one with a high score (an idea suggested by Kohonen 1992). Although otherwise random, the selection of the students to the groups was constrained by this principle of heterogeneity (this is against the suggestion supporting homogeneous pairs in Kowal and Swain 1994, see chapter 10). I also made sure the students in group I and group II were enrolled university students (i.e. who could have been students on a reading comprehension course at the Helsinki University Language Centre).

The students did most of the course work with the group. The interaction of the chosen two groups on the course was taped on four occasions with the consent of the students. The students in the two groups were

group I:

J = a female student of Finnish
M = a female student of theoretical philosophy
P = a male student of history
R = Rachel, a student of social policy/social work[5]

group II:

An = a female student of health care
He = a female student of aesthetics
A = a female student of health care
J = a male student of education
H = Helen, a student of social policy/social work

By the end of the course, five of the students in the two groups had been present on all taped sessions. The participants in the two groups taped varied not only because of absences, but also because of an introduction of a new member to group II at a later stage (due to practical reasons). I sent an invitation to these five to attend an interview some five months after the completion of the course, and four students agreed to attend the interview.

I finally selected two students for closer scrutiny after comparing the background details of the four available which in a nutshell were as follows:

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[5] The use of the English pseudonyms Rachel and Helen stems from the study itself. At the after-the-course interviews, I asked one of the students what she would like to be called, if I chose to write about her. Her immediate reply was "Rachel", as that had been her English name in her English lessons at school - a practice quite common then and still. When prompted, "Lucy" (now A) told me her English name and wanted me to use it, if needed. Helen is my invention, as I did not have a chance to ask her what she had been named at school. I personally believe Rachel's reaction and the fact that people after thirty, even forty years readily remember their school time alias - which after all was only used in English lessons a few times each week - form a beautiful link to the importance of learners' background and affective side in building their identities.

Table 3: Background of four students

	gender	age	beginning of course proficiency level	current use of English in studies	student status at the time of interview	field of study
group I:						
Rachel	female	early 50s	middle: 38/60	yes	yes	social policy
P	male	late 20s	high: 47/60	hardly	yes	history
group II:						
A	female	early 40s	middle: 41/60	no	no	health care
Helen	female	late 40s	low: 28/60	yes	yes	social policy

First of all, I was interested in participants who were still enrolled as students - this was a way to take out A who had taken her reading comprehension course at the very end of her studying career instead of the intended beginning. Since I was not only interested in any two students, but two students who were involved in different group interaction, Helen needed to be included. Having to choose between Rachel and P, I could not resist to tackle Rachel who in her background (her full-time job, part-time studying of social policy/social work and nearly grown-up children) seemed so similar to Helen.

5.3 Introducing Helen and Rachel

In many ways Helen and Rachel are similar, but let us take a closer look at them.

Let me first introduce Helen, one of the two main participants of this study. Helen - a mother of three grown-up/teenage children - is a part-time mature student of social policy/social work[6] with social psychology as her minor. Having had three years of English more than 20 years before the data collection, she mainly uses English when reading her text books and sometimes at work with clients. At school, she also had Swedish (compulsory second official language of Finland) and Russian. At the beginning of the course, Helen was insecure about her language skills, but also very

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[6] Of about 30-40 students accepted to study social policy/social work in the years 1995, 1996 and 1997, two or three each year have been women born between 1945-1955 (personal communication with Mikko Laukkanen , Department of Social Policy, University of Helsinki) which is the time period Helen's birth date fit into, just like that of Rachel's, the other main participant of this study.

motivated to learn and "uncover what [she] knew from before" (q1). Assessed with three tests during the course, Helen passed the reading comprehension course.

Rachel, too, is a part-time mature student of social policy/social work with social psychology as her minor. She had had six years of English at school about 30 years before the data collection. She reads English for study purposes and whenever she finds "something interesting". She also goes to an English discussion group at work. At school, she had German and Swedish, the latter now being the language she is in daily contact with after marrying a Swedish-speaking Finn and having brought up three bilingual children. At the beginning of the course, Rachel was concerned with understanding entities and concepts behind subject-specific academic words. She took part in the course to pass and to get the credit. Rachel too, passed the English reading comprehension course.

The initial motives in taking part in the course varied between Helen and Rachel - this potentially had an effect on their strategic approaches to language learning (see Gillette's study 1994 on the role of learner goals in L2 success).

5.4 General trends in the data from Helen and Rachel

With the decision to focus on Helen and Rachel as my two case study participants (see 5.2), it had become evident that the data Helen and Rachel provided me with are very rich in metacognitive and strategic matters. One way of conceptualising the rich data - before touching on the specific research questions or episodes of analysis - is splitting it into three overlapping areas, namely those dealing with consciousness, quest for meaning and interpersonal/intrapersonal process of meaning making all of which were very much present in background literature (see 2.1 and 2.1.1). I have discussed these areas in 4.1 where they were portrayed as having been present, albeit not clearly structured, in the design phase.

First, inherent to the design of the data collection, most of the data available and of interest are formed by the students' conscious articulations. In fact, the information from

all the questionnaires, the interview and most of the group work comes from the conscious sphere of the learners. However, some of the group work, i.e. where the students look for the meaning of the text/words, is not necessarily on the conscious level in the sense of metacognition, but is conscious in the sense of construction of co-knowledge. (Different types of consciousness were discussed in 2.1.1 with the help of Vygotsky 1962, Schmidt 1994, van Lier 1996.)

The second generally relevant characteristic of the data is the almost ever present quest for meaning. With the quest for meaning I basically refer to the driving force behind finding out what is important to the learner. The idea of the quest for meaning is tied with the idea of agentiveness, i.e. an individual's effort to create meaningfulness to situations which first seem difficult to perceive (e.g. van Lier 1996: 91, 189, Bruner 1986). The quest for meaning was present perhaps due to the nature of the tasks the students tackled and due to the reasons the students had to read English. In the group work (tasks A.1 and B.1), the instructions were to find out what the writer of the text thought important - a prompt enough to look for the meaning. Also, in the second type of group work (tasks A.2 and B.2), the students were prompted to talk about their learning, a quest for meaning in itself. Also, the questionnaires were geared towards the quest for meaning in the students' reading and in their approaches to vocabulary.

The third area characteristic to the data stems from the interpersonal-intrapersonal process of meaning making, a key concept in (neo-) Vygotskian thinking (see e.g. Bruner 1986, 1990, 1996, Lantolf and Appel 1994, Mercer 1994). At the onset, I expected to find interpersonal processing in the group work and intrapersonal articulation in other types of data, but this area has proven more complicated. It is clear that most of the group work data exhibit information from the interpersonal level of meaning making, but the students also let me know in the interviews and questionnaires that they indeed need others to make sense of or in a foreign language. The intrapersonal data most characteristically come from the questionnaires the students filled in on their own, but also from the interview and group tasks. However, in their process of revealing something of their intrapersonal side, the students were not in a vacuum, but prompted by the questions I had formulated, i.e. the process was interactional or interpersonal.

5.5 Research questions

The general trends discussed above in the data from Helen and Rachel give an idea of the type of data available. As doing this research has not been a linear process, I would now like to form a link between what the general trends of the data are (and were known to be before finalising the research questions) and what the initial areas of interest were and what eventually became the research questions. In section 4.1, a point was made about the evolving nature of the research questions. It was made clear that the initial areas of interest were

- strategies in vocabulary learning, mainly inferring and memorising of word meanings
- consciousness in vocabulary learning in general and committing word meaning to memory in particular
- the influence of group work
- an individual's change - why, how, etc.
- the possibility to train students - causing something to happen

While doing this research, the initial areas have remained, but the focus in these areas is sharper. In the process of clarifying the focus, the general trends in the data were of enormous help.

My focus moved from the group as a whole to two students, as I saw this as a way of getting deeper into the process of change. In other words, I started to see the consciousness raising in vocabulary learning and reading (part of which were the group work activities) from the point of view of the two case study students who offered substantial information about their processes etc.

With the initial areas of interest and the general trends as my guides, I came to realise that each change I was to look at needed to be seen in connection with the consciousness raising, both the teacher-led and the group work. With this realisation, I was able to narrow down the scope of the research questions.

As a part of the consciousness raising - see mainly section 4.3.3, session 2 - concentrated on finding out meanings of words, I formulated the following:

1. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?
1. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes?
1. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes?

As two sessions of the teacher-led consciousness raising (4.3.3 session 3 and 4) were devoted to committing meanings to mind and recall, I included the following:

2. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with committing the meanings of words to memory and recalling them?
2. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes?
2. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes?

Although the focus of this study was on issues in vocabulary, reading strategies were seen as a related issue. As the first teacher-led consciousness raising session (4.3.3) consisted of reading strategies, I formulated the following:

3. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with reading?
3. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes?
3. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes?

The final group of research questions came from my understanding of people learning in context, including the immediate context of, say, a task and the less immediate context of the learner's background, for example. This understanding of context - which can hardly escape any practitioner - is strongly present in, for example, the neo-Vygotskian and social-constructivist approaches, reviewed in 2.1.1.

4. a) How did the two participants describe a change in other aspects related to the above?
4. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes?
4. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes?

In each group of research questions, the notions of consciousness, quest for meaning and interpersonal/intrapersonal meaning making are present. I approached the research questions with the learner's saying of doing, doing and metaknowledge in mind. More of these in 5.7.

5.6 Episodes of analysis

As the data at hand were wide, I wanted to concentrate only on what is relevant from the point of view of the research questions. To select representative parts of the data for inspection, I investigated episodes of analysis. The episode of analysis in this study is any part of text where Helen and Rachel as either the sole voices or voices among others, talk of the following topics

- finding out meanings of words
- committing the meanings to memory
- recalling the meanings from memory
- reading
- related aspects

In practice this means that in the group work data, only parts of the data where Helen or Rachel speak have been analysed, although other parts of the data may have been relevant to Helen's and Rachel's changing conceptions, e.g. listening to/observing others may have a function in the process of change. However, choosing what was to be analysed only from the parts of the data where Helen and Rachel were present in their articulations rendered this study, in my opinion, less speculative.

The beginning of an episode is where an introduction of a topic (as listed above) appears and the end is where a new topic is introduced. In the questionnaire and interview data, the initiators for the change of topic often are the questions written or posed by me as the researcher, and in the group work data, the students themselves function as initiators. The change of topic in the group work is normally easy to notice, as seen in extract 2.

As a result of the type of data (see 5.7) and the research questions, the episodes of analysis fall into the following categories (see Kowal and Swain (1994) for different types of episodes in another type of data)

- episodes on metaknowledge where the students talk on metalevel of their learning, language and themselves as learners and persons

- episodes where students talk about doing, but do not actually engage in that doing when recorded (e.g. I often read out loud)

- episodes where students are actively engaged in finding out meanings of a word or some other kind of doing

- episodes embedding any of the above where the topic remains the same (e.g. while finding out meanings of word, talking about what one normally does)

Extract 2 shows how I separated the following into episodes (the beginning and the end of each unit is marked with #). The extract is from group task A.1 (group II) and it starts in the middle of the negotiation of meaning of the word "convenience", i.e. in the middle of one episode.

extract 2

```
#
[...]
A1 - H: yes it is well "convenience" "mukavuudet nykyajan mukavuudet" [from the
dictionary]
A2 - An: or right
A3 - J: well this is, this "easy purchase" and "preparation", that it is easy to make
and
A4 - H: exactly, it is the thing in the brackets what it means #
#
A5 - A: did you have anything, I do have another word here, can I say all the words
that I didn't understand
A6 - H: yes tell them all
A7 - A: same paragraph third line from the bottom "repertoire", is it "varasto"
(stock)
A8 - H: yes that is what I thought
A9 - J: "repertoire" because "repertuaari"
A10 - An: yes the whole repertoire
A11 - H: this is how I have understood it in Finnish #
#
A12 - A: how about paragraph five, what is this "crackers" the Japanese have this,
number twenty five is right next to it, "crackers"
[...]#
```

Extract 2 shows episodes where students are actively engaged in finding out meanings of words, but there is also an embedded part in A5 (articulation 5) where A reveals her metaknowledge. In A4, Helen recaps the topic of finding out the meaning of "convenience" and thus marks the end of that topic. In A5, A introduces a new topic, again about the meaning of a word ("repertoire"), through first asking the others if she

can ask as much as she wants. A11 marks the end of the topic of finding the meaning of a word. A12 shows another introduction of a new topic, again on word meaning.

5.7 Organising the data

In order to make sense of the data from the students and get closer to the answers to the research questions, I took the decision to split the data into three areas as follows.

1) what Helen and Rachel say (and do) in questionnaires 1 and 4 and in the after-the-course interviews

2) what they say and do in the context of others, i.e. in the group work

3) what happens in the groups of which Helen and Rachel are members

With the first two, I hoped to be able to detect the "changes" as Helen and Rachel saw them in the areas specified in the research questions. Although basically approaching the first two with the same categorisation system in mind (see section 6) and although in many ways the data from these two form an inseparable unit, I wanted to keep in mind that the two stem from different contexts of data collection. Area 1 comes from a more fixed question-answer format than area 2, in particular the questionnaire data which - although open-ended - were in written form. The format of the interview was semi-fixed, i.e. there was a selection of questions in all interviews, but variation arose because of the answers to the questions which prompted further questions. Area 2, on the other hand, is more the product of an interaction which was guided by the tasks as students interpreted them. With area 3, I hoped to clarify what in the group work possibly acted as a support for the change, i.e. I wanted to focus on the whole group.

5.8 Analyses 1, 2, 3 and 4: attempting a holistic view

Having separated the data for the purposes of the analysis meant having to devise several ways of analysing, i.e. ways targeted to areas 1) and 2) as explained in 5.7 above (see analysis 1 in chapter 6) and ways targeted to area 3) as explained in 5.7 above (see analyses 3 and 4 in chapter 8). Analysis 2 is somewhat different from the above, as I

looked at the information from the teacher-led consciousness raising and the carry-over of the areas covered in it to the student data in areas 1) and 2), i.e. I used the consciousness raising material as data. As I am using terms "saying" and "doing" in each system and as I have used them in 5.6, it is appropriate to have the terms explained.

In this study, the concepts of saying and doing are crucially important, as the data are about doing and saying. Though sounding simple, the relationship between the two is not an easy one. Bruner (1986, 1990, 1996) discusses the saying-doing paradigm quite widely. In his opinion, it is common to consider what people do somehow more important than what people say. It is common to think that when people say they "only" say and that saying may not be connected to doing. It is also common to believe that people's actions are behaviours out of context, with no relationship to the worlds of people. Bruner promotes a different kind of thinking - in his approach (he is one of the promoters of "cultural psychology") what people do, what they say they do, what they say caused them to do what they did and what people say their worlds are like are all important, inseparable aspects in understanding people (Bruner 1990: 16-19, Bruner 1996: 49). Essential in his thinking is that 1) our doing is motivated by beliefs, emotions and thoughts and 2) in our saying we may reveal some of those beliefs, emotions and thoughts, in our saying we may reveal reasons for our doing. Thus the study of saying and doing are equally important, intertwined tools in an effort to make sense of what people are (in my study, what learning is, how people learn).

The above acted as an incentive to coding the data in a certain way. As a learner's saying of metaknowledge (metalevel), of her doing (metalevel) and actual doing in this study form an interlocked net which can be used to detect changes in her articulations and possibly to explain why the changes took place I have made use of the following considerations (Vygotsky 1962, Bruner 1986, 1990, 1996, Garrett and James 1991, Legutke and Thomas 1991, Williams and Burden 1997: 154-155) when building the picture of Helen and Rachel (see figure 3) :

- a person's conscious metaknowledge of herself as a learner and a person, of her learning, and of language all may help explain a person's use of conscious and unconscious strategies, i.e. a person's doing

- a person's doing and saying of doing may also help explain her metaknowledge, as in the process of learning the learner reflects - when reflecting, the learner's metaknowledge may change

- a person's conscious saying of her doing and actual doing are interrelated - mastering an action means the learner taking over the control and consciousness, i.e. it would make the learner capable of talking about the action, but this very talking may also change the person's doing in the long run

Figure 3: **Metaknowledge, saying of doing and doing**
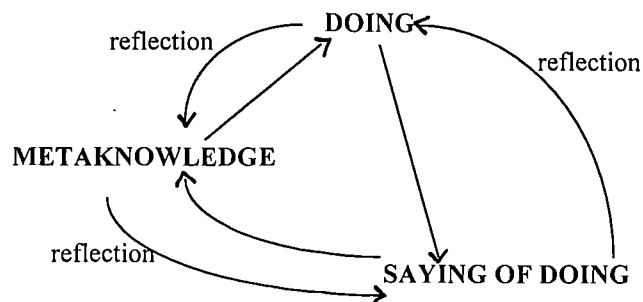
I have based analyses 1, 2, 3 and 4 on these considerations in an attempt to build a holistic view of the learners in this study.

6. Analysis 1

In this chapter, I first explain the coding system used in analysis 1 and then move on to the analysis and its findings. The idea of analysis 1 is to present Helen and Rachel in an "intrapersonal" light, i.e. to show what they articulate of themselves as learners, of learning of language and of their strategies.

Analysis 1 involves Helen and Rachel providing me with information in written form at the beginning of the course (q 1) and at the end of the course (q 2), information in spoken form in the after-the-course interview and information in spoken form in the four group tasks, i.e. the more intra-individual articulations as explicated in areas 1 and 2 in 5.8.

In analysis 1, I used a categorisation system which is based on the type of information the students provided by saying and, sometimes, by doing. The categorisation system is data-driven, but it is overlapping with some categorisations used in other studies (see e.g. Rubin 1987, Oxford 1990, Kohonen 1992). I would like to point out now that although only the group work data seemed interactional to start with, all the data are dialogic. First, the students do not say and do anything in isolation, but in the framework of the instrument and its prompts. They are, in other words, interacting with the instrument, behind which was another person (see 2.1-2.4). Second, although they might produce the answers physically on their own, in particular the answers to the questionnaires, they do bring the element of others and their importance forth, e.g. when talking of their family members as helping them or vice versa, or when telling about their school times.

6.1 Coding system

The system of coding used in analysis 1 consists of two main areas, 1) metalevel and 2) doing. Metalevel can further be split into two areas; 1) metaknowledge where the learner describes herself as a person and a learner, where she describes her language

awareness or learning and 2) saying of doing where the learner "steps" outside her doing and explain what she does, can do, usually does.

To step into the coding system, let us first take an extract from the data, with codes attached to it. This extract is from Helen's questionnaire 1, her answer to the question

extract 3

> Q: "When you read English, you may come across unknown words. How do you find out the meaning of an unknown word when reading? (Will you please tell all the ways you use!)
>
> I have first tried to interpret the word in its context and then continued reading. If my interpretation is reinforced in the text that follows, I don't check the word. Sometimes the interpretation is not enough and a dictionary is necessary. I choose the most appropriate of the words provided. In other words, I translate unknown words and I may still be unsure about the meaning. **CO CONF TRA EVA1 DICT2 INF2**

I briefly go through each of the codes used in the extract, clarifying why they were used in this context.

- Helen articulates her understanding of her awareness of language, thus

> **CO** (effects of context on the meanings of words) - Helen shows awareness of the effects of context on the meaning of words when she says she chooses the most appropriate of the words provided by the dictionary.

> **TRA** (beliefs on translatability/need to translate) - Helen uses the word "translate" to express what she does with a word in English. She also talks about using a dictionary, not specifying what kind of dictionary she refers to. Elsewhere in the data, however, she claims she uses a bilingual dictionary (interview data). Also, according to my observations in the classroom, the dictionary in use was a bilingual English-Finnish dictionary.

- Helen articulates something of herself as a person and learner, thus

> **CONF** (confidence) - in the extract, Helen says she may be unsure of the meaning of words even after inferring and using a dictionary. She is lacking in confidence in the task of finding the meaning.

- Helen articulates some word strategies which she sometimes uses, thus

DICT2 (use of or intention to use dictionary) - she makes it clear in the extract that she uses a dictionary

INF2 (inferring, finding out the meaning with the help of textual clues, background knowledge, other languages, word formation) - she also makes it known that she tries to interpret or infer the meaning of an unknown word

- Helen shows the use of a metacognitive strategy here, thus

EVA1 (evaluation of one's situation, use of strategy etc.) - the whole account above is an evaluation of what she normally does/what she is

Let us now look at the whole coding system. In the following examples only the code relevant to the discussion is presented.

1. METALEVEL, the level of saying

1.1 "METAKNOWLEDGE"

1.1.1 Articulation of oneself as a person and learner, i.e. this is what I am

- AFF affective side of the learner
- BAC language learning background, both facts and experiences
- CONS conscientiousness and dedication as a person and language learner
- CONF confidence, 1) task-related (observed/inferred in action or expressed by the learner) or 2) a more general personality trait
- SPE one's speed
- ME comments on how the learner believes his/her memory works

Example 1 (interview, Helen) is an example of articulation of Helen's affective side and memory

H: and then I am irritated, why don't I remember it was there AFF ME

1.1.2 Articulation of learning, i.e. this is what I know of learning (my own and in general)

- AG effects of age and ageing on learning
- CHAN articulation of change
- STR awareness of a strategy not used by the learner
- SYS systematicity in learning

Example 2 (questionnaire 1, Helen) is an example of articulation of age affecting learning

> <u>With ageing acquiring has slowed down</u>. **AG**

1.1.3 Articulation of one's awareness of language, i.e. this is what I know of language(s)

- CO effects of context on the meaning of words
- DIFF difficulties in language
- TRA beliefs on translatability/need to translate
- VARI variation/similarities between languages

Example 3 (task A.1, Helen) is an example of articulation of effects of context on the meaning of words

> A: one can then see it in the context and then decide which one it is
> H: yes <u>whichever is suitable in that situation</u> **CO**

1.2 "SAYING/METACOGNITION OF ONE'S DOING"

1.2.1 Metacognitive strategies, i.e. this is what I say I do/did or can do (not what I am doing right now)

- EVA2 evaluation of one's situation, use of strategy etc.
- PLA2 planning an action, a change, setting of goals
- SEL2 selecting what to pay attention to

Example 4 (interview, Rachel) is an example of articulation of selectivity

> T: so do you tend to check whether you really have learnt something, do you go back to where you have
> R: <u>I may go back there, if the thing is important to me, if you need to, you know, be in control of it, I do go back there</u> **SEL2**

1.2.2 Word strategies, i.e. this is what I say I do or can do with words

- CONT2 learning words in the context of their subject matter, use of textual/personal or other context as an aid to learning/memorising/understanding, including associations, personal effort, elaboration (goals RECALLING AND MEMORISING)

- DICT2 use of or intention to use dictionary (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- EXP2 building on somebody else's suggestion on word meanings (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- INF2 inferring, finding out the meaning with the help of textual clues, background knowledge, other languages, word formation (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- LOU2 speaking out loud (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- MEMO2 use of individual memory in "digging out" a meaning and committing, including rote learning (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- WRIT2 taking of notes or underlining to help to get the meaning of the text, to help reading, to memorise (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- LOOK2 looking at the word (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)

Example 5 (interview, Helen) is an example of articulation of writing and looking as word strategies

> H: and I practise, but <u>I have to write it and see</u> **WRIT2 LOOK2**

1.2.3 Reading strategies, i.e. this is what I say I do/did or can do

- SKI2 skimming
- SCA2 scanning
- EXPLAIN2 finding parts of the text or examples in the text to explain another part or word

Example 6 (task A.2, Helen) is an example of articulation of skimming

> H: yes so had I I have learnt to skim and I can see that I don't get stuck as much I used to read slowly and painstakingly every word and I am now trying not to do it and <u>skim and that is why I haven't looked at every word and have skipped words instead</u> **SKI2**

1.2.4 Social strategies, i.e. this is what I say I do/did or can do

- NEG2 negotiation of meaning with others in a task
- SUP2 having support in learning/finding out etc. (emotional support too), more general than NEG

Example 7 (questionnaire 1, Rachel) is an example of articulation of having support from friends etc. in learning

> 1. first I try to understand from the context, 2. I look the word up in a dictionary, 3. I look it up in a corresponding book in Finnish, 4. I ask my children, 5. I ask my colleagues **SUP2**

2. STRATEGIES: "DOING"

2.1 Metacognitive strategies, i.e. this is what I am doing

- EVA1 evaluation of one's situation, use of strategy etc.
- PLA1 planning an action, a change, setting of goals
- SEL1 selecting on what to pay attention to

Example 8 (interview, Helen) is an example of evaluation

> H: plus then, well, I do not know English, this must be stressed, although I try to convince that it is on its way **EVA1**

2.2 Word strategies, i.e. this is what I am doing with words

- CONT1 learning words in the context of their subject matter, use of textual/personal or other context as an aid to learning/memorising/understanding, including associations, personal effort, elaboration (goals RECALLING AND MEMORISING)
- DICT1 use of or intention to use dictionary (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- EXP1 building on somebody else's suggestion on word meanings (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- INF1 inferring, finding out the meaning with the help of textual clues, background knowledge, other languages, word formation (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- LOU1 speaking out loud (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- MEMO1 use of individual memory in "digging out" a meaning and committing, including rote learning (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- WRIT1 taking of notes or underlining to help to get the meaning of the text, to help reading, to memorise (goals FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING)
- LOOK1 looking at the word (goals RECALLING, FINDING OUT AND MEMORISING

Example 9 (task A.1, Helen) is an example of using a dictionary

> H: "kirjoittaja" "tekijä" "kirjailija" "alullepanija" "isä" so yes [from the dictionary]
> **DICT1**

2.3 Reading strategies, i.e. this is what I am doing

- SKI1 skimming
- SCA1 scanning
- EXPLAIN1 finding parts of the text or examples in the text to explain another part or word

Example 10 (task A.1, Rachel) is an example of finding examples in the text to explain a word

> J: well like I don't even know where to start working on this like is this a verb or a
> noun or what is it
> R: well they like give these examples of what different social sciences concentrate
> on what they research like we have for example wait a minute **EXPLAIN1**

2.4 Social strategies, i.e. this is what I am doing

- NEG1 negotiation of meaning with others in a task
- SUP1 having support in learning/finding out etc. (emotional support too), more general than NEG

Example 11 (task A.1, Rachel) is an example of negotiation of meaning with others

> **NEG1**
> R: well let's start
> J: well what is that "disply..." or what is it
> R: disciplines
> J: what
> R: this what is it
> J: well how do you say it in the first place
> (...)

With the above codes, I was able to trace the frequencies of the codings, i.e. the frequencies of certain traits in the data. The frequencies, in turn, helped me navigate through the data, in search of patterns. However, the codings also helped me in finding features that were infrequent, but still significant (see 6.2).

6.2 Findings and discussion

In 5.6, 5.7 and 6.1, I covered the way the data were coded. In what follows I aim at presenting Helen and Rachel in the light of the system of analysis 1 which I constructed with the help of those codes. I first offer an overview of the data and then move on to both participants reporting on 1) their changing metaknowledge (6.2.1), 2) their stable metaknowledge (6.2.2), 3) their change in saying of doing and doing (6.2.4) and 4) their reasons for doing (6.2.5). This information helps me answer research question

4. a) How did the two participants describe a change in other aspects related to the change in finding out the meaning of words, in committing and recalling word meanings and in reading?

In other words, I am not starting from doing or the learners' perceptions of doing, but from their perceptions of what they are and how those perceptions changed during the data collection. It soon becomes clear to the reader that a single line of causality can hardly explain the changes. Rather, the issue of change is a much more multifaceted issue which I discuss in 6.3.

Helen

I would first like to turn to the data from Helen which was coded in the way explained in section 6.1. Table 4 presents the statistical information from Helen's data. There were 61 episodes of analysis all in all, falling into two groups. First, there were 36 episodes of various length in Helen's data, spread out over the data from three instruments (questionnaires 1 and 4 and after-the-course interview). These data come from instruments with a question-answer format, with me as the researcher giving the questions in written form or in spoken form. In addition to the 36 episodes of analysis explained, I found 25 episodes in the work of the group of which Helen was a member. These data fall basically into two types according to the task - task prompts in A.1 and A.2 were identical as were those in B.1 and B.2. In these data there was no strict question-answer format provided by the researcher. Although the task constrained what a group did, the group still had relatively lot of freedom in choosing what and how to do.

Table 4. Analysis 1, Helen

instrum-ent	length of recording	number of words (English)	number of episodes	number of codings used	saying - meta-know-ledge	saying of doing	strategies - doing
q1		461	8	31	15	8	8
task A.1	15 min	1246	6	23	8	-	21
task B.1	10 min	1496	7	31	19	6	13
task A.2	16 min	2446	7	32	9	3	27
task B.2	9 min	1213	5	23	10	4	14
q4		342	5	19	9	8	3
interview	32 min	5222	23	124	56	46	22
total	1 hour 22 min	12426	61	283	126	75	108

The intuitive impression that Helen's data were rich in metaknowledge, saying of doing and doing is strongly supported by the information in table 4. The table is further discussed under **Helen and Rachel** after table 5.

Rachel

The summary of the data by Rachel in table 5 shows us overall similarities with that by Helen. Rachel's data contained 52 episodes all in all, 29 from instruments with a question-answer format (questionnaire 1 and 4 and interview) and 23 from the group work.

Table 5. Analysis 1, Rachel

instrum-ent	length of recording	number of words (English)	number of episodes	number of codings used	saying - meta-know-ledge	saying of doing	strategies - doing
q1		329	6	17	6	7	5
task A.1	15 min	1779	7	35	3	-	32
task B.1	12 min	1586	7	53	14	10	30
task A.2	9 min	974	4	21	6	1	15
task B.2	13 min	1078	5	43	22	5	21
q4		237	4	8	1	3	4
interview	25 min	4061	19	154	71	35	48
total	1 hour 14 min	9715	52	331	123	61	155

Table 5 demonstrates that Rachel, too, provided me with rich data from the areas of metaknowledge, saying of doing and doing. Table 5 is further discussed in the following paragraph.

Helen and Rachel

Helen's questionnaire data were more elaborated than Rachel's who, on the other hand, was slightly more articulate in the group tasks and in the interview. In fact, Rachel's questionnaires, in particular the end of course questionnaire 4, was quite limited in its information. These slight differences can be put down to two reasons. First, Rachel found filling in the Likert scale questions in questionnaire 4 difficult (this was discussed in 4.3.2.) Because of these difficulties that may have taken away the motivation to answer the open-ended part of questionnaire 4 and because of Rachel's slightly less enthusiastic attitude at the time of the beginning-of-course questionnaire towards taking the course, Rachel's questionnaire data may have remained less informative than Helen's. However, Rachel's overall number of codings outnumbered Helen's partly because Rachel was most of the time working in smaller groups due to absences of group members and thus had a greater chance to speak.

Bearing in mind what Bruner (see 5.8) has said of the relationship between a person's saying about her metaknowledge and doing and her doing and reasons for doing, Helen's and Rachel's saying and doing is worth taking a closer look at, as with the information provided by them we may get nearer to the answers to the research questions, in particular to the change in the participants' articulations. I am basing some of the analysis on frequencies in the data, but with a cautious mind. The frequencies of each code used in Helen's and Rachel's data are to be found in tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in appendix 6. The tables are not included here, because my concern is not the codings as such but what I can reach with the help of them. The frequency of a code may tell us about the trends in the data, about the trends in Helen's and Rachel's articulation, but we have to remember that the frequency of a code is context-dependent too, i.e. the situatedness of the data collection may have prompted Helen and Rachel to articulate certain issues more frequently than others. The other features, i.e. the less

prevalent ones are at times taken up in the discussion that follows, as these other features further help us in building a picture of Helen and Rachel.

Looking at the tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in appendix 6 might also suggest when new or, rather, previously less used codes appear chronologically (see 6.2.1 and 6.2.4). The tables might also be looked at from the point of inconsistencies, i.e. Helen providing us with only one or two cases of certain types of doing but her not saying about it (see 6.2.4). The inconsistencies may, however, only be products of the instruments again and, as such, nothing unusual.

6.2.1 Change in metaknowledge

Let us now have metaknowledge, i.e. what Helen and Rachel articulate of themselves as persons and learners, of their learning and their awareness of language, as the point of departure to Helen and Rachel as learners. This metaknowledge works on a level that is somehow "above" the actions of the learners, it signals the learners' ability to be in control of herself, it tells of the person. In my coding system (see section 6), I have two areas of metalevel, i.e. what I call metaknowledge of oneself (such as confidence) and what I call saying of doing (such as "I often read out loud"). In sections 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2 and 6.2.1.3, I concentrate on the metaknowledge of oneself.

In what follows, I draw a holistic picture of Helen and Rachel with the help of the tables in tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 in appendix 6 and the actual data. To help in the construction of a holistic picture, it may be advisable to have a look at the background information on Helen and Rachel in section 5.3.

It would seem that Helen's and Rachel's articulations on metaknowledge form a continuum with more or less stable features and with slightly more changeable ones. Helen's "stable" end of the continuum consists of her articulations of herself as a person and a learner, namely of her affective side, her background features, her views on how her memory works and her view of her conscientiousness. Rachel shares Helen's "stable" features to an extent. Instead of conscientiousness, she talks about the use of

context as a way of learning and understanding. The stable features are discussed in 6.2.2 to illuminate the two cases. As the research questions deal with change and support for the change, I only come back to the stable metaknowledge in chapter 9 when drawing a comprehensive holistic picture of Helen and Rachel where even the metaknowledge that did not change may play an important role. The "less stable" end of the continuum accommodates features dealing with Helen as a person and a learner too, such as her perceptions of her confidence, awareness of strategies and her speed. Rachel, on the other hand, does not concentrate on speed, but does talk about confidence and awareness of strategies.

6.2.1.1 Speed - Helen

Helen is concerned about being a slow reader at the beginning of the course (questionnaire 1). In the first group work task (A.1), Helen comments twice - in action - on not being as quick as the other members of the group:

extract 4

> HE: the next paragraph, "influences in the disciplines", until there, is it
> J: yes and there is one more
> H: I still haven't read the last paragraph, I am so slow

She also finds a reason for her slowness in the same task

extract 5

> A: I have, when I have a little bit of time, I read like the first sentence of a paragraph
> H: yes, in other words you can make use of it whereas I get stuck with every single
> thing and I am then too slow

With the course progressing, Helen continues making comments on her speed. She reports in group work task A.2 she is not as quick as the others (in action) and she also shows she is trying to improve or change, implying she is not as slow anymore as she used to be. Her slowness seems to have two dimensions, i.e. in relation to others and in relation to herself before. In task A.2, Helen reflects on her slowness in relation to herself.

extract 6

> A: ...I had just jumped over them, over the ones I did not understand
> H: yes so had I, I have learnt to skim and I can see that I don't get stuck as much, I used to read slowly and painstakingly every word and I am now trying not to do it and skim and that is why I haven't looked at every word and have skipped words instead
> ALL: LAUGHTER

Finally, Helen reveals in the interview that she has become faster than she used to be. We can, however, observe that Helen is not very definite about her change:

extract 7

> T: all right, so you have different
> H: I have
> T: techniques
> H: I now have, they have changed, earlier I started, perhaps now I read a bit faster

But in the same interview, when prompted, she also says with more certainty:

extract 8

> T: well, when do you use the dictionary, since you surely have one still
> H: yes, I use it when I feel I can't get something out of the text, that there is something that I need to check
> T: yes
> H: well, that is when I take the dictionary
> T: yes
> H: but a lot more seldom
> T: yes
> H: well, then
> T: you save time then
> H: I save a lot of time, I think I have become a bit faster, twenty pages go a bit faster
> T: how long does it take you to read twenty pages, it of course depends on the text
> H: it depends on the text, sometimes when I find it difficult it may take hours, well, say that I will have to sacrifice at least two, three hours an evening, a night

Her speed might not seem very fast, but she seems happy for the change in relation to what she used to be.

Extracts 4, 5, 6 and 7 show that speed was a problem which Helen started to overcome in the time the data were collected.

6.2.1.2 Confidence - Helen and Rachel

Helen

The second feature where Helen shows progress or change is her confidence. It is relevant to point out that Finnish students often understate their skills - it is a national virtue not to boast about one's skills (Dufva et al 1996: 57), and reporting lack of confidence might well be connected to being modest.

Helen starts off with wanting to gain "confidence to reading English" (questionnaire 1). As an answer to the question below, Helen reveals she does for example the following (in questionnaire 1)

extract 9

> Q: When you read English, you may come across unknown words. How do you find out the meaning of an unknown word when reading? (Will you please tell all the ways you use!)

> (...) In other words, I translate unknown words and I may still be unsure about the meaning.

At the onset, Helen presents a picture of herself as somebody lacking in confidence or certainty in her reading and approaches to vocabulary.

Her remarks about her lack of speed in relation to others in task A.1 can be interpreted as a sign of lack of confidence (see extract 4).

In group task B.1, it seems Helen is trying to tell herself she needs more confidence in her reading and interpretations. The following is a telling example of her knowing what she is lacking.

extract 10

> H: well that, what I have, I have laughed about it when I do that, like in speed reading, I have done it before but now on summer holidays or now I have time to do some reading out loud on top of other things but well I do have this unsure feeling whether I really did understand it correctly but that is what I have to
> J: have to rely on
> H: have to rely on that I have understood it

However, she is not lacking in confidence in all tasks in learning English. When the group goes through their ways of processing words of the text from the previous day, Helen seems very much in control. The first of the extracts is from task B.1, the second from B.2. There is a time gap of about a week between the tasks.

extract 11

> H: I, I went through this text
> J: this is Heli talking now
> H: this text, well, once last night, I really put my mind to it and I thought, as you see, I have written those words in the margin that were there in the questionnaire and this is how I remembered them and in my opinion it went really well

extract 12

> H: well I as a conscientious person tried to go through the whole text, I mean I tried, and almost did so, I checked the words that I had marked to be remembered, but I don't have anything, I haven't developed yet, I haven't had an idea to develop any memory rules, I only checked and now checked and I think it went as it should have gone

In questionnaire 4, Helen reports increased confidence in her skills and interpretations. Her answer to the following question is:

extract 13

> Q: Why do you use <u>old</u> ways of *finding out* the meaning of a new word?
>
> I still trust the dictionary, but I increasingly try to give an interpretation of my own first.

In the interview, Helen plays down her language skills, perhaps in a manner typical to Finns (Dufva et al 1996). The following comment is interesting in the sense that, although Helen had demonstrated increased confidence during the course (and does in this interview), she is claiming she is not confident, but working on it.

extract 14

> H: plus then, well, I do not know English, this must be stressed, although I try to convince that it is on its way

In the interview, Helen is bringing together her desire to avoid mistakes - which is evident elsewhere in the data too - and her willingness to use others as guides as ways of keeping her confidence up. She says

extract 15

> H: and then, in these problem places, I happen to have a husband who speaks English all right, he reads it, well, not that well, but he sticks to these words, words, words, and then I, when there is a difficult part, then I ask him would you please look at this paragraph, I got this out of it, would you see, if I was right
> T: yes
> H: then he slowly goes through it and says that this is the way I read it and if it points to the same direction then I trust myself
> T: yes, right, I do believe that
> H: but I can't make him read a lot
> T: of course not, but it is surely an advantage to have somebody you can ask at least a little
> H: that it doesn't go entirely wrong
> T: yes, see some people have these, well, study friends or some people with whom they then may well discuss in order to get help
> H: yes a bit of consultation about it

In the interview, Helen also connects boosted confidence to her dictionary use. She claims to have become more selective, also a sign of confidence.

extract 16

> H: yes, less now, now I try to start thinking whether it was essential, whether there is anything else there
> T: well, when do you use the dictionary, since you surely have one still
> H: yes, I use it when I feel I can't get something out of the text, that there is something that I need to check
> T: yes
> H: well, that is when I take the dictionary
> T: yes
> H: but a lot more seldom
> T: yes

To summarise, it seems Helen's confidence or the lack of it depends on the context or the task she is talking about. However, it is also clear that she herself - perhaps because of her problems of slowness and getting stuck with words - is not very confident in the

sphere of reading to start with, but evolves into a more confident person in reading in the five months the data were collected.

Rachel

Rachel's change in confidence appears much less pronounced than Helen's. Nevertheless, there are traces of it in the data. Starting off as a seemingly confident learner (who perhaps thought she should not have been "forced" to take the course and whose goal, according to questionnaire 1 was to "get the credit" and "pass the course"), Rachel travels an interesting road.

To begin with, Rachel is confident in remembering words under discussion in the group. In task B.1, Rachel engages in a discussion about words each member had self-selected, words the group members had previously tackled in questionnaire 2b. Rachel seems sure to remember the word "disciplines" and its meanings, perhaps believing in the power of errors, hard work and contextualisation.

extract 17

> R: you know I wrote this "disciplines" here so that it is, what is it, this "disipliini" LAUGHTER what on earth "kurinpidollinen toimenpide", "tutkimussuuntaus", "kohderyhmä", I am sure to remember it now

The same confidence in remembering is apparent in task A.2, this time as a result of the word's amusing character.

extract 18

> R: what are these crackers there, they must add some cereals there or biscuits LAUGHTER
> P: some sort of biscuits they must be
> R: it seems so strange to put rice to biscuits LAUGHTER
> R: [from the dictionary] yes "keksi" (biscuit), "paukku", "karamelli" [Rachel reads the word "paukkukaramelli", i.e. cracker, as if it was two words "paukku", i.e. blast, bang or fart, and "karamelli", i.e. sweetie] LAUGHTER
> P: LAUGHTER did it have "paukku" (fart)
> R: LAUGHTER yes it has "paukkukaramelli" or "keksi", this is easy to remember for ever but the fact that in certain situations they still

Rachel's confidence is more in flux in other contexts. Quite often her confidence or lack of it is coupled up with success in a task, like in the following extract from task B.2 where she is talking about two cloze exercises.

extract 19

> R: I skimmed this child labour article, well, it was quite easy but even so I only had one mistake
> P: yeah
> R: now in this one, I had five mistakes
> P: yeah
> R: I get this panicking feeling that good grief, oh, help me what on earth is this

It is in task B.2, in particular, where Rachel shows less confidence than before or after. She comments in the following way when the theme of discussion is the lag between now and their school times.

extract 20

> R: yes I think English wasn't that common, well, it was common but not quite as common as today
> P: of course
> R: like the world was so much smaller, it was, what do you say, it was more closed, the television was new and we used to watch Peyton Place, it was one of the first American
> M: language skills must have ?
> R: yes it was Swedish that was much more important than English, I don't really think I am a successful English learner in this sense
> P: well it is so that ? in that sense I am more experienced so that I can leave things out
> R: I am not yet, I still need to practise, I need to practise a text taking my time finding out whether it is negative or positive [referring to prefixes]

It is difficult to suggest reasons for this low in confidence, but perhaps her initial reluctance has started to give way to the admission that there is room for improvement. From a teacher's point of view, I would have worried in the "wrong" direction of her confidence unless I had had the after-the-course material available, as it suggests Rachel's subjective verdict was that she had gained from the course. In the interview, Rachel reports how positive experiences have boosted her self-confidence in the following way

extract 21

> T: well, then what is benefit of it, not being so hang up with the dictionary and using other means
> R: I progress faster LAUGHTER
> T: well it is certainly quite
> R: and of course it boosts you self confidence, like oh yes, I grasp this
> T: yes
> R: that I don't have to read every single word

Later in the same interview, Rachel considers herself a successful learner, considering her circumstances.

extract 22

> R: I did learn, like I said, I learnt a whole lot, I learnt in a concrete way, my school times were such a while ago
> T: yes
> R: yes I learnt, I am always a very successful learner be it anything at all, you know, I feel that it is always a victory when one goes forward
> T: yes
> R: then, well, I can't really say anything to that
> T: well, one can't, it is also difficult, this is maybe a slightly difficult question
> R: I do feel that I am very successful all the time, being in this age then

Perhaps it is this very realisation that she sees herself in her own context that helped in her positive outlook in the interview. Her expectations of herself are realistic and success follows easier than if expectations are too high (this is one of the key notions on confidence building in sport psychology, discussed in chapter 9).

To sum up, Rachel evolves into a more confident learner and reader, although at the beginning she did not clearly identify confidence as a problem. Her feeling of confidence, just like that of Helen, is dependent on the task.

6.2.1.3 Awareness of strategies - Helen and Rachel

Helen

The third feature I can put under the label "changing features" is the awareness of strategies. In this area, Helen's change in not quite as linear as in the areas of confidence and speed. Of all her awareness of a strategy, her awareness of committing a word

meaning to mind is of most interest. In task B.2 - where the group engaged in a conversation on "ways of committing meaning to memory" - Helen articulates, on three occasions, how she feels the need of new kind of "memorisations". Once, she shows she was aware of another member in the group using associations, but is not herself doing so. Here she reflects on J's talk about "funny things sticking to one's mind".

extract 23

> J: yes, but on the other hand the humour, like in "breadwinner" which is quite comical and another word that comes to mind is "in these circumstances"
> A: mmm
> J: "näissä sirkustansseissa" (in these circus dances)
> A, An & H: LAUGHTER
> J: surely you will remember what "in these circumstances" is, oh yes isn't it "näissä sirkustansseissa"
> H: yes yes so you already have these type of things developed
> J: well, yes, then you will remember better

On two occasions, she refers to not yet using new ways of committing meanings to memory, but being aware of "easy" ways out there - something she might have interpreted from the teacher-led consciousness raising. The following extract from task B.2 demonstrates Helen, with others, showing awareness of ways of committing meanings to memory which in their view in this discussion are perhaps not different from other types of routines.

extract 24

> A: and also we had to, I think we had to start, to think how, as you said I still haven't developed the way to remember, how to remember, yesterday I started seriously to think that I have to now
> H: we have to now
> A: before the word appears to know that this is the way to learn, to develop a natural way of remembering the words, methods that make it easy to
> H: mmm
> A: some systematic way, after all I have a systematic way of dealing with domestic duties
> H: in everything else yes
> A: I brush my teeth starting from one side, going there and to the front
> J: and if you do it wrong your day will be ruined
> ALL: LAUGHTER
> J: and on the other hand
> A: did I brush my teeth or did I start from the wrong side

In the interview, Helen could be expected to have discovered new ways of committing, i.e. she could be expected to show a similar trend of change she did with confidence and speed, but she does the contrary. When prompted, she denies having started to use the "put the new word in a sentence" -method, associations and the key word method (all from the teacher-led consciousness raising, see 4.1.3) in the following fashion.

extract 25

> T: ... then there are associations, do you remember anything of them
> H: we did go through them there, yes, they are something I haven't developed anything out of in my own reading, no particular way to remember, not until know
> T: so you don't remember you would have used exactly this
> H: I can't, I wonder what I have put there
> T: do you remember we had, you had just put here, in the summer, that you had not used them before, but that you had used them in the course and you may use them after the course
> H: mmm

The key point seems to her that these ways, although perhaps interesting, are not for her, not her own.

Helen's data suggest she becomes knowledgeable of strategies that may be helpful in committing word meanings to memory, but she does not find personal relevance in using the strategies.

Rachel

Let us now change our focus to Rachel's awareness of strategies. The strategy Rachel becomes aware of or the awareness of which becomes more articulated is the key word method.

The key word method does rise to Rachel's consciousness, but, analogous to Helen, Rachel does not find the method appealing. To the question on using the key word method in the interview, she quite bluntly says, true to her agentive approach

extract 26

> R: no I haven't even, I haven't used it at all, maybe I haven't' had the need to start

Like Helen, Rachel is clear about not starting to use a method that she does not need, that carries no personal relevance for her.

6.2.2 Stable metaknowledge

Now moving to the features more "stable" in Helen's and Rachel's data, it is interesting to notice how Helen's and Rachel's speed, confidence and awareness of strategies which seemed to be in the process of change are sometimes interconnected with the more "stable" features. In terms of the coding system presented in 6.1, the more "stable" and the less "stable" features often co-appeared.

Although the focus of this study is on change and features that helped the change to occur, stability in certain features in a person may illuminate the process of the change. Equally, it may help us understand why a change did not take place, which, although not the primary focus of this study, is a related issue. As pointed out in 6.2.1, the stable features are discussed in this section and I only return to them in chapter 9.

6.2.2.1 Affective side - Helen and Rachel

Helen

When Helen reveals something of her affective side, she normally refers to not wanting things to go wrong and wanting to do away with the problems in learning. This affective side is often coupled up with her views on how her memory functions and with her background. Helen explicitly points out how she believes we learn with the help of feelings, be they negative or positive. From task B.2, this extract is a case in point.

extract 27

> H: yes, but isn't all learning connected with feelings in the sense that if strong feelings are aroused you will always remember the thing easier than something that just goes calmly and rationally

Also, Helen reveals in task B.2 that her own irritation, i.e. a strong feeling, helps her to remember, use her memory. (She talks in a similar vein in the interview too.)

extract 28

> H: I noticed too, that all the original words that I have went just like that, really quickly but then the last one "breadwinner", that was one of those you know what on earth was this wait a minute and then I had to, you know, I will
> J: so you dug it out
> H: so I dug it out, so it did finally come out, but whether it comes another time now, it seems it surely
> A: one needs to bring it back to memory
> H: yes so next week I will most likely find out whether the word is still there
> J: mmm
> H: or whether they have already disappeared
> J: I hope to remember "hence" because I had it wrong in the exam
> H: so did I
> J: and it bothered me afterwards
> H: I will now remember "hence" ever after
> J: what is it then
> H: "siten, täten, näin ollen"
> J: "täten, näin ollen" "rest of my life"

In the following extract from task B.1 Helen talks about her background which might explain, together with her conscientiousness, her desire to be error-free. In the extract her affective side co-occurs with confidence, or rather, the lack of confidence in the past, i.e. not knowing whether she was right or wrong. (The desire not to make mistakes in languages seems to be a shared cultural belief in Finland, see Dufva et al 1996: 53-58).

extract 29

> H: but this is, I will go back to my own background, we were taught that if you don't know it grammatically correctly you'd better be quiet
> A: and you were
> H: and I was a good conscientious girl and if I wasn't sure whether it was right I chose to be quiet

In summary, Helen's affective side is not a separate issue, but an area connected with her views on memory, her experiences in the past (background), her consciousness.

Rachel

Rachel's affective side as metaknowledge appears less pronounced than Helen's who explicitly pointed out the importance of feelings in learning. But Rachel brings her affective side to the forum less explicitly as metaknowledge. She frequently uses

expressions such as "I was horrified" when talking about her learning experiences and she laughs a lot in the taped sessions, at her mistakes as well to funny events. In other words, her manifestations of affective side are more on the level of doing.

6.2.2.2 Background - Helen and Rachel

Helen

As we saw in extract 29 in 6.2.2.1, Helen's background tells us about a desire for error-free production. In the interview, Helen implies one needed courage and knowledge to raise one's hand in her school days.

extract 30

> T: like, as one, do you remember whether you had any training in vocabulary learning at school or later in any other language learning context
> H: no, no, not when I was studying foreign languages we, well, we used to read and read in the system of doing this and doing that and doing this again and doing that again and if you did that right, you were brave enough to raise you hand
> T: yes
> H: but nothing in that way, it is just that you rote learn this and
> T: lists of words
> H: yes, lists of words, yes

A conscientiousness learner striving for perfectness may indeed result in loss of confidence in such circumstances. Another effect of "only giving the right answers" could perhaps be Helen's speed which is, at least partly, a result of her attempt to know well and in a perfect way, with no inferring.

Rachel

Helen associated her school background mostly with the demand not to make mistakes. However, Rachel stresses the thirty some years as a long time she has been with little institutional instruction. In many ways, her comments on that time "long ago" have more to do with the fact that she is now having to rediscover things she has forgotten as well as to learn about things that were not yet taught in her school years. (Dufva et al 1996: 56 write about the shared belief that schools are thought to be different now from

what they used to be.). Rachel points out the faultless ideal of her school years only once. The following extract is from task B.2.

extract 31

> R: yes, I took, you see, the very old exam, I haven't had any listening comprehension or anything, we only had a text that we translated into Finnish and from Finnish into English and it was a text that had to be translated you were not allowed to make things up, it was very strict
> M: ?
> R: well yes, if you think about the school in the 60's it didn't pay attention to speaking like we did not discuss in the class

What is most important about Rachel's background is her ability to overcome difficulties. She reveals in the interview she failed in her Swedish courses in her school times and had to study in the summer.

extract 32

> T: can you remember whether you had at school, or in somewhere else, whether any attention was paid to learning vocabulary, in your days there may have been "essential vocabularies" (a series of books in different languages)
> R: oh yes we had those, we rote learnt things, that's it
> T: that's what we did
> R: yes, so I don't remember anything else from German but "dürfen können mögen müssen Herren wollen Damen küssen"
> T: yes, but that has stuck to your mind, hasn't it
> R: yes
> T: it has been repeated so
> R: like if I think that I never passed my Swedish courses and had to work in summer
> T: yes
> R: and now I, see, I speak Swedish

Despite the hardship, she now considers Swedish to be more important for her than English - she is married to a Swedish speaking Finn, has sent her children to Swedish speaking schools and reads her papers in Swedish.

Both Helen and Rachel reveal a great deal of the part of their background which is relevant to them as language learners despite the long time since they attended school.

6.2.2.3 Memory - Helen and Rachel

Helen

As pointed out under 6.2.2.1, Helen clearly sees her memory working together with the affective side. She also expresses the view that in her years of learning English, she has accumulated knowledge to her memory, but it is there "covered with the dust of the past" (interview) and it should be "forged out" (interview) or "uncovered" (questionnaire 1) - again an issue covered in Dufva et al (1996: 56-57). Working hard or putting one's mind to the task makes remembering easier for Helen, as the following extract from group task B.1 highlights:

extract 33

> H: this text, well, once last night, I really put my mind to it and I thought, as you see, I have written those words in the margin that were there in the questionnaire and this is how I remembered them and in my opinion it went really well

This last view of Helen's memory brings us to conscientiousness which in many cases is the same as hard work or putting one's mind to the task. It is, in particular, in the field of memory that Helen brings forth reasons for her doing. This reason giving is discussed later in 6.2.5.

Rachel

When talking about her memory, Rachel seems to share the belief of many that time conceals what was once learnt. The talk about her thirty year gap is a recurring pattern in Rachel's data. But Rachel also comments on other areas of memory. In task B.1, she gives an example of learning "specific" words, i.e. words that are used in her social psychology books and that are difficult to find in dictionaries. The way she sees her learning process is effort, work and understanding/contextualising the new information. (It is quite notable she does not undergo the process on her own, but with the help from others - more on her contextualising through others in section 6.2.4.)

extract 34

R: but for example I was reading this, could it have been Lorenz or Finlayn, for an exam and there was this term, I wonder if it was "animation education"
J: what
R: "animation education" and I tell you I tried to translate it and looked it up in the dictionary and I was completely lost and did not know what it was in Finnish, something like "käsitteellisyys", I asked our English teacher at work and it didn't take me anywhere and then it appeared that it comes from French and is "mielikuvakasvatus"
J: "animation association"
R: no "education"
J: "education", I would think something like "animaatio-opetus"
R: that is what I would have said, it is quite simple really, you draw animations, but no it is "mielikuvaopetus" this you know "seikkailuopetus"
J: oh really
R: in other words
J: so it has gained a whole new meaning this word
R: and I was horrified, luckily someone
J: oh well LAUGHTER
P: LAUGHTER
J: "sarjakuvaopetus" [cartoon education]
R: LAUGHTER
J: in the middle of psychology
P: oh yes they are really difficult
R: they are really difficult because they confuse you and then, you know, one speaks about "sosiaalikasvattaja" and "sosiaalikasvatus" so I get totally confused, we, "sosiaalikasvattaja" we have a clear ? and somewhere like in Germany there is a different
J: mmm
R: so you can guess if I learnt, they are difficult these separate words
J: yes it is seldom that one needs separate words but there are of course
R: yes when you have understood the whole text
J: yes yes
R: LAUGHTER

In addition to the above, Rachel gives an interesting account on the kind of memory she has. In B.2 she claims she has auditory memory, but later in the interview she is in favour of visual memory. These kind of contradictory claims seem something quite typical in learner talk. Dufva (1995) claims they are the result of reflection or the dialectic dimension of a person's metaknowledge. One idea articulated may give rise to another idea.

6.2.2.4 Conscientiousness - Helen

Helen

In the course of the data collection, Helen made frequent implicit and explicit references to her conscientiousness. Her study habits, goal setting and determination in themselves are a sign of conscientiousness. Knowing her lack of speed in reading and her tendency to get stuck with words, Helen's goals in questionnaire 1 are to fulfil the degree requirement, to uncover what she knew from before and to increase her vocabulary which all seem conscientious goals. In the group tasks, Helen shows her conscientious approach to homework (see extracts 11 and 12 above), but she also labels herself as a conscientious school girl (see extract 30 above).The very fact that she seems to become aware of some of the strategies of committing word meanings to memory (see extract 25 above) but does not actually start using them in the long term could be interpreted as a sign of conscientiousness.

6.2.2.5 Use of context - Rachel

Rachel

Rachel comes forth as a learner whose understanding and contextualising give rise to her learning. This trait is prevalent throughout the data from Rachel. We have seen above how she strives to understanding - be it the quest for a meaning of a word in a given context or for a meaning of a text. She clearly attempts to make sense of a word in its context with the help of the context first, goes through the trouble of asking others if the dictionary cannot guide her and learns by understanding as a result of her efforts.

6.2.3 Helen's and Rachel's metaknowledge in a nutshell

Research question 4 a) in 5.5 was connected to the change in the participants' doing and saying of doing in finding out word meanings, committing words meanings to memory and recalling them and in reading. This is how I formulated it

4. a) How did the two participants describe a change in other aspects related to the above (i.e. to the areas just mentioned)?

I have now covered these other aspects, i.e. the participants' metaknowledge, and am in the position to recap on these changes. Tables 10 and 11 in chapter 9 summarise what was discussed about the changes on metaknowledge.

Helen

In a nutshell, the picture of Helen we have is one of a conscientious learner who has views on her memory, background and affective side. These "stable" features in Helen are connected to her initial lack of speed in reading, her perceptions of confidence and awareness of strategies. She progresses from slowness to a little more speed, perhaps guided by her conscientious approach. She develops into a more confident learner, despite her background. And she becomes aware of associations but does not start using them, perhaps because of the solid views of the ways her memory works.

Rachel

Being a contextual learner who is well equipped to evaluate and monitor her own learning, Rachel's greater awareness of the key word method is easy to understand - after all, the key word method is a very contextual method of committing. However, Rachel's own ways of contextualising and her view of her memory may be so embedded in her that the key word method seems redundant for her purposes. The confidence Rachel builds may be connected to using English again more after years and having experiences of success.

6.2.4 Change in saying of doing and doing

In this section, I first consider the change in Helen's and Rachel's saying of doing and doing with the desire to answer the following research questions

1. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

2. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with committing the meanings of words to memory and recalling them?

3. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with reading?

In 6.2.5, I turn to the reasons Helen and Rachel give to their doing throughout the data, something of great importance in cultural psychology.

6.2.4.1 Helen

Looking at Helen's doing and saying of doing is quite complicated, as in her saying of doing she mainly referred to what she generally does in the context of reading (on her own and with others) whereas in her doing she mainly shows strategies or approaches in group work tasks (see appendix 6 for numerical information). There is, for example, a great inconsistency between how much she said she evaluates and how much evaluation she seemed to be using in the instruments. I would argue that the overwhelmingly high occurrence of evaluation as doing is due to the instruments which prompted the students to evaluation. Also in doing, the high numbers of expanding on the basis of what others said and of using memory strategies are very much dependent on the group tasks - it is clear Helen responded to the suggestions of the others and it is clear she used memory strategies in the discussions on word meaning, i.e. in most cases the memory strategy of "digging out"/suggesting a meaning to the word under discussion. What exactly these "recall" strategies were, remains unclear. Helen could well be in control of her doing (in memory strategies and expanding), but not prompted to talk about them in the instruments.

What then are the areas where Helen's doing and saying of doing seem to change? Because of Helen's own evaluation, Helen frequently reported explicit change in the data. In addition, the data show changes that are less explicit. Helen seems to exhibit change in her finding out (less dictionary, more inferring), her committing (note taking) and her reading (selectivity, skimming). Let us take a closer look at the changes.

The most significant finding in Helen's saying about doing is her selectivity. She first brings up the theme of selectivity in discussion in task A.2 and later in the interview she reports in similar vein. On the basis of task A.2 she implies selectivity in what to read and selectivity in what words to read. At this point she claims to skip (difficult?) words, a type of selectivity.

On the 10th day of the course during group task A.2 where the students were to find out what the writer of the text A (appendix 4) thought important, Helen reports that she has tried to change her ways of reading. Here the initiation of change is clearly tied with what she had reported her problems were, namely getting stuck with words and being slow.

extract 35

> A: ...I had just jumped over them, over the ones I did not understand
> H: yes so had I, I have learnt to skim and I can see that I don't get stuck as much, I used to read slowly and painstakingly every word and I am now trying not to do it and skim and that is why I haven't looked at every word and have skipped words instead
> ALL: LAUGHTER

In the interview, Helen goes back to the issue of words - being less stuck with them, being able to cope with being stuck, being more confident about her own interpretations, being able to be more selective in what to spend time with, using the "translation on top of the word" strategy no more. The following nicely exemplifies some of these reported changes

extract 36

> T: yes so I have understood too, well, what about, well, all of us reading in a foreign language, we have problems, what are your problems at the moment, or are there any left after the summer
> H: yes, there are problems, but what I, what could I say my problems are, earlier I had this lack of confidence
> T: yes
> H: if I didn't understand a word, I took the dictionary, as you remember
> T: yes, you really loved the dictionary LAUGHTER
> H: yes, I have now tried to trust myself more, like, okay, if I don't understand a word, but if I get the idea, I always take notes to myself about what the paragraph is about
> T: all right, so you have different
> H: I have

T: techniques

H: I now have, they have changed, earlier I started, perhaps now I read a bit faster

T: but that is positive, isn't it

H: mmm well, what would I say are the problems, I do get stuck, get stuck, get stuck and then I feel I don't progress and I don't understand a thing, but then I comfort myself saying would I understand this, if this was in Finnish

T: yes, see sometimes

H: because it is good

T: it is good to remind oneself, surely

In the interview, Helen seems more focused about her selectivity. According to her, she used to check words that she knew (see extract 36) and she is at the time of the interview trying to find out what is essential before taking up the dictionary (see extract 37). This selectivity seems to result in more speed in her reading.

extract 37

T: and what about now

H: well now

T: you told me something a minute ago

H: yes, less now, now I try to start thinking whether it was essential, whether there is anything else there

T: well, when do you use the dictionary, since you surely have one still

H: yes, I use it when I feel I can't get something out of the text, that there is something that I need to check

T: yes

H: well, that is when I take the dictionary

T: yes

H: but a lot more seldom

T: yes

H: well, then

T: you save time then

H: I save a lot of time, I think I have become a bit faster twenty pages go a bit faster

Helen also reports a change in her approach to note taking. Earlier she noted translations of words on top of the words, but she "improved" in this respect, as is shown in extract 38.

extract 38

T: and this, there was a question here whether you write the translation of a word on top of it and at least then you ticked that you used to use it before the course

H: I have used it, yes

T: and do you still use it

H: I don't, but I have my notebook now

T: so

H: I, you know what

T: mmm

H: before the course I had meant to go to an exam on one of the courses in social psychology
T: mmm
H: and I had this copy of the book that I had, had to return, I had started reading it and I had translated words on top of them and when I started to reread it, it really puzzled me now that I had written something in Finnish there, so I have rid myself of it, so to speak
T: so it disturbed your reading then
H: it did
T: now that you had, in this sense, you had made some kind of
H: improvement, improvement
T: well I would not say so either, but you had changed your habits
H: yes well, I do feel it is better now, it really did disturb me

When it comes to Helen's doing in the time frame we have here, there are two changes that stand out quite clearly, although these "doings" are not very frequent. Helen uses the dictionary three times in task A.1 (no one else in the group does), whereas, later, in group task A.2 (repeat of A.1) she does so only once (see section 8.2). In contrast, she seems not to engage in inferring in task A.1, but does so three times in task A.2. Inferring is a feature Helen reports all through the data, but is seems she becomes more confident in inferring. She said in questionnaire 1, questionnaire 4 and in the interview she uses inferring of word meanings. This example is from questionnaire 1, an answer to a direct question

extract 39

When you read English, you may come across unknown words. How do you find out the meaning of an unknown word when reading? (Will you please tell all the ways you use!)

I have first tried to interpret the word in its context and then continued reading. If my interpretation is reinforced in the text that follows, I don't check the word. Sometimes the interpretation is not enough and a dictionary is necessary. I choose the most appropriate of the words provided. In other words, I translate unknown words and I may still be unsure about the meaning.

And indeed, in task A.2 she engaged in inferring in the following way, with the rest of the group. (Helen's "finding out" strategies with the group are discussed in 8.2.)

extract 40

A: well, you could, how have you understood in paragraph three these strange long words here
An: yes, from the first paragraph from line three
A: this "push-pull of cross inclination"

J: wait a minute
H: hey, say that again
An: the first paragraph line three
An & A: "the push-pull of cross inclination"
An: "what is that"
H: I thought something like push and pull, that you are in the middle
An: oh some sort of tug of war or "push-pull of cross inclinations"
A: push pull "push pull", is push the same as "työnnä" (push)
H: yes it is
An: "cross" that is "raja" (border), isn't it
A: "inclination about maintaining their"
H: that is how it is when you think in general

Finally, a sign of confidence in inferring emerges in questionnaire 4 (end-of-course questionnaire). When it comes to Helen's ways of finding out meanings of words, she reports trusting her inferring or interpretations *more than before*. *She says in response to the question*

extract 41

Q: Why have you started to use <u>new</u> ways of *finding out* the meaning of a new word?

I have noticed that it pays to trust in oneself, it often happens that the word can be understood from the context, without the dictionary.

The changes in saying of doing and doing presented here give further evidence to Helen changing on different levels and to her having an agentive approach to finding personal relevance.

6.2.4.2 Rachel

As in Helen's case, the relationship of Rachel's saying of doing and doing is both consistent and inconsistent. Context-dependency explains both phenomena. I look at the changes, if possible with the help of the consistencies, as they provide me with a more solid ground when inspecting the change, i.e. if the learner claims she does something and also does it, the results are more valid. However, because of the context-dependency, just doing or saying of doing may well give an indication of the change.

Rachel reported change several times - more often than Helen - in the course of the data collection, mainly in the interview. Rachel's focus of change is on three major areas: 1)

on skimming as a way to read, 2) on the use of prefixes and increased inferring as ways of finding out the meaning of a word and 3) on the use of associations as a way of committing the meaning to memory.

In task B.2, Rachel claims she knows how to skim, but that she does not skim all the time. The impression is that she is trying to make herself use skimming more. The following example shows the group discussing reading and the difficulties in reading.

extract 42

> R: and I have do have to say that I find it very difficult to read these texts, maybe I just can't read the text carefully enough if I don't have to read it
> M: mmm, one needs to somehow become experienced, I think that I have only in the past years started to, earlier I just read the words, but not the text as a whole
> R: it helped me enormously when I went through that, skim first, and then I tried to find the key words or core information and so on, if I just had the patience to skim, to read a bit at the beginning and at the end

In the after-the-course interview, Rachel re-enters the area of skimming and reading in general. She attributes her improved skills to the course, which she has also done in task B.2.

extract 43

> T: well, do you feel you have problems when reading
> R: well yes, I do still have problems, but the course in summer did teach me to read
> T: yes
> R: or I thought it awfully good
> T: so the problems you have now you know how to solve
> R: I can solve them, so I don't read and reread and reread any more and look at the words LAUGHTER
> T: LAUGHTER
> R: first I, well, look at the entity browsing and then I find certain things there, it helped me, it really did me good to study reading techniques
> T: yes perhaps that is a way to gain self confidence too
> R: oh yes
> T: well, you did just fine in the course
> R: I was completely surprised of it, but somehow the pieces went into their places at some point of the course, I am now eagerly looking forward to an intensive course in oral skills which will be really good to me

Rachel's use of prefixes in making sense of a word is something she denies having been aware of. In her opinion, her school times were such a long time ago that she was not exposed to prefixes then. When talking about prefixes, Rachel makes the connection

between them and semantic cloze exercises that were used in the course. These exercises were texts with some omitted words. The blanks needed to be filled in with one of the alternatives. Only one alternative would be semantically correct in the context. Rachel first brings up the topic of prefixes in task B.2 when the group is talking about a cloze exercise they had had. She refers to the prefixes as "negative" or "positive" in the following extract.

extract 44

> R: I am not yet, I still need to practise, I need to practise a text taking my time finding out whether it is negative or positive

She is again speaking about prefixes in the interview, on two different occasions. Extract 45 shows one of the occasions.

extract 45

> R: well, I don't get the dictionary as the first thing anymore, I try to look at the context and if that doesn't make it logical to me or if I can't understand what the word means, then I might go and get the dictionary and see what the thing is all about
> T: do you use then when you are looking for the logic, what helps you, before you go and get the dictionary
> R: well, I sort of try to look for it in the textual context, the meaning of the word
> T: yes, do you use, in the word itself there is something
> R: yes, if there is something familiar, if there are these prefixes or something, then I know that this is negative now or this is positive or this takes away or rejects something or
> T: yes, by the way, were these prefixes something that you hadn't dealt with a lot previously
> R: well when it is years since I went to school
> T: a long time LAUGHTER
> R: LAUGHTER more than thirty years, well, I hadn't paid attention to them

The second example from the interview illustrates her growing awareness of prefixes, and the not always pleasant road to them. In it, Rachel recaps her finding out methods and mentions prefixes when prompted. (She discusses the cloze exercises, her initial hatred of them and her evolved understanding of prefixes from them in another part of the interview too.)

extract 46

> T: yes, well, how about, in the course you remember we had something about learning vocabulary
> R: yes we did
> T. what can you remember of it, although you might not have used them, what can you remember or do you remember anything
> R: I remember these connections, when you start of with inferring a word, they were just what I didn't like
> T: LAUGHTER
> R: the two when there was a gap LAUGHTER here and the alternatives there, that is where I learnt that one must look at the prefixes and all before one finds
> T: you mean the cloze exercises where
> R: yes
> T: where you put a word in a meaningful context
> R: yes, and, well, when I had experienced it, it was what was most awful in my opinion
> T: LAUGHTER
> R: LAUGHTER most horrible, what can you do with some prefix like "de", to get it connected to
> T: yeah
> R: when you have four similar words, more or less, and then it is some prefix that is crucial
> T: yes
> R: so these have come to me from the course

Rachel is extremely good at talking about and evaluating her own learning. When recalling her changed approaches, she does not only talk about the change, but where or why or how the change took place. Although she never reported during the course that she was hung up with the dictionary, in the interview she brought up the issue of dictionary use. Like Helen, she knows there are times when using the dictionary is necessary. Remembering what the previous extract told us and looking at the following one also from the interview, we can clearly draw a picture of Helen as an agentive learner who is well aware of her finding out methods which in her case seem to overlap with the committing methods.

extract 47

> T: well, then what is benefit of it, not being so hang up with the dictionary and using other means
> R: I progress faster LAUGHTER
> T: well it is certainly quite
> R: and of course it boosts you self confidence, like oh yes, I grasp this
> T: yes
> R: that I don't have to read every single word
> T: yes, I can certainly believe that, so perhaps you could say that your use of a dictionary has decreased and there is an increase not only in self confidence but also .
> R: yes
> T: in, well, in the techniques of guessing

R: yes and this inferring from them

T: yes then, what then, if you are in a situation where a word might trigger you off, if you want to find out the meaning, what kind of word could it be, for example, when you said that there are words that you have looked for in the dictionary and couldn't even find them LAUGHTER

R: LAUGHTER

T: then why did you still start looking for them

R: well, since it is a language of concepts and I have to, like, to understand the concept

T: yes

R: well, I think it is important that if I understand the concepts on the top, then it is easier to go on

T: most certainly yes

R: to go on to develop whatever and then I want to find it

T: yes

R: find, like, what it means as a concept, like in the social sciences there was, I still remember the word, it was "animation education"

T: yes it was

R: or something like that it has stayed in here

T: now I can remember it too

R: well, I, I could not understand what it means, then I could not get an idea of the text, so

T: yes

R: before I understood it, I thought what sort of education in the film world

T: yes

R: and it was education in associations

T: so you couldn't find out about it in the context

R: no, I didn't find it from there

T: yes, sometimes it is quite irritating

R: and that is why I always want to find out, if I feel it is something important, I mean important in my opinion, my way of learning is that I have to understand it

T: yes, I am sure it is an effective way of learning

R: LAUGHTER yes

Rachel is clear about the benefits of her ways of finding out which, like in Helen's case, involve much more selectivity.

Rachel's ways of committing word meanings show her contextualised learning. Using the context to infer word meanings (which Rachel does a lot in the group tasks, see 8.2), learning the meaning in a context and understanding in order to learn are evident in the data from Rachel. The use of associations as a new way of conceptualising is therefore not surprising - associations are, after all, a form of contextualising. Before reporting using associations, Rachel demonstrates in task B.2 that her group has worked on associations in the context of task A.2 - this time it is a phonetic association with the "r" in riisi (rice) and the "r" in krakkerit (a coined sound-alike for crackers). The group is here reflecting on questionnaire 3b.

extract 48

> P: we had "breadwinner", it is "elättäjä"
> R: "cracker" is "paukkukaramelli"
> M: is it
> R: yes, and "riisin kanssa krakkerit on varmaan hyviä" ("crackers must be good with rice") [exaggerated pronunciation of "r"]

In the interview, Rachel reveals her use of associations which for her are more or less the same as mind mapping.

extract 49

> R: well, it was this when you start to derive from a word, you know, something familiar
> T: yes·
> R: well, what was it, well, it was these techniques of association in a way, I had never used it before
> T: yes
> R: and, well, if I remember correctly, I didn't even want to use it in the future, but now I have practised it a bit
> T: oh yes
> R: yes, well, I have started to do mind maps
> T: yes
> R: yes, I have, like, through them, tried to
> T: in other words, you have made mind maps of words
> R: yes
> T: yes, when you, like, combine
> R: combine
> T: one thing brings another thing to mind which brings a third thing and they are still connected with something in common
> R: well, that is what I have perhaps more, but I haven't used other methods consciously, and this mind mappings is connected to many other things too
> T: so you have started to use in elsewhere too
> R: yes

Rachel changes in her saying of doing and in her doing. These changes are guided by her agentive approach to finding personal relevance.

6.2.5 Reasons for doing

The reasons people give to their actions have an important role in Bruner's cultural psychology. Reasons are part of the agentive approach of the learner. Reason giving may be subjective, but it is valuable to the learner in that it helps him or her make sense of learning.

6.2.5.1 Helen

Some of the extracts shown until now have exposed the participants' reasons for doing to us. Many of these concern the participants' doing in order to remember, i.e. the reason for doing something is the urge to remember. These reasons are mainly very explicit, as in this one where Helen says she reads out loud in order to use all her senses, a way of learning the language for her (from B.1)

extract 50

> H: well, I have, I have thought that I, after all, have a visual memory, that the channel that mostly commits to memory is visual more than hearing, like although I now read out loud it is more to do with the fact that all the senses are used in order to hear
> A: so you don't mean that you like read out loud to learn by heart
> H: no, no, not by heart, I read the text to myself, like reading a bedtime story
> J: so that pronunciation stays better in mind

Helen reveals the following beliefs/reasons in the data about making remembering easier. Not only does she give a reason, but she tends to act accordingly. In other words, she shows agency in her doing.

- Remembering is easier if committing took place only a short time earlier.
- Putting mind to something and writing down helps in remembering.
- Using all senses helps in remembering.
- Checking words and studying them helps in remembering.
- Irritation helps learning words.
- Strong feelings help in learning.
- Writing down important words helps.
- Writing down and reading help.

These reasons on remembering may be significant in that Helen seems to have a fairly fixed view of her memory - a view that does not give much room for changing her strategies of finding out or committing meanings to memory. Therefore, it is remarkable she does show change in inferring and dictionary use (which she perhaps sees *only* as finding out methods).

Her comments that deal directly with remembering outnumber reasons in other topics she discusses. However, these other reasons may be relevant so let us take a look at

them. This other set of reasons may explain something of Helen's dictionary use. She herself puts her dictionary use down to the lack of confidence and her willingness to understand, to find meanings. She evolves into a selective user of a dictionary who realises that, at times, a dictionary look-up only helps in getting the message, not in committing meanings to mind. She articulates the following from areas other than making remembering easier (in chronological order).

- She used to lack in confidence and not understand words so she used to take the dictionary.
- She had an easy electronic dictionary so she used to use it.
- If there is essential information, she uses the dictionary.
- When she needs to find out the message she uses the dictionary (but forgets the meaning later).
- If there is essential information she writes words down.

Helen shows she has an agentive approach to many of her doings. The reasons she gives to her doing range from events or approaches of the past to more task-specific reasons.

6.2.5.2 Rachel

Rachel gives reasons to her remembering, or learning. Rachel's view on memory is clearly connected to the notion of understanding and contextualising. This may explain her change in understanding prefixes the way she did and the use of a mind map. These are some of the reasons Rachel articulates on memory.

- Lot of work helps in remembering.
- Working in a group and asking others help in learning.
- Visual presentation helps in learning.
- Understanding helps in learning.
- Associations help in remembering.
- Lack of textual context amounts to the loss of meaning of a word.

She also makes the following comments in other areas where reason giving is evident.

- Because her school times were thirty years ago, she had no previous knowledge of prefixes.
- She uses the dictionary to understand an important concept.
- She was not keen on using the key word method because there was no need for it.

- Saying words out loud helps in recalling the meaning.

In view of these comments, Rachel paints a picture of herself as an agentive learner, well aware of some of the ways she uses as a learner and of their benefits.

6.3 Back to research questions: summary of the changes

I am now in the position to answer the first questions of the first three sets of research questions (4 a answered in 6.2.3). These answers have been collected to tables 10 and 11 in chapter 9 which incorporate the changes, the stable metaknowledge and the possible support for the changes from the consciousness raising sessions and the group work.

1. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

Helen

I would argue Helen shows change in her articulation of strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words. She claims she is more selective in her decisions to find out meanings of words, she claims she infers more and uses the dictionary less. Her doing in the group would seem to give support to her claims.

Rachel

Rachel claims in the interview she has started to use the dictionary less. However, she does not seem to find her dictionary use too excessive in any other part of the data. Maybe the whole realisation of too much dictionary use is because of the course and the talk about dictionaries. Rachel also grows fond of prefixes in the course - they had not been touched upon in her previous learning experiences.

2. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with committing the meanings of words to memory and recalling them?

Helen

Although Helen shows greater awareness of strategies of committing word meanings to mind, she does not claim she uses new strategies and there is no evidence of these new strategies in her doing. She does, however, indicate that she has altered her note taking - instead of writing the translation(s) of a word on top of the word, she has started to write the translation in the margin.

Helen touches the topic of recalling word meanings in the data a few times when she ponders about the ways her memory works. She does not show any change in her recalling - for her recalling is "digging out" the word meaning. Indeed, she seems to suggest word meanings in the group work without any evidence of any particular method of recall. Naturally, recorded group work and questionnaires are hardly the best ways of finding out about her recalling methods, as people do not often tend to say (or know) how they recall word meanings.

Rachel

Mindmapping as a way of associating word meanings and other to-be-learned materials is new to Rachel. She seems keen on using mind maps, as they fit her contextualised learning.

3. a) How did the two participants describe a change in their strategies that deal with reading?

Helen

Skimming, selectivity, or skipping parts of a text are the terms with which Helen describes the change in her reading, although her remarks in this area are not very frequent. There is no evidence of her independent doing in this area.

Rachel

Skimming, or selectivity is certainly present in Rachel's data, although the presence is not quite as predominant as in Helen's data. We learn about Rachel's skimming from her comments about doing, not from her doing.

Each of the four sets of research questions had two additional questions on the support for the change like these

b) How could the teacher-initiated consciousness raising have supported the changes?
c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes?

My intention is to shed light on the questions on support in the forthcoming sections. I first tackle the consciousness raising sessions (analysis 2, chapter 7) and then move on to the support of the group work in chapter 8 (analyses 3 and 4).

7. Analysis 2: teacher-led consciousness raising sessions

Bearing in mind the changes that took place in Helen's and Rachel's articulations and the time the changes started to occur, I now trace the possible support for these changes in the consciousness raising sessions, i.e. to answer the question

How could the teacher-led training have supported the changes?

As was explained in 4.3.1, the consciousness raising sessions consisted of explicit "teaching" (me as the teacher in collaboration with the group) and practice. My goal as a teacher when engaging myself into the consciousness raising sessions was to offer some ways which I thought and which people writing in the field of vocabulary learning have thought helpful in treating vocabulary (see 2.7 and 2.9). The sessions were not intended to give ready-made solutions suitable for each and all, but ideas and concrete ways that would serve as alternatives or possibilities. To begin with, my vision of the powers of the consciousness raising sessions was not clear. However, it was clear from the beginning that the consciousness raising sessions alone would not make a dramatic change, that they needed something to supplement them. I had thus included the element of questionnaires on vocabulary learning as part of the consciousness raising (questionnaire 2abc and 3abc), and group work was expected to work as a consciousness raiser too. I discuss the consciousness raising function of the group work in 8.1 and 8.2.

I now look at the carry-over of the themes in the consciousness raising to Helen's and Rachel's articulations, thus trying to see how some of the changes may have been initiated or supported.

1. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes in strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

Helen

As stated earlier, Helen becomes more selective in her decisions to find out meanings of words, she starts to infer more and use the dictionary less. Helen talks about her dictionary use and inferring well before finding out the meaning of a word was tackled in the consciousness raising. What I am interested in, however, is not these traits as such, but the refining of these traits in Helen's data. In the consciousness raising sessions all methods were presented as possible ways of dealing with a problem to be taken up in appropriate circumstances. A dictionary, in particular, was seen as an important tool which, however, should not be used in excess. In this sense, I can find support for Helen's increased selectivity in the contents of the consciousness raising sessions. But how exactly Helen becomes confident enough to make decisions on what is in excess and what is appropriate for her remains as yet somewhat unclear.

Rachel

Rachel claims in the interview she does not use the dictionary as frequently as before. Session 2 dealt with reading and vocabulary in general, stressing for example the fact that some words are more important in a particular context than others, so Rachel's more selective dictionary use may have found support in the consciousness raising session 2. When it comes to Rachel's actual use of dictionary in the data, she only uses a dictionary once in group work task A.2, but elsewhere she claims the group did use dictionary in the classroom.

Before Rachel starts talking about prefixes, affixes were introduced in session 2 and practised in cloze exercises (which were not only about affixes and which were not intended to be part of the consciousness raising). It seems likely prefixes enter Rachel's consciousness partly through the teacher-led sessions.

2. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes in strategies that deal with committing the meanings of words to memory and recalling them?

Helen

Helen's note taking changes from translations on the top of an unknown word to those in the margin. This could well be because of consciousness raising in the course. Helen's habit of writing translations on top of words was also a topic of discussion between me and her at other times in the course so this change is quite clearly due to events in the course.

Rachel

Contextual learning is present in Rachel's data from the beginning, but the use of mind maps could have been introduced by session 3 where mind maps were used as a way of learning/conceptualising words/word families. However, Rachel says that she has encountered mind maps elsewhere too, and that she uses mind maps when taking notes on lectures.

3. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes in strategies that deal with reading?

Helen

Skimming was covered in the first consciousness raising session after which Helen reveals she is not able to skim because she is stuck with words. I would argue Helen's awareness of skimming is partly due to the consciousness raising, but there must be other spheres in her life where she has increased her awareness in skimming, such as reading documents in Finnish at work or reading books in Finnish. The point, however, is Helen's claimed initial inability to skim in her English reading context. In the interview, Helen discusses her increased selectivity in what to read and what words to pay attention to which suggest she is not only aware of skimming after the course, but confident to practise it where appropriate.

Rachel

Skimming was discussed in session 1 with the group, and in session 2 there was further talk about reading, vocabulary and selectivity. It is possible Rachel's raised consciousness of skimming and its increased use were supported by sessions 1 and 2.

4. b) How could the teacher-led consciousness raising have supported the changes in other aspects related to the changes in finding out, committing meanings to memory, recalling and reading?

Helen

Helen shows increasing awareness of strategies of committing word meanings to mind. She starts talking about this awareness only after the sessions on committing word meanings to mind which focused on associative or grouping methods. In session 3, a handout (see appendix 1) was given where some successful adult Finnish learners of English explain their vocabulary learning. This handout may have provoked Helen's interest. Helen is even enthusiastic about starting to use these "new" strategies in questionnaire 4. However, the support from the consciousness raising and other parts of the course seem not to have been enough to make her use them, although the awareness remains in the interview.

The theme of speed is very prominent in Helen's data. She describes herself a slow reader to start with, but claims to have become faster. Speed was discussed in the consciousness raising sessions as the benefit of not making excessive use of dictionaries, of selective reading, etc., but it was not practised as such. However, these "promises" of increased speed may have prompted Helen to try out methods and approaches presented in the sessions. Speed could, thus, be claimed to be an indirect result of the sessions.

Helen's confidence is clearly a trait of importance, almost a superordinate trait to most of the changes. However, there were no direct references to confidence building in the consciousness raising sessions, although indirectly the sessions may have supported

Helen's gains in confidence. How gained confidence may have come about is discussed in chapter 9.

Rachel

Rachel's raised awareness of the key word method was likely to be connected with the consciousness raising, but, as we have seen, she is confident enough to choose not to use the method.

As with Helen, the raised confidence in Rachel's case is impossible to explain through the consciousness raising activities as such, although they may have helped in creating positive experiences which, in turn, may have increased Rachel's confidence. More of confidence in chapter 9.

Conclusion

Many of the themes presented in the consciousness raising sessions reoccur in the changes Helen and Rachel underwent. It is likely this relationship is not coincidental. However, the course also included a number of group work sessions where the relationship could have been further reinforced after the teacher-led sessions gave a focus and suggested possible routes. In the following chapter, I look at the taped group work sessions where Helen and Rachel were present to illuminate further support for the changes.

8. Introduction to analyses 3 and 4: in the group

I would like to pursue further answers to the research questions. It would be deceiving to believe that the changes in Helen and Rachel are only due to the input of the teacher, in particular as the course where the data were collected relied heavily on group work. The four taped sessions where the participants were present with a group of students may illuminate another source for the changes, thus steering us towards answering the following question contained in each set of research questions, namely

How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes that took place?

Let us look at the group work from the point of view of reflection. The importance of reflection has been covered in many writings following the Vygotskian or the social constructivist traditions. For example, Mercer, when discussing classroom education (children), writes

> A neo-Vygotskian perspective does not entail the researcher treating children's talk as some kind of transparent 'window on the mind'. Talk is not simply 'thinking out loud'. Instead it encourages the view that to talk, to communicate with others through speech, is to *engage in a social mode of thinking*. Through talking - and listening - information gets shared, explanations are offered, ideas may change, alternative perspectives become available. Mercer (1994: 95)

Writing about our expertise in narratives, Bruner (1996: 147) tackles "[t]he three classic antidotes for this peculiar kind of unconsciousness of the automatic, of the ubiquitous" which for him are contrast, confrontation and metacognition. He continues about the functions of the triad

> While contrast and confrontation may raise consciousness about the relativity of knowing, the object of metacognition is to create alternate ways of conceiving of reality making. Metacognition, in this sense, provides a reasoned base for the interpersonal negotiation of meanings, a way to achieve mutual understanding even when negotiation fails to bring consensus. (Bruner 1996: 148)

In my quest for meaning and in my desire to shed light on the research questions, I devised two ways of analysing the data that stem from the group work. These ways

depend on the type of data in question and on the type of task the data come from. They both deal with reflection. The first way concentrates on the metacognitive exchanging of meanings in a group task (analysis 3 in section 8.1), whereas the second concentrates on the students' construction of the meaning of a word in a group task (doing) (analysis 4, in section 8.2). I present tables 10 and 11 in chapter 9 summing up the changes in the articulations (chapter 6) and the possible support for the changes from the group work (section 8.1 and 8.2) and from the consciousness-raising (reported in chapter 7).

Before embarking on either of the analyses, it is apt to point out that both Helen and Rachel indicated their positive attitudes towards working with or consulting other people throughout the data. Helen mentions the following people who either act as a source of information or comfort to her or who she advises

- other learners in the course
- the teacher
- her husband
- her son (oldest child)
- her daughter (youngest child).

On a few occasions, Helen mentions her husband as a consultant for her, as somebody who helps her to build up her confidence, as demonstrated by extract 51.

extract 51

H: and then, in these problem places, I happen to have a husband who speaks English all right, he reads it, well, not that well, but he sticks to these words, words, words, and then I, when there is a difficult part, then I ask him would you please look at this paragraph, I got this out of it, would you see, if I was right
T: yes
H: then he slowly goes through it and says that this is the way I read it and if it points to the same direction then I trust myself
T: yes, right, I do believe that
H: but I can't make him read a lot
T: of course not, but it is surely an advantage to have somebody you can ask at least a little
H: that it doesn't go entirely wrong
T: yes, see some people have these, well, study friends or some people with whom they then may well discuss in order to get help
H: yes a bit of consultation about it

The function of her husband to Helen's learning, meaning making is that of a facilitator. Knowing this and Helen's active role in the group tasks, Helen can be seen as a person who enjoys learning with others, with the help of others. This observation is worth bearing in mind when moving on to analyses 3 and 4.

Rachel makes it clear that her quest for meaning often takes place with others, such as

- other learners in the course
- other students
- colleagues at work
- her son (oldest child)
- her younger children.

Rachel and P give an indication of what they do together in class, when discussing their working in class in the following way (task B.2)

extract 52

> R: oh yes, we were supposed to talk about the ways we worked on the words, we always do that, yesterday's class
> P: yes, we discuss during the class too, we do
> R: then we look words up in a dictionary since it happens to be here, yes, and then we tried to infer, we looked for these funny details that stick to mind awfully easily
> P: yes

This talk illustrates that at least Rachel's group believe they (note the use of "we"!) study together and talk on metalevel even when the task is not explicitly to do so. This may, in fact, add to the value of the evidence I have from the four taped sessions, i.e. it is likely that what I am able to report is only a small part of the whole.

It is Rachel, again, who brings up the topic of interaction as a means of making learning easier. Although she does not talk about language learning in this extract from task B.2, the function of "me with others" is clearly to facilitate Rachel's quest for meaning.

extract 53

> R: like I find it easy if there are two, or if there is someone I know who is studying
> for the same exam, if we talk the book over and the things in it

8.1 Analysis 3

The first way of analysing the group data is suited for the episodes where the students are reflecting on their and each other's saying (of doing and of metaknowledge).

I discovered 17 episodes of analysis in the taped group work sessions where Helen was present and eleven of those where Rachel was present. These episodes consisted of two types of reflection which may have given support to the changes Helen or Rachel underwent, namely reflection on alternative ways of doing and reinforcement. Reflection on alternative ways comes forth in discussions where Helen or Rachel and another student or other students talk about their ways of doing and perceiving and where they make it clear their point of view is or has been different from what the others utter. In a sense, in reflections on alternative ways Helen and Rachel are different from the others ("I" vs. "others"). Reinforcement, on the other hand, points to events where Helen or Rachel and another student or other students, again, talk about their ways of doing and perceiving and where they receive reinforcement from the others to their ways by comments such as "I do that too". In a sense, in reinforcement Helen and Rachel are the same as the others ("we").

Although these two types of reflection are seemingly different (contrast or conflict vs. harmony), they may both work as consciousness raisers. If we take the view that "others" are the learners' consciousness or that they scaffold the learner until the learner internalises the new concept etc. or becomes autonomous, it is likely that shared metaknowledge of any type may act as consciousness raiser (see e.g. Wood et al 1976, Bruner 1986: 67, Bruner 1996: 19, 21, 97). In the case of Helen and Rachel, the alternative ways may have helped them to reflect on their own ways of doing and thus assisted in the change. The awareness of other ways of doing, let alone the possible consequent change, may act as confidence builders. The reinforcement by others, on the other hand, may have functioned as a uniting force, helping Helen and Rachel to realise

they are not *only* doing things differently from others but also sharing some of the beliefs and ways of doing with the others, thus giving a boost to their "belonging" and confidence.

In what follows I have studied the group work as a consciousness raiser, as something helping in the change in metaknowledge, saying of doing and doing. On the whole, I have left out how the group work could have supported the stable features in Helen's and Rachel's metaknowledge. The stable features are taken up again in chapter 9.

8.1.1 Findings and discussion

The 17 episodes in the group work where Helen was present contained the following types of reflection. In the following table I have included the types of reflection as well as the topic on which the reflection was.

Table 6: **Reflection, Helen**

TASK	REFLECTION	
	alternatives	reinforcement
A.1	• on skimming/selectivity • on speed	-
B.1	• on confidence • on speed/selectivity • on conscientiousness and confidence	• on note taking, hard work, conscientiousness and confidence • on context & word meaning • on inferring • on reading out loud • on memorising by saying out loud
A.2	• on speed	• on skimming
B.2	• on memory strategies	• on remembering • on remembering and feelings

So which of the above reflections have a bearing to the changes Helen articulated? In a way, it would be tempting to claim all type of metalevel broadening of mind would increase Helen's process of change, but I focus on the areas where clearly defined change took place and report on them, after first giving out all types of reflection in Rachel's data in a table form. Rachel's data contained eleven episodes, and she was involved in the following types of reflection.

Table 7: **Reflection, Rachel**

TASK	REFLECTION	
	alternatives	reinforcement
A.1	-	-
B.1		• on importance of hard work in remembering • on context in word meanings • on context • on selectivity • on importance of pronunciation to recall the meaning of a word background
A.2	-	• on skimming
B.2	• on selectivity • on context • on importance of experience/expertise in reading	• on associations • on context in cloze exercises/prefixes • on different skill areas • on skimming • on learning in course • on memory • on skimming and dictionary use

I now consider the research questions on the support from the group work for the change.

1. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in the strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

Helen

Is there anything in the reflections in the group work that could have supported Helen's more selective use of the dictionary and increased inferring? The first episode relevant to Helen's change in finding out methods occurred in task B.1 where Helen's group is somewhat critical towards questionnaire 2b[7] (see appendix 5) because of its separation of words from their context. Interestingly, Helen who until this episode had admitted using inferring, but who in the course of the data collection claimed she had started using inferring more, says she actually needs the context in order to know what the word means. It almost seems that when the context is available, it is not necessarily used in finding out, but the lack of context complicates recall so much that the students seem

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[7] Questionnaire 2b had words out of context, selected by each student from the text from the day before. The students claimed to have paid attention to the words. Each students had his or her own words.

confused. Indeed, the lack of context in questionnaire 2b may have prompted Helen to value context when it is available. (This episode can be seen in table 6, task B.1, under reinforcement.)

extract 54

> A: yes you said it went just fine although I had used the dictionary, and now that she gave us separate words without having the text next to it I started to wonder whether it was clear enough
> J & H: yes
> A: to put it this way in the questionnaire
> J: from the context one could remember so much better
> A & H: yes
> J: if I had seen the text, even if it had been a clean text, I could have developed a meaning at least I had such words there
> H: yes, and with me, my basic problem is that if somebody gives me just a list of words, you know, say this way and say that way, it does not help me at all, even if the I knew the words, but if I am reading a text then, how strange from somewhere comes information that
> J: mmm
> H: so this still is all right, after a day, I remembered what I had thought about yesterday but if we had this about in a week as separate words it wouldn't take me far
> J: but I claim many of us would have known more words if the text had been there even if it had been without any translations
> H: yes exactly
> J: if we had thought about what this was about, and from the context we could have picked the missing piece
> H: yes

What is important in extract 54 above is the reinforcement the students give one another. They all seem united in the importance of the context in deciding on the meaning of a word. This "united front" may have acted as a way of reinforcing Helen's beliefs in the importance of the context and of making her aware of being like the rest of the group, which could have acted as a confidence builder.

Helen's selective use of dictionary is not tackled in the taped group work, but there are cases where selectivity in what to read - perhaps another dimension of the same type of selectivity - is discussed. These cases on selectivity are discussed with the change in reading strategies.

Rachel

Rachel's data indicated she learnt to use the dictionary a bit more sparingly than before. Let us trace this trait. As seen above, the group where Helen was a member was concerned with the separation of words from their context in questionnaire 2b, and Rachel's group reasoned in the similar vein in task B.1 (see table 7, task B.1, under reinforcement)

extract 55

> R: just like this "disciplines", well, if I had read this sentence I could have inferred it
> from the text
> J: it is easier, much easier to remember them in a sentence, but please one more time
> because my memory is really short, what is this interpretation once again
> P: "interpretation", "tulkinta", "näkemys"

This consensus on the importance of the textual context may have helped Rachel further trust in inferring and consider her use of dictionary.

It is possible that the group working in a particular way with their texts during the course may also have reinforced Rachel's inferring and dictionary use. It is likely the group in the three weeks of the course started to use the dictionary less as they built more confidence in their reading and as some of the vocabulary recurred. This extract from task B.2 gives an indication of what Rachel's group did in the classroom

extract 56

> R: oh yes we were supposed to talk about the ways we worked on the words, we
> always do that, yesterday's class
> P: yes we discuss during the class too, we do
> R: then we look words up in a dictionary since it happens to be here, yes, and then
> we tried to infer, we looked for these funny details that stick to mind awfully easily
> P: yes

2. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in the strategies that deal with committing the meanings of words to memory and recalling them?

Helen

Helen's note taking is not directly brought up in the group work discussions, but Helen's success after note taking coupled with hard work and conscientiousness is praised by J in the following extract from task B.1. A, too, makes her hard working habits known to the others, perhaps thus reinforcing Helen's conscientiousness. Extract 57 overall is a case of reinforcement (see table 6, task B.1, under reinforcement).

extract 57

> H: I, I went through this text
> J: this is H talking now
> H: this text, well, once last night, I really put my mind to it and I thought, as you see, I have written those words in the margin that were there in the questionnaire and this is how I remembered them and in my opinion it went really well
> J: excellent
> H: and you, I mean A
> A: yesterday in the class I tried to infer the meaning from the context and then you had a dictionary and you checked words and I grew confident with what the meaning might be and at home I read it through around nine o'clock, I was dead tired, but I had made up my mind to read still and I looked up words in the dictionary and was laughing at "lager louts", it was different from what I thought it would be, I also talked about the words with my husband at home, I must admit I was a bit puzzled when she put the words in front of us again

Rachel

Rachel's use of prefixes is touched upon on a few occasions in the group work tasks. In task B.2, Rachel's group first discuss cloze exercises which clearly were for Helen the initiation to the importance of prefixes (see table 7, task B.2, under reinforcement). After the group had gone through how to fill in the gaps in a cloze exercise and after it has become evident that Rachel has done quite well, she still says

extract 58

> R: I am not yet I still need to practise I need to practise a text taking my time finding out whether it is negative or positive

Her reflection above may be due to the others having done better and her thus needing to practise prefixes (i.e. what she refers to as positive or negative) a bit more.

The introduction of mind mapping to Helen's learning is not discussed in the group work.

3. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in the strategies that deal with reading?

Helen

Skimming was reported by Helen as the change she underwent in her reading strategies. To start with, Helen clearly gives the picture of being different from the others in her reading. She is made to reflect on the alternatives on two occasions before she starts reporting on a change (see table 6, task A.1, under alternatives and table 6, task B.1, under alternatives). In task A.1, she is aware of skimming, but not able to do it.

extract 59

> A: I have, when I have a little bit of time, I read like the first sentence of a paragraph
> H: yes, in other words you can make use of it, whereas I get stuck with every single thing and I am then too slow

In the same task, she complains about being slow two other times, slowness in her opinion being the result of reading everything.

In task B.1, Helen is again faced with alternatives: selectivity which results in speed.

extract 60

> A: I can remember when I was reading the first English text book, I was reading about administration, I started to read it word by word, paragraph by paragraph, I was so tired afterwards, I had an awful headache, my pupils, I heard, were really small and LAUGHTER and all in all I thought this is not going to work
> H: you didn't tell me what you study
> A: nursing science
> H: sorry
> A: nursing science
> H: oh yes
> A: and I am interested in administration
> H: all right

A: well, then I thought good grief this can't be, that there must be a quicker way of reading, you know, seeing the main things
H: yes
A: that I can't get stuck with the words
J: well, you learn to see the main things, we also have exam books which are well, say, four five hundred pages long, something like "research methods in education", so if you start to translate word by word it won't be until next Christmas when half of it is translated, so you have to take a sentence, this is good

Later, according to task A.2, Helen has consciously started to practise skimming. In this extract A summarises the problems many students face in reading - the balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches is not always easy to achieve. Helen is on her way to becoming a more top-down reader and, as yet, does not see the problem A reports. This extract can be interpreted as reinforcement - Helen is in the process of becoming what A claims to be. The laughter by the group was benevolent, encouraging.

extract 61

A: so the answer to this is that in my opinion it was difficult to understand the text as a whole, see, when we now look for these separate words I had just jumped over them, over the ones I did not understand
H: yes, so had I, I have learnt to skim and I can see that I don't get stuck as much, I used to read slowly and painstakingly every word and I am now trying not to do it and skim, and that is why I haven't looked at every word and have skipped words instead
ALL: LAUGHTER

Rachel

Skimming or selectivity is a trait that Rachel sees the other members of the group are capable of in the right kind of context. On the one hand, Rachel takes the other members as offering alternatives, but, on the other, she is reinforced by the realisation that she is doing something that seems to help her reading and dealing with texts (see table 7, task A.2, under reinforcement and task B.2, under alternatives and reinforcement).

The first extract comes from A.2 and is a telling example of her starting to get the gist of it all (this is being reinforced by P).

extract 62

R: [...] I tried to read this so that I started from here, see, from the beginning, I took a look at this and saw that this sort of leads to the subject
P: yes
R: then I checked what factors affect the change in foodways

P: yes
R: from here and from paragraph five, this leads us to, this can be more or less divided into the beginning and the conclusions
P: yes, it is like some kind of research analysis
R: yes LAUGHTER

The second extract about skimming stems from task B.2 and clearly steers Rachel's thinking towards the context-dependency of skimming

extract 63

R: it helped me enormously when I went through that, skim first, and then I tried to find the key words or core information and so on, if I just had the patience to skim to read a bit at the beginning and at the end
M: ?
P: yes, I do that too that I immediately start to
M: otherwise there is no motivation
R: yes
P: well, I have this thing that I don't really skim, perhaps if I read something like when I read books and there is, are a lot of things that I don't need, then I do do it

Although the middle part of the extract is ambiguous because of M's unclear utterance, it seems Rachel is again being given reinforcement to go on skimming, but at the same time she is being offered an alternative, i.e. to select when to skim.

4. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in other aspects related to the above changes?

Helen

Helen's perception of improved speed was tackled under the strategies that deal with reading and there is thus no need to repeat what was written above.

Helen's awareness of strategies of committing meanings to mind may have benefited from the group work. Helen tells the group she reads out loud when she is on her own and she is also asked to clarify what she means, thus having to bring her thinking to the public sphere. The following extract from task B.1 also reveals Helen's beliefs in how her memory works. I would argue the discussion acted as reinforcement to Helen's ways of doing, despite the fact that she is not sure if it is right to read out loud (see table 6, task B.1, under reinforcement).

extract 64

> H: yes yes, well, what I have done with an exam book on social psychology that I am working on, I have, since I have mainly been on my own at home, I have found the courage to do so, I have been reading it out loud to myself
> A: yes
> J: yeah, that is really a good thing
> A: yes, but think if you have a lot of text you can't just read it all, it would be awful
> J: reading out loud
> A: yes, reading out loud, is it right or wrong then
> H: well, I don't know that
> A: you remember, oh, yes, this is pronounced so and then comes the understanding from there
> J: but what does help with these long and difficult words is that you write it down dozens of times on a scrap paper and always think when it appears, something like "exemplifica", then slowly you start to like have it framed, it is much easier if you have both pronunciation and writing just like that
> H: well, I have I have thought that I, after all, have a visual memory that the channel that mostly commits to memory is visual more than hearing, like although I now read out loud it is more to do with the fact that all the senses are used in order to hear
> A: so you don't mean that you like read out loud to learn by heart
> H: no, no, not by heart, I read the text to myself like reading a bedtime story
> J: so that pronunciation stays better in mind

In task B.2, a few days after the teacher-led consciousness raising which focused on strategies of committing meanings to memory, Helen's group on the whole is very aware of "memory rules" (associations?). After a discussion on how the members studied their self-selected words at home, An leads the discussion to "memory rules". (Although Helen is not saying anything here, she has been very much present and continues to be after this extract.) The group seem united in their awareness of associations or other mnemonic devices. Some of the members also claim to use associations, but Helen, for example, does not (see table 6, task B.2, under alternatives).

extract 65

> An: I didn't go through, but these memory rules and these like "cream cracker" and these of some words, they stem to my mind
> A: those are the words I used too, like "erode" well this "ero" in Finnish (separation in Finnish)
> J: sometimes if something ends with a specific word like "nation", for example, then if you add something at the beginning of "nation", like, "nation", "inclination", or "destination", then it is sure to come back to mind because then the textual context tells what it is about

Later, in the same task, the group talk about systematic ways of remembering. Helen is aware of possibilities, but she claims not to use these systematic ways, although she considers them valuable.

extract 66

> A: and also we had to I think, we had to start to think how, as you said, I still haven't developed the way to remember, how to remember, yesterday I started seriously to think that I have to now
> H: we have to now
> A: before the word appears to know that this is the way to learn to develop a natural way of remembering the words methods that make it easy to
> H: mmm
> A: some systematic way, after all, I have a systematic way of dealing with domestic duties
> H: in everything else yes
> A: I brush my teeth, starting from one side going there and to the front
> J: and if you do it wrong your day will be ruined
> ALL: LAUGHTER
> J: and on the other hand
> A: did I brush my teeth or did I start from the wrong side
> J: yes but on the other hand the humour like in "breadwinner" which is quite comical and another word that comes to mind is "in these circumstances"
> A: mmm
> J: "näissä sirkustansseissa" (in these circus dances)
> A, An & H: LAUGHTER
> J: surely you will remember what "in these circumstances" is, oh, yes, isn't it "näissä sirkustansseissa"
> H: yes, yes, so you already have this type of things developed
> J: well, yes, then you will remember better
> A: so it is the association in Finnish with you
> H: yes

The above extracts could be interpreted as offering alternatives to Helen's awareness of "memory strategies" which, according to the after-the-course interview, as we have seen in 6.2.1.3, did develop, but which did not find realisation in her language learning or reading in English. The reasons for this awareness leading to no change in doing is taken under scrutiny in chapter 9.

There are several cases in the group data where Helen's confidence may have come under her reflection. In task B.1, Helen and A reveal their conscientious attitude towards course work. In this context, A says

extract 67

> A: yesterday in the class I tried to infer the meaning from the context and then you
> had a dictionary and you checked words and I grew confident with what the
> meaning might be

Here A is bringing the theme of confidence under the group's scrutiny. She is most likely talking about a process most group members are familiar with: building one's confidence to the hard decision on what is correct and what is not, or how correct something is. Helen is likely to have found reinforcement to her ways of doing/being (both dictionary use and considerations on confidence) in this instance (see table 6, task B.1, under reinforcement).

In the same task, the group are reinforcing Helen's budding self-reliance by giving an alternative of being more confident. The group is possible to divide into two types of learners: the divers and the analysts (see Dufva et al 1996: 72-73 for these two categories among Finnish university students). The divers seem to believe in speaking without letting the mistakes bother, whereas the analysts process from bottom up, leaving little room for mistakes. A in extract 68 is on her way to become more self-reliant, to let go, to be not too conscientious. Whether Helen takes after, is not the issue, but most certainly A's attitude has given a new alternative to Helen (see table 6, task B.1, under alternatives). Although the group is stepping further from just reading in a foreign language, the extract is a telling one.

extract 68

> H: well, that what I have, I have laughed about it, when I do that like in speed
> reading, I have done it before, but now on summer holidays or now I have time to
> do some reading out loud on top of other things, but well, I do have this unsure
> feeling whether I really did understand it correctly, but that is what I have to
> J: have to rely on
> H: have to rely on that I have understood it
> A: one experience a kind of illuminating experience that I had in the spring was that
> I had to use English when travelling abroad on business, I had this strange thought
> that I was supposed to know it a hundred per cent although I might not be able to
> know Finnish that way either
> J: yeah
> A: one then stammers all sorts of things and then this change in character, like in
> English I am much more talkative than when using Finnish, it was such an
> experience to me that, oh my god, what do I demand of myself, to change character
> when changing the language
> J: yes

A: to speak exactly correctly

H: but this is, I will go back to my own background we were taught that if you don't know it grammatically correctly you'd better be quiet

A: and you were

H: and I was a good conscientious girl and if I wasn't sure whether it was right I chose to be quiet

J: every tourist is happy if you say to him using any sort of English if he just finds the place he is looking for

A: yes

J: so you shouldn't think whether you had the right case and tense and so on

Rachel

Rachel shows increasing confidence. It is difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint single instances which could have helped her in confidence building, as confidence is the produce of success and realistic expectations which feed into more success and realistic expectations, but there is one instance in the group work data (task B.2) where Rachel explicitly evaluates her own learning in the context of the course (see table 7, task B.2, under reinforcement).

extract 69

R: I am not really, oh, I wish that I will somehow manage to take this course, but this has somehow made it easier, it has given something

P: oh yes, of course, that is why I came here

R: yes, it motivates you when you understand something on your own, like these numbers, and when you can fill in [talking about a cloze exercise]

M: it is practising all the time

R: studying under obligation suits me, the more voluntary my studying is, the worse it gets, studying to exams really

The group members are reinforcing each other in this extract, and Rachel brings up the topic of motivation as a result of understanding, as a result of success. She is not using the concept confidence, but what she talks about is not far from it.

Rachel also shows growing awareness of the keyword method, but the group did not discuss the key word method at all, so no support can be detected.

Conclusion

This section on the supporting functions of group work has shown us that many of the possible ways of dealing with words and reading presented in the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions were carried over to the reflection of the students. The students readily discussed their ways of making sense of their learning and thus offered alternatives or reinforcement to the other members in the group. This section has mainly concentrated on the students' metalevel. The next section focuses more on the level of finding out word meanings and the support for change that process had.

8.2 Analysis 4

The second way of analysing the group work data is suitable for the data where the students are jointly constructing a meaning or meanings of a word ("doing", no or hardly any direct references to metalevel), in the task where they were asked to discuss what the writer of the text thought important (tasks A.1 and A.2, see appendix 4). The students talk about the text on different levels, one of which is vocabulary. The task itself did not entail tackling of vocabulary - it is the students who constructed the task in a way which involved discussion on vocabulary (on students' transforming a task into an activity, see chapter 2, Coughlan and Duff 1994, Donato 1994, Gillette 1994, Kowal and Swain 1994).

When looking at the group work data, I was interested in the group interaction in ways which could have supported Helen's and Rachel's changed articulations about their strategies and about their metaknowledge. Before embarking to my aims, let us remind ourselves of what the changed articulations were.

Helen

When it comes to Helen's articulations of change in metaknowledge, I have argued (see section 6.2.1.1 and 6.3) she progressed from slowness to a little more speed. She developed into a more confident learner. And she became aware of associations as a memory aid. Her articulations of her strategies also show a change. She claimed she is

more selective in her decisions to find out meanings of words, she claims she infers more and uses the dictionary less. She altered her note taking - instead of writing the translation(s) of a word on top of the word, she started to write the translation in the margin. Skimming, selectivity, or skipping parts of a text are the terms with which Helen described the change in her reading, although her remarks in this area were not very frequent.

Rachel

Also Rachel showed changes in her metaknowledge. Being a contextual learner who is well equipped to evaluate and monitor her own learning, Rachel's built greater awareness of the key word method, but did not start using it. She also gained in confidence. Her perceptions of her strategies did not remain unchanged either. Rachel claimed in the interview she had started to use the dictionary less than before. Rachel also grew fond of prefixes in the course and became keen on using mind maps, as they fit her contextualised learning. Skimming, or selectivity is present in Rachel's data, although the presence is not quite as predominant as in Helen's data.

Now back to my aims in analysis 4. First, my aim was to answer research question

1. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

and to answer research question

3. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in strategies that deal with reading?

Third, I was intrigued by the possibility of finding an answer in the group work to the following research question

4. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in other aspects related to the changes in strategies?

I first illuminate the background to analysis 4 (see also chapter 2). When analysing the negotiations of meaning in the data, I was interested in the concepts of zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding. The ZPD was originally used to refer to "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978: 86). In its original form, the ZPD was a concept in a child's development, but lately it has been used to refer to a stage in development of human beings in general. As people clearly develop all through their lives, the ZPD is a convenient, although not an easy concept to use when interested in change in development. Scaffolding or the help a child has from an adult or the help a novice receives from an expert is a widely covered issue in developmental literature. However, the scaffolding function of group members to one another - which is the area of interest in this section - is a more recent introduction at least in second language research. Two articles (Donato 1994, Kowal and Swain 1994) were influential to my thinking about the scaffolding effects of the group, although neither of them tackle a context or a task similar to mine. These articles were reviewed in 2.2, but I again bring forth a few issues in them that have a relevance to my views on the group work in my study.

Both Donato (1994) and Kowal & Swain (1994) point out that in an ideal situation, members of a group may scaffold one another and jointly negotiate meaning. Both articles also concentrate on the context of the learners when engaging in an activity (not the same as task, as task represents the predefined ideal of what happens in a task). This basically means that the agentive approach of the students is essential in defining the task. These two areas of interest - scaffolding and redefining of the task - are important when looking at the episodes of finding out the meaning(s) of a word in the data available here.

I first analyse the data from Helen. I then cover similar issues in the data from Rachel. In the case of this study, negotiation of word meanings took place in tasks A.1 and A.2. The tasks were about a week apart. I have chosen a representative episode (two from one task where Helen was present) from each task where Helen and Rachel were present

to illustrate what went on in the group work, how the students constructed the meaning of a word and how the process may have helped scaffold Helen's and Rachel's changed ways. The episodes are different from one another as far as some features are concerned. Yet, they are similar in that the students are trying to find out a meaning or meanings because one of the group members (in both groups, there is little variation as to who initiates the quest for meaning) indicates she needs an answer. The students' quest for meaning is on making sense of the text via making sense of the words.

In this section, my interest is in the public sense making where the students externalise their thinking. Externalising, i.e. the fact that the group members uttered their views and ways of thinking, "rescues cognitive activity from implicitness, making it more public, negotiable, and "solidary". At the same time, it makes it more accessible to subsequent reflection and metacognition" (Bruner 1996: 24-25).

8.2.1 Findings and discussion

The data analysed according to analysis 4 are not very extensive. In the two tasks where the data stem from (A.1 and A.2), Helen's group was involved in finding out a meaning or meanings of the words seen in table 8. The words have been underlined in the text in appendix 4.

Table 8: **Words discussed in Helen's group**

task A.1	task A.2
authors	push-pull of cross inclination
peer group	breadwinner
subdiscipline/discipline	convenience
	commercialization
	crackers

Extract 70 from task A.1 where the students are discussing the word "authors" gives an idea of the joint construction of meaning in this particular task. Helen's group consisted of the following members in task A.1 (see 5.2 for further details of group members)

A
He
H Helen
J

All group members participate in the search for an answer in their own way. A is the one setting the question on a word, so the group's quest for meaning stems from her initiative (A1). J and He are the ones making the group move on (A4, A15, A16) as well as the ones connecting the word to the context where it comes from (A6-A9). H resumes the role of a dictionary user of the group (A10), but she also takes part in suggesting (however, talking about a wrong word) a meaning to the word (A2) and in evaluating the "rightness" of the information from the dictionary with the rest of the group (A11-A15).

(In extracts 70, 71, 72, 73 and 74, A before the initial of the student stands for "articulation", the number after A shows the order of articulations in that particular episode.)

extract 70

A1- A: it becomes clear that there are how do you translate into Finnish "authors" who have a different opinion of
A2 - H: yes yes "authorities" well "viranomaisia" or something like that
A3 - A: I would say it is "kirjeenvaihtaja" ("correspondent")
A4 - J: that's it
A5 - A: ? knowledge on how
A6 - He: and they have a dispute in this paragraph
A7 - J: if there are fields of study in which you cannot awfully
A8 - He: you may only
A9 - J: they may be so extensive that not all psychologists agree on everything and all sociologists
A10 - H: "kirjoittaja" "tekijä" "kirjailija" "alullepanija" "isä" so yes [from the dictionary]
A11 - A: it could be "alullepanija" here
A12 - H: well it could in a way
A13 - A: then quite many could ?
A14 - H: yes
A15 - J: that's it
A16 - He: have we got it now

Extract 70 from the beginning of the course deals with the students' finding out a meaning/meaning for "authors", i.e. what the group did to reach an agreement on the

meaning. However, from the point of view of Helen, episodes like this may have served the function of showing how to solve a problem on a word level. It may have given an example of reaching a solution despite wrong suggestions and misunderstandings (see Donato 1994) - something likely to happen in the intrapersonal level too. The evaluation of the outcome of the interaction and the references to the link between the word on its own and its textual context may have mediated raised awareness of ways of tackling words. Helen's strong role as "the dictionary" of the group is evident from other episodes of finding word meanings in task A.1 - Helen used the dictionary in all three episodes of finding out the meaning of a word. It would not be surprising if Helen grew aware of her role because of these episodes[8] and perhaps started to reflect on her strategy use.

Let us look at another episode from Helen's group, this time from task A.2 about a week after the previous extract. This time the group is discussing the word "crackers". The group members present were

A
An
H Helen
J

Again, all the four group members are actively engaged in the activity. A is again the one asking the initial question about the word "crackers" (A1). The group members step out of the text soon and bring their own background to the discussion (A2-A16). All through the interaction it is clear most members have an idea of the concept they are after. This time even Helen is able to stand a situation where no exact translations are offered (she herself is adding to the explanations given in A5, A7, A10, A13) and she does not resort to using the dictionary, although she is trying to suggest a Finnish word that would correspond to the word "crackers"(A17).

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[8] We need to remember that the data under discussion are only a part of what took place in the classroom where a lot of group tasks were used. It is likely Helen made use of the dictionary in other tasks in the course - her articulations certainly suggest so. In addition, it is recorded in my field notes that she always had the dictionary at hand on the table and that she was often seen to look up words in it.

extract 71

> A1 - A: how about paragraph five, what is this "crackers", the Japanese have this, number twenty five is right next to it, "crackers"
> A2 - H: where, oh, there
> A3 - A: "cream crackers"
> A4 - An: biscuits, some kind of biscuits
> A5 - H: so they add rice to biscuits, it is something really American
> A6 - J: but aren't "crackers" something like a savoury snack
> A7 - H: yes, something like that
> A8 - J: well "cream cracker", what is it, "don't worry"
> A9 - A: the Japanese keep on to rice or whatever it is
> A10 - H: but
> A11 - An: they added
> A12 - A: but they added these biscuits to it
> A13 - H: something like that, in America they always bring to you, with almost any portion, some sort of dried things like crisps, they may be salted peanuts, or what I thought is really strange having always something at the side of the plate
> A14 - J: but nothing like what you get with Mexican food that you can dip
> A15 - An: natchos
> A16 - J: yes
> A17 - H: well, I could imagine that these are simply like

Let us again look at the episode from the point of view of support to changes in Helen. Again, there are better and worse suggestions for the meaning of "crackers", but in the end the group seem to know what crackers are, although no translation has been uttered (indeed, a translation would not even be readily available in Finnish, as the concept "crackers" is foreign). It is this tolerance to "fuzziness" and the acceptance of references to the person's background knowledge that may have acted as a consciousness raiser for Helen, i.e. she has seen a satisfactory example of finding out a meaning without the dictionary. (In task A.2, Helen only used the dictionary once to find out the meaning of "convenience" which was one of five words the group brought up as problems.)

In the two episodes above, we see Helen interacting differently in the group. She uses the dictionary in the first, not in the second. She concentrates on the word without its context in the first, but uses freely her own experiences in the search for the meaning of "crackers". These differences may have been because she had started to change in the week which separated the episodes.

Let us consider the changes Helen articulated and the possible support from the group work to the changes.

1. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

Extract 70 shows other group members bringing the textual context for Helen to use so that she could infer. This may have helped Helen to start inferring more instead of always relying on the dictionary. Extract 71, then again, may have given rise to valuing the use of context (background) - the group did well with the background information the members brought to the task and coped well without a dictionary definition. The group's ability to stand "fuzziness" may have been helpful to Helen.

3. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in the strategies that deal with reading?

The group work data suggests that all group members were in some way interested in the words of the text, although it is likely some of them were more "top down" readers when on their own, i.e. they may not have let occasional unknown words bother them. Helen was fond of words/stuck with words and the episodes from group work may have suggested to her that she is entitled to pay attention to words in "bottom-up" manner as long as that is not the only way of approaching a text. The data outside the word meaning episodes give ample evidence that the group did, indeed, have other approaches to the text too, e.g. talking about the contents without references to the words.

4. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in other aspects related to the strategies?

Reflecting on other ways of doing may have given Helen more confidence to change her own ways of doing (Donato (1994:45) talks about group work lowering the frustration levels of the task at hand). Doing with the group in a certain way first could be the important step to independent doing in the same way - the group may well have played a major role in building Helen's confidence in trying out previously unknown ways of doing.

There is yet another aspect that stems from analysis 4. In Donato's study (1994), the group members were capable of producing certain verb forms independently after the joint construction of verb forms. This made me believe in the possibility that the students in my study could have scaffolded one another not only in ways of doing (in Helen's case inferring, dictionary use and the balancing act of reading in a way that is appropriate to the situation) or being (in Helen's case confidence), but also in remembering the meanings they had constructed to the words. I had the sets of questionnaires 2abcd and 3abcd (see appendix 5) where the students 1) recorded words they had intended to pay attention to and 2) wrote down the meaning(s) to the words they had paid attention to a day, a week and five months after the initial intention. Therefore, I was in the position to check if Helen and Rachel remembered the words discussed in the group. From the intralevel point of view, it is interesting to notice that Helen recollected the meanings of all three words discussed in the group that she had, among other words (eleven altogether), chosen to pay attention to (i.e. words *discipline, peer group* and *convenience*) all through to the time of the last questionnaire five months after the course. She was not quite as successful with the rest of the words (eight) she had chosen to pay attention to, i.e. words that were not discussed in the group.

Rachel

In the two tasks that the data that follow come from, Rachel's group was involved in finding out a meaning or meanings of the words in table 9. The words have been underlined in the text in appendix 4.

Table 9: **Words discussed in Rachel's group**

task A.1	task A.2
discipline	commercialization
core	dishes
spawn	crackers
occur	
sub-discipline	
fund	
defined	
lager louts	

The following extract from task A.1 where the students are discussing the word "occur" is an example of the joint construction of meaning in this task. The members of Rachel's group in this task were

J
M
P
R Rachel

All group members participate in the process of finding out the meaning of "occur". J - like in all other cases in task A.1 - initiates the quest (A1) and also keeps the group "on the move" by further questions (A3, A8). P and R are trying to explain the word through the context, unable to give a translation (A2, A4-A7, A9, A12-A15). M is mainly quiet, although quite likely knowing the answer or an answer, only once suggesting a translation (A10) (which is a correct one).

extract 72

A1 - J: what does this mean this "occur" "occur", what does "occur" mean
A2 - P: it like is part of it
A3 - J: "sisältyä"
A4 - P: well like
A5 - R: that it is a part of it
A6 - P: well, it gives exactly this, that they give this chance
A7 - R: that these subdisciplines in a way give the chance to specialise
A8 - J: yes but is "occur", the word, does it mean "mahdollistaa" (make possible) or "sisältyä" (contain)
A9 - P: this is like inside, like inside, for example, history, it is possible to specialise, it like contains
A10 - M: but is this "ilmaantua" (appear) also another meaning for it
A11 - P: yes, it may be
A12 - R: yes, I somehow understood that if there is, like in sociology there is, for example, educational sociology, the chance to go
A13 - P: exactly, in that way appear in it, yes, but exactly, that you try to give explanations inherent to the field
A14 - R: yes or results
A15 - P: yes results and we have this "education sosiology" and then they talk about

The above extract from the beginning of the course indicates what Rachel's group did to find out the meaning of "occur" in a task which was to find out what the writer of the text thought important. From the point view of Rachel, episodes like the above may

have illuminated one way of approaching words. To a contextualised learner, J's "bottom up" approach may seem strange, as P and Rachel both are able to explain the message of the text without an exact knowledge of the word. Having to talk about the text in the way initiated by J may have, however, boosted Rachel's confidence and increased her selectivity as she clearly realises one word is not the whole text. And if Rachel did use a dictionary in excess (as she maintains in the interview), the collaborative finding out and accepting of an open solution may have shown how a dictionary is, at times, redundant.

In task A.2, the group is made up very differently, which had an effect on the outcome. Present were only

P
R Rachel

Only three words were under discussion, out of which the meaning of two was basically just checked by Rachel (see extract 74). The following extract on the word "crackers", however, shows more interaction between Rachel and P.

Rachel initiates the question (A1), although she has a clue of what the concept is. Rachel and P together, with the help of their background knowledge and the textual context, further build a meaning to "crackers" (A3-A5). Unusually for her, Rachel looks the word up in the dictionary (A6) (this is the only time anyone in her group was recorded to use a dictionary, although there was a dictionary on their table.) After a unanimous decision on what the meaning is (A8), Rachel and P go back to the text (A8-A10).

extract 73

> A1 - R: and they add something to it, what are these crackers
> A2 - P: what
> A3 - R: what are these crackers there, they must add some cereals there or biscuits LAUGHTER
> A4 - P: some sort of biscuits they must be
> A5 - R: it seems so strange to put rice to biscuits LAUGHTER   .

A6 - R: [from the dictionary] yes "keksi", "paukku", "karamelli" [Rachel reads the word "paukkukaramelli", i.e. cracker, as if it was two words "paukku", i.e. blast, bang or fart, and "karamelli", i.e. sweetie] LAUGHTER
A7 - P: LAUGHTER did it have "paukku" (fart)
A8 - R: LAUGHTER yes it has "paukkukaramelli" or "keksi" this is easy to remember for ever, but the fact that in certain situations they still
A9 - P: hold onto
A10 - R: onto the traditional foodways and in the end there is a conclusion

Let us view the episode from the point of view of the changes Rachel articulated. After about two weeks of working well together, P and Rachel are truly adding on to one another's suggestions. Once again, the episodes like extract 73 may have given confidence to Rachel's ability to solve problems also without a partner. It may also have reinforced Rachel's contextualised frame of mind, as P seems to work along the same lines.

In the following extract, R is checking the meaning of "commercialisation". Rachel initiates the quest again (A1). It seems she knows the answer when asking, but it is not available to her until P reminds her (A2). Although the extract is very short, it shows one very important function of interaction in classroom, namely that of finding reinforcement from another member when in little doubt.

extract 74

A1 - R: how it is advertised isn't this "commercialisation"
A2 - P: "kaupallistuminen"
A3 - R: yes oh yes of course

The function of this short episode and episodes like it from Rachel's point of view were likely to be that of reinforcing her lessened dictionary use and contextualised learning. Why use a dictionary if an answer can be found from a partner, from the context or even from one's own mind when prompted?

In the episodes from Rachel's group, Rachel's actions vary a little. In A.1, Rachel is the one giving answers, but in A.2 she is the one asking (mainly because of the changed make up of the group). She shows her contextualised approach in both tasks. Comparing Helen's and Rachel's ways in the recorded group work, Rachel shows less change, although she maintained in the data and, in particular, in the interview that she did

change. It is possible her changes were not articulated in the group work, because the context was not appropriate for it.

1. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in strategies that deal with finding out meanings of words?

Rachel claimed in the interview five months after the course that she had started to use the dictionary less. Two of the episodes from above (extracts 72 and 73) would have provided her good opportunities to reflect on different ways of finding out the meaning and on the need to find out the meaning of certain words but not others. J's over-dependency on words and the group's ability to together solve the problems in extract 72 and the look-up of a word in a dictionary when one's interest is aroused in extract 73 are cases of point of opportunities for reflection.

3. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in strategies that deal with reading?

Rachel's contextualised approach to reading/learning may well have found support in the group work in that the group's use of context (background, textual context) in extracts 72 and 73 were near to her contextualised approach.

4. c) How could the collaborative group work have supported the changes in other aspects related to the above?

The provision of alternative ways of approaching the text and the words in it gave Rachel ample opportunities to reflect. Weighing different ways and perhaps noticing some of one's own ways are worthwhile may have boosted Rachel's confidence in her approaches. The group, where Rachel and P were the core members, enjoyed working together. They gave each other positive experiences and outcomes which help in confidence building.

Let us look at the aspect of remembering word meanings, i.e. whether the recorded group work helped Rachel to remember word meanings. Rachel had fourteen words she had chosen to pay attention to (from tasks A.1 and A.2) out of which five were

discussed in the group. Out of those five (*discipline, define, occur, lager lout* and *crackers*), Rachel was able to recollect the meaning of four five months after the words were first paid attention to in the class. The rest of the nine words were not recollected very well, in fact, only two were given a correct meaning. This seems to suggest that tackling words together helped Rachel learn some aspects of the words, perhaps by making her to "deep process" the words, making them her own.

Conclusion

This section gives further support to the idea that group work may help students change. Helen and Rachel clearly benefited from the tasks where the group were to find out what the writer of the text thought important and where the group decided to tackle word meanings among other things.

9. Summary of analyses 1, 2, 3 and 4 and discussion

Summary of analyses 1, 2, 3 and 4

The aim of this chapter is to bring together the findings from analyses 1, 2, 3 and 4 and discuss them in the light of the background literature. I first provide tables 10 and 11 which summarise the findings of the different analyses for both Helen and Rachel and explain the changes and the support for the changes after each table. I then move on to further discussion.

Let us first look at tables 10 and 11. Column A states the time of the data collection, column B covers the data which I have labelled as "intraindividual aspects from different instruments", although these data are intraindividual only in the sense of being introspective, of telling about the speaker in various contexts. In other words, these "intraindividual" data stem from a context of an instrument and are thus, strictly speaking, inter-individual. However, the inter-individuality in column B is of different type from column D where the focus has been on what a group together did or said, where the focus has been on the impact of a group to the individual. Column C explains the themes of the teacher-led consciousness raising that could have played a role in the changes reported by Helen and Rachel. (The very end of both tables only has column A and column B.)

Column B makes use of the coding system presented in chapter 6, i.e. the main headings are metaknowledge, saying of doing and doing. The data in column C come from chapter 7. Column D includes findings from section 8.1 which discussed metacognitive reflection and findings from section 8.2 which discussed the ways the groups had for finding out meanings of a word.

Helen

Let us first view table 10 with the data from Helen.

Table 10: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Helen**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments	C teacher-led consciousness raising	D group work
week 1 day 1	<u>questionnaire 1:</u> **changing metaknowledge** - slowness - no confidence in reading - uncertainty of word meanings **stable metaknowledge** - *memory: knowledge covered in dust* - *conscientious nature* - *background: rote learning* **saying of doing** - use of dictionary - use of inferring	<u>session 1:</u> - skimming	
week 1 day 2	<u>task A.1:</u> **changing metaknowledge** - knowledge of skimming - slowness because stuck with words - lack of confidence **doing** - use of dictionary		<u>task A.1:</u> 1. reflection on - awareness of skimming which results in more speed 2. scaffolding in finding out the meaning of a word
week 1 day 3	<u>task B.1:</u> **changing metaknowledge** - building up confidence in reading **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side important in learning* - *background: demand for right answers* - *memory: hard work* - *conscientious nature*	<u>session 2:</u> - reading & vocabulary. - finding out strategies: dictionary and inferring - writing in the margin, not on top - successful learners (associations in committing to memory)	<u>task B.1:</u> 1. reflection on - inferring - note taking & hard work - confidence - confidence in word meanings -conscientiousness - selectivity in reading

Table 10, cont.: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Helen**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments	C teacher-led consciousness raising	D group work
week 1 day 4		session 3: - strategies of committing meanings to memory	
week 2 day 8		session 4: - strategies of committing meanings to memory	
week 2 day 10	task A.2: **changing metaknowledge** - slowness, but quicker now **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side important in learning* - *conscientious nature* **saying of doing** - selective attention to words - use of dictionary **doing** - less use of dictionary - use of inferring		task A.2: 1. reflection on skimming 2. scaffolding in finding out the meaning of a word
week 2 day 11	task B.2: **changing metaknowledge** - aware of memory rules in committing meanings to memory **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side important in learning* - *conscientious nature* **saying of doing** - use of dictionary		task B.2: 1. reflection on "memory rules" and systematic methods of learning
week 3 day 18	questionnaire 4: **changing metaknowledge** - increased confidence in finding out word meanings and committing them to memory **saying of doing** - inferring without dictionary		

Table 10, cont.: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Helen**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments
five months later	<u>interview:</u> **changing metaknowledge** - increased confidence in reading and finding out meanings of words - increased speed in reading - awareness of strategies of committing meanings to memory **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side important in learning* - *conscientious nature* - *background: no associations in the past, demand for right answers* **saying of doing** - use of dictionary selectively - use of more/better inferring - avoiding mistakes - writing in the margin

Each step in Helen's data complements the previous one. The traits followed in table 10 were present throughout the course and five months after which increases their credibility.

Helen conceived herself as a slow reader stuck with words and with little confidence in her reading in English (week 1, day 1). With the introduction of skimming (week 1, day 1, session 1 and week 1, day 2, task A.1) and inferring (week 1, day 2, task A.1 and week 1, day 3, session 2), she seemed to start reflecting on her ways of reading. With this reflection in group work and most likely on her own and trying out of new approaches such as selective attention to words and use of inferring (week 2, day 10), she started building her self-confidence in reading. It is likely each successful step in her new approaches - which are all supported by the group work and the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions - helped in the process of confidence building. And the more confident she became, the more likely she was to try out a bit more. At the end, she had evolved into a faster learner with more confidence in reading and finding out meanings of words. (Even if she did not become faster in reality, her conception of her own reading altered which again fed into more confidence.) Her conscientious nature and the importance of the affective side in her learning may well have helped in her process, as conscientiousness may have made her try out new approaches, and her

feelings, when successful, may have guided her too. It is likely that her conscientiousness played a role in her raised awareness of new strategies of committing meanings to memory which she, however, did not report having started using, perhaps because they did not bear enough relevance to her as a learner. What Helen reported during the course is highly congruent with what she reported five months after the course which implied that the features reported were of a lasting nature.

Rachel

Let us now see the summary of the changes in Rachel.

Table 11: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Rachel**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments	C teacher-led consciousness raising	D group work
week 1 day 1	questionnaire 1: **saying of doing** - inferring - dictionary use - looking up corresponding concepts from Finnish books - asking others	session 1: - skimming	
week 1 day 2	task A.1: **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side*		task A.1: 1. reflection on - skimming or selectivity 2. scaffolding in finding out the meaning of a word

Table 11, cont.: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Rachel**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments	C teacher-led consciousness raising	D group work
week 1 day 3	task B.1: **changing metaknowledge** - awareness of selectivity/skimming - confidence in remembering word meanings (hard work) **stable metaknowledge** *- memory: contextual memory when learning words and in other areas, hard work* *- affective side*	session 2: - reading and vocabulary - finding out: dictionary and inferring - affixes - successful learners (associations)	task B.1: 1. reflection on - inferring - selectivity
week 1 day 4		session 3: - committing meanings to memory: associations and mind maps	
week 2 day 8		session 4: - committing meanings to memory: associations	
week 2 day 10	task A.2: **changing metaknowledge** - confidence in remembering word meanings (funny) - lack of confidence in cloze exercises **stable metaknowledge** *- affective side* *- memory: auditory memory*		task A.2: 1. reflection on - skimming 2. scaffolding in finding out the meaning of a word

Table 11, cont.: **Summary of the changes and the possible support for them, Rachel**

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments	C teacher-led consciousness raising	D group work
week 2 day 11	<u>task B.2:</u> **changing metaknowledge** - confidence and lack of it in cloze exercises - despite failures, confidence **stable metaknowledge** - *affective side* - *error-free background* - *memory: visual and auditory important* **saying of doing** - learning to skim - learning to use prefixes - using associations (phonetic)		<u>task B.2:</u> 1. reflection on - inferring/context - dictionary use and selectivity - prefixes - skimming - confidence and learning in course - associations
week 3 day 18	<u>questionnaire 4</u>		

A time	B intraindividual aspects from different instruments
five months later	<u>interview:</u> **metaknowledge** - no use of keyword, but awareness - better confidence in reading without dictionary - confidence in one's learning because of success **stable metaknowledge** - *background: overcoming difficulties* - *memory: contextual and visual* **saying of doing** - improved skimming - use of prefixes - not being hung up with dictionary any more - use of associations and mind mapping - contextualised learning

The data from Rachel are consistent too. Certain traits were present throughout the data collection. To start with, Rachel conceived herself as a relatively proficient reader who knew how to infer and use a dictionary. However, she acknowledged words/concepts cause her problems. Her self-reporting at the beginning of the course was clearly not as comprehensive as Helen's or her own later. Also, either her reports from the beginning of the course were inconclusive (because of not wanting to be on the course perhaps) or

she was not aware of her problems, as the data from the course suggest she started picking things that she finds useful, although she did not report missing them. For example, she started reporting on her awareness of skimming (week 1, day 3, task B.1) and her use of prefixes (week 2, day 11, task B.2), after both skimming and affixes had been introduced in the teacher-led consciousness raising and after they had been a matter of reflection in group work tasks. Along with these new traits in Rachel came confidence in various tasks: confidence in remembering word meanings, confidence in cloze exercises which in Rachel's mind are about affixes, confidence in reading without a dictionary. Rachel's confidence may well be the product of her success in various tasks with others during the course (Rachel enjoys working with others) and in tasks at home on her own or with members of her family. This success is likely to have boosted her confidence even further. Rachel's affective side (a stable metaknowledge feature) probably played a role in her confidence building/feeling of success. Rachel's contextualised learning (which is seen, for example, in her fondness of the mind-map technique) most likely supported her interest in prefixes which really only have a meaning when in context, but which can be tied with a vast number of stems/words. Rachel reports she grew aware of the keyword method but did not start using it, perhaps because it lacked personal relevance to her. As in Helen's case, the changes reported by Rachel are not one-off cases. Instead, they were present both in the course and five months after it.

Discussion

The changes and the support for the changes described above and in chapters 6, 7 and 8 steer me to consider the findings from different angles. I first concentrate on the quest for meaning of the learners. Second, my aim is to compare the reported changes with findings from literature dealing with vocabulary learning and with some other aspects of change. I then consider the reported changes in this study in connection with Parry (1993) where two students in a reading context out of classroom remained the same in their approaches. Fourth, I move to the cause-effect relationships in training studies, and consider whether that approach is applicable here. Fifth, I bring up consciousness raising with many of its sources in this study.

The quest for meaning of the learners is an interesting area. It entails the idea that learners are active, agentive participants in the learning process. As Bruner says (1990:20), "culture and the quest for meaning are the proper causes of human action". In other words, it is the wanting to make sense of the world around us and of our relationship with it that act as stimulators in learning. This active approach of the learners was part of this study which involved a quest for meaning on different levels.

The quest for meaning is constrained by the context of the learner, i.e. the learner's past and present. Personal relevance is part of this context. Williams and Burden write about personal relevance in using strategies

> [Learners] will employ particular strategies if they have a sense of ownership or choice in the strategies used, they are clear why they are using them, and they want to complete a task to achieve a goal that they have identified as worthwhile. (Williams and Burden 1997: 164)

The data Helen and Rachel provided me with are very rich in metaknowledge of themselves as learners and as persons, of learning and of language, and in articulation about what they do normally and what they are engaged in at the moment of recording. Helen and Rachel are articulate about their beliefs and about their context of learning, they give reasons for their actions, etc. They are in charge of their learning, but their choices are related to what they already are. The changes they manifested were changes that fit the framework formed by their background. It is likely the background consists of several areas, but Finnish cultural, institutional and personal backgrounds are present in Helen and Rachel (see Dufva 1995 and Dufva et al 1996).

The data are at its richest when they come from the group work tasks and from the interview where there is interpersonal interaction in the sense of having at least two people physically present. The changes Helen and Rachel underwent are likely to have been influenced by their reflection on what took place in the group work and in the teacher-led consciousness raising (including all the questionnaires). The ideas presented by me as a teacher (which I adopted from my own experiences and from literature) and by other members in the course offered Helen and Rachel a selection of beliefs and ways of doing, some of which had more personal relevance to them than others. Helen's

and Rachel's quest for more meaning in their language learning and using (meaning at all levels, e.g. meaning of words, meaning of texts, meaning of their own learning) formed the driving force of change and made the students in group work make the task their own, make it relevant to them (see Donato 1994, Kowal and Swain 1994). There was dialogue between the context that the students brought to the task with them (e.g. their background) and the immediate context formed by the group and the task.

Let us now relate the changes Helen and Rachel reported to the literature on change. The main emphasis of the teacher-led consciousness raising was on possible change in vocabulary learning strategies, but as has been shown the changes took place in other areas as well. In section 2.7, I reviewed the strong explicit vocabulary learning hypothesis which accommodates for strategies such as inferring to find out the meaning and associational techniques to remember the meaning[9]. Teaching these methods has been promoted, for example, by Nation (1990, 1994) and Oxford and Scarcella (1994). The intervention study by Kern (1989) (see section 2.10) on inferencing showed some indication that inferring as a strategy can be taught. However, Kerns's "cause-effect" study took little account of the context of the learners, nor did it try to establish what possible other gains the students achieved. Cohen and Aphek (1980) (see section 2.10) trained their Hebrew learners in associations. The learners using associations in the subsequent tasks did well, but so did they when not using associations. Cohen and Aphek both ignored the context and took it into account, i.e. they expected a ten to fifteen minute training session to have a relevance, but they also noted that the type of learner benefiting from associations is difficult to define. The intervention study by Brown and Perry (1991) (see section 2.10) aimed at finding out what is the best method of committing meanings to mind. There was some indication that the keyword-semantic method made the students deep-process best and thus retain word meanings. Again, the context of the learners was ignored, for example, when the researchers gave researcher-generated keywords to the learners. Each of the above studies highlighted some aspects of vocabulary learning, but in their cause-effect design overlooked the background of

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[9] The difference between language using and language learning strategies is not very clear cut. Inferring, for example, has been looked at from the point of view of finding out the meaning of a word, but also as a way to learn the meaning (see e.g. Clarke and Nation 1980, Hulstijn 1992). Also, when learning a word through an association, one is likely to use the word, perhaps making use of the association in the recall.

the learner, the context of the classroom where the students are likely to reflect on a vast number of ideas not only stemming from the training, how the students changed in other respects, etc.

My study showed either Helen or Rachel or both of them becoming better at ways of finding out word meanings, at committing word meanings to memory and at reading. They found personal relevance in the course. These were changes I expected to see, but in both Helen's and Rachel's data there is one trait that stands out, namely confidence. In everyday speech and life we often refer to confidence as an important factor, but confidence was not a topic I expected to find to the extent it appeared in the data. Confidence was not a topic in the teacher-led consciousness raising, as confidence seems to come through something else and cannot thus be targeted directly.

Confidence is present in many fields of life. Confidence in language learning has been a somewhat ignored area (although it is referred to quite often), perhaps because of its omnipotent character. Is it a cause or an effect? I would argue in my study it is both. The more Helen and Rachel tried out new strategies and the more they read and did exercises in and out of the course, the more they improved and the more their confidence in knowing how to read and how to tackle words improved. The experiences they both had from their school times were not all encouraging and the long gap between the school times and studying at the university may have affected their lack of confidence in reading in English to start with. On the other hand, their background in other fields of life where they were likely to be more confident (one would not study, raise a family and work without being confident of oneself on a general level!) may have helped in their confidence building in the language classroom. Bruner, when discussing folk beliefs, may help us in understanding the issue of confidence. He states that people with agentive minds have reasons for their actions and that

> ... in theorizing about the practice of education in the classroom (or any other setting, for that matter), you had better take into account the folk theories that those engaged in teaching and learning already have. For any innovations that you, as a "proper" pedagogical theorist, may wish to introduce will have to compete with, replace, or otherwise modify the folk theories that already guide both teachers and pupils. (Bruner 1996: 46)

It is likely that Helen and Rachel had beliefs about their language learning that were changed when they, as a result of reflection, started to change their ways of doing (see figure 3). With this process of change there seems to have been a simultaneous, interrelated process which is about knowing and feeling, i.e. the sense of confidence.

Confidence is one of the areas of interest in sport psychology which like some SLA research is a relatively young applied field of psychology. I found quite a few analogies with my study from sport psychology when wondering about the issue of confidence. In sport reporting, when sports people are asked about their success, we hear references to confidence. Also, when reporters comment on success or failure of an athlete, confidence is very often part of the belief explaining the result. Horsley (1995: 311), writing about boosting self-confidence in sport, maintains that "[a]n appreciation of context is as important for effective intervention as is the understanding of techniques that work" which is very relevant to the language teaching context too. He also lists intervention strategies that can be used to boost a sportsperson's self-confidence, one of which is successful experiences through making the task easier and changing perceptions of success in, for example, group tasks. This analogy fits the context of my study well. The task of reading and tackling vocabulary was made easier through the involvement of the group and the teacher-led consciousness raising, and perceptions of success may have changed when the students found reinforcement or points of reflection in the group (see sections 8.1 and 8.2). These actions may have boosted Helen's and Rachel's self-confidence. In a similar fashion, Clark and Ivanic suggest that consciousness raising in writing helps students become more self-assured in their writing as a result of the opportunities to discuss their writing (1991: 182).

Would the changes reported have taken place without the course? Parry (1997) (reviewed in 2.8) introduced us to Dimitri and Ae Young who had different approaches to reading and vocabulary, holistic and analytic respectively. Parry collected her data on students reading on their own for "real" purposes. Dimitri who at the beginning of the term the study focused on was not interested in words as long as he was able to work out the meaning of the passage did not show changes in his approach. In contrast, Ae Young liked studying words in great detail and was therefore slow, but like Dimitri, she

showed no change in her approach. Neither of them did well in an anthropology exam, a real life trial for one's proficiency. In her implications, Parry called for classrooms which would offer students different types of approaches to avoid stagnation of one's ways of reading. Helen's fondness of words and the dictionary resembles Ae Young's approach, whereas Rachel worked more like Dimitri to start with. However, Helen and Rachel changed and developed a more balanced approach to their reading and vocabulary. The course is likely to have helped their development. Whether any course (i.e. also a course without deliberate attempts to provide students with opportunities to reflect, for example, through tasks) would help in change, is worth investigating.

What then about the notion of training which involves the idea of cause and effect as discussed in 2.3 and 2.4? Proponents of learner training acknowledge the role of the teacher as the initiator, certain types of tasks that help in becoming aware, and often some emphasis is on learners in groups. All these aspects were part of my study in some form too, but I can see other factors which may have helped the learners in my study to change. A single line of cause and effect is impossible to accept when thinking of the multitude of factors in the classroom. It is not feasible to train learners in something and expect them to change *because* of the training. It is up to the learners whether they change. The learner's cultural, institutional and personal background alone plays a role in how "trainable" the students are. Students in their active role also may, in an ideal case, change the task of strategy training into an activity which has more relevance to them. In experimental intervention studies the focus is on whether a trained strategy has been successfully acquired or not. In addition to these two options, there might be a third one, i.e. whether the learners have acquired something else, perhaps equally important, but this third option has been overlooked. In my study I attempted to trace the changes not only in strategies which were brought up in the teacher-led sessions to start with but also in related matters, such as confidence. All the support for these changes is not easy to define, but the group work data and the teacher-led consciousness raising do offer explanations, as seen in chapters 7 and 8, but the changes only took place if Helen and Rachel were "ready" for or "open" to them.

Let us take a closer look at consciousness and consciousness raising in my study. The agentiveness of the learners displays itself in the consciousness. Consciousness was reviewed from two points of view in chapter 2. Consciousness is the metacognitive knowledge the students reveal, i.e. consciousness as intentionality, as attention, as awareness and as control (Schmidt 1994). This type of metaknowledge when it has been studied is often seen as stemming from an introspective point of view, from what the learner tells us about what happens inside his or her head. This is how I looked at consciousness in analysis 1. However, this reported consciousness can hardly come to existence in a vacuum, i.e. there needs to be something or somebody that the learner can interact with. The group work data are an illustrative example of the other type of consciousness reviewed in chapter 2, namely that of consciousness as co-knowledge. It is the group work that provided the students with ample opportunities to reflect, to make the topic co-knowledge, but also the teacher-led consciousness raising added to the reflection. Often the topics that had been covered in the teacher-led sessions appeared in the subsequent group work sessions. The reflection can be seen in the "introspective" reports as well as in the more public sphere. As Bruner states

> Externalizing, in a word, rescues cognitive activity from implicitness, making it more public, negotiable, and "solidary". At the same time, it makes it more accessible to subsequent reflection and metacognition. (Bruner 1996: 24-25)

With the two views of consciousness in mind, we can see consciousness raising from two points of view too. Externalising, i.e. making ideas public, in itself is consciousness raising as it may result in co-knowledge which then helps the learner to further reflect and become aware (or intentive, attentive or in control). Becoming aware is closer to consciousness as a metacognitive state, it is raising an idea or a strategy or an approach to where it is available to the learner. Becoming aware offers a possibility to the learner to accept the new idea/strategy. As a case in point, Helen became aware of memorisation strategies which she did not take on, because of not finding personal relevance in them. Rachel not only became aware of prefixes in the English language, but also went further. She actually started to enjoy and use them.

Consciousness raising in this study thus consisted of several areas. The group work tasks provided ample opportunities for the students to externalise and reflect, the teacher-led consciousness raising may have given incentives that were carried over to the group work or directly to the learners. There were, of course, several other aspects in the course that may have helped the students to change. The questionnaires used in the course made the students externalise and reflect. In addition, in a 48-hour course, many unrecorded events took place (much more group work, many different kinds of tasks, etc.) that may have added to the dimensions of the study. However, Helen and Rachel were the main actors of the study. Having an active and articulate approach to their own being, to their own learning, they showed a change in some areas, but not in others.

10. Implications

Since my study has been a response to the challenges in my own teaching, I first consider its implications for that situation. Thereafter I move on to implications for other teaching situations. Finally, I give suggestions for further research.

10.1 Implications for teaching

The holistic approach I adopted in my study has both advantages and disadvantages. Because of its context-sensitiveness, the study entered the rich language learning worlds of real students, but the inclusion of the two real learners means it has restricted generalisabity. The changes in the two mature students, Helen and Rachel, can be seen as uniquely theirs. However, stepping away from the particular changes in Helen and Rachel, I am inclined to think that most students in this study did benefit from consciousness raising (i.e. teacher-led consciousness raising sessions, group work tasks and questionnaires) - each in their own way. It is likely that the social science students, who, as seen in 8.1 and 8.2, were good at reflecting in group work tasks, gained a personal relevance from the course. I have also some indication of this happening to two participants who provided me with data, but who I did not study in detail. At least the students studied in detail and most likely the rest of the students benefited from the course. Having a teacher offer alternatives to vocabulary learning and reading together with group work tasks where the same topics were often brought up without direct prompts from the teacher was a feasible way of raising consciousness.

The changes Helen and Rachel underwent could be an indication of possible changes in other students in a similar situation in future. If another, similar course with the same aims was to be given, certain modifications to the course plan should be made. As pointed out in 4.4, the data collection instruments and classroom activities in most cases formed one unity, but not in all cases. If I was to give another reading comprehension course, I could not do exactly what was done in this study, unless I was to collect data

again. For example, some of the instruments (see questionnaires 2abc and 3abc, appendix 5) would not be ideal as purely classroom activities because of time constraints in a course. However, most of the classroom activities cum data collection instruments could be adapted for further use. The beginning-of-the-course questionnaire and the end-of-course questionnaire would easily fit the ordinary routines of classroom as consciousness raisers. Moreover, some kind of teacher-led steering is apt too, and the power of group work is definitely of utmost importance.

As we saw in this study, the students were keen on articulating about themselves and their learning when with other students. They interpreted the somewhat open tasks according to their own active minds and decided, without the task prompting them, to talk about their learning and themselves (see tasks A.1 and A.2 in appendix 4). Thus, the group work was functional. This brings us to the question on how a group should be formed. In 2.2, I mentioned Kowal and Swain's (1994) suggestion that a homogeneous pair may prove best. The homogeneous/heterogeneous nature of a pair/group may, however, be a relative issue. In my study, the students in groups differed in their proficiency but, perhaps, after all, the differences were not great, relatively speaking. All group members had taken a reading comprehension test and failed it, but they were still in the position to read English texts in one way or another even before the course. Had the differences in proficiency been enormous, scaffolding would likely have been a one-way process from one expert to one novice (or it may not have taken place). It seems therefore that in the future the principle of forming heterogeneous groups could further be employed in my situation.

On the whole, I see what took place in my study in a positive light. Spending time on consciousness raising activities is a road worth opting for. What took place was not time-wasting. The positive comments of the students in the end-of-course questionnaire support this claim. Clearly, many of the practices (also the ones not reported in this study, i.e. the ones that also construct the context) could be repeated in another, similar situation with adult social science students in the hope of each of them finding personal relevance in the framework provided. What then about other situations?

Thinking of some courses in my work, I can see my approach as presented in my study could not be applied to them all. The social science students are a special group. They are, on the whole, eager to try out new things and discuss, they are friendly and perhaps more acutely in need of English than some other students whose studies are not so much based on long texts in English. A group of students from another faculty in a reading comprehension course would not benefit from a similar "treatment", although it is likely there are roads to raised consciousness in a way approved by their context. Teacher-led consciousness raising and group work activities would likely work in most of my classes, but creating a fruitful combination of different possibilities is worth further classroom research. The following quotation from sport psychology I used in chapter 9 is very relevant to the different language teaching contexts

"[a]n appreciation of context is as important for effective intervention as is the understanding of techniques that work" (Horsley 1995: 311)

The fact that Finnish university students do share certain background features and thus share a context in this sense implies that some type of consciousness raising in approaches to vocabulary is worth incorporating into my reading classrooms with students from different faculties. However, how this is done has to be thoroughly thought through, as in addition to sharing certain background features, the students have personal experiences and interests guiding them. This positive vein of thinking contradicts Gillette who writes

Successful language learning depends on an individual's willingness to make every effort to acquire an L2 rather than on superior cognitive processing alone. Viewing foreign language skills as a valuable personal goal is a crucial trait of effective language learners. Each learner's social history is the key to goal formation, and, hence, to explaining success in second language acquisition. (Gillette 1994: 212)

The quotation can be interpreted as pessimistic and fatalistic, although sharp in pointing out the importance of the goal of the learner. It leaves no room for "training", and I can see it leaving no room for consciousness raising as presented in my study either. My study showed an initially somewhat reluctant learner, Rachel, who felt forced to take the course (but who at the same time had a positive outlook towards foreign languages)

benefiting from the course, not only through the reported changes, but also in her subjective perceptions of the course.

The appreciation of context can be a tricky issue because of the many factors building a context. In many ways, it seems a learner has several contexts, for example, the institutional, personal and cultural contexts and the immediate context of learning where there is interaction with people and with materials which are produced by somebody and interpreted by the learner. Gillette (1994), when writing about learner histories, says that learners' language learning histories can explain why students behave the way they do, why they are what they are. It is true future case study research needs to know about the students' background, but it would be wrong to believe that our ever-present backgrounds altogether block options we have. They work nicely in descriptive accounts as a way of explaining certain features, but in a teaching context we should at least try to change some of the beliefs etc. created in the past to break the circle of "less effective" learners failing most of the time and to offer new avenues to the more effective ones too. This is what my study succeeded in doing and what is possible to take place in other contexts too.

Let us consider other situations with *adult* learners. Adults, especially mature students like Helen and Rachel who had a positive outlook on learning in general, are likely to provide a fertile ground to consciousness raising with their varied backgrounds and metacognitive abilities. If the teacher and the tasks are realistic and not condescending, adults can find personal relevance in consciousness raising (or if they do not find it, it is not because they have not tried, but because it is not there). When sensitive enough to the many features that form a learner's context, a practitioner finds ways of helping the students raise their consciousness and thus help them change. My study with the reported changes gives support to the idea of life-long learning, i.e. adults may undergo changes in metaknowledge as well as in the use of strategies, and adults in all teaching/learning situations have that potential.

10.2 Suggestions for further research

Context

Now to the suggestions for further research. In 2.3, 2.4 and chapter 9, I pointed to the experimental training approach which often presents matters in a cause-effect fashion. This causal explaining does not do justice to the idea of context or students finding personal relevance, as having a preprescribed idea of what is positive and what is negative and only concentrating on, say, changes in strategies does not tell us enough. A learner has a past, present and future which are all related to changes in strategies and changes in other areas. Therefore, in future studies on learning, an effort should be made to acknowledge and study as many factors in learning as possible so that we can get a fuller picture of language learning. What I find extremely interesting and important is to make room for the "personal growth" (such as increase in confidence) in adult language learners. How does it take place? What is its significance? What is the role of subjective feelings of oneself in (language) learning?

Different ways to raise consciousness

Parry (1997) showed us (discussed in 2.8 and chapter 9) that her two case study students more or less remained unchanged in their approaches to reading and vocabulary during the term they were reading on their own. My study with consciousness raising, however, uncovered changes in Helen and Rachel. I would like to call for more research on what I have labelled consciousness raising in my study. In other words, it would benefit us to see what kinds of approaches have helped students in particular teaching contexts change in their metaknowledge or in their strategies, perhaps in their performance too. What is the role of teacher-led activities? How can group activities help in consciousness raising? Do questionnaires function as consciousness raisers as effectively as more interpersonal activities, i.e. where the partners are physically present? What kind of changes take place in students when consciousness raising is geared towards a grammatical feature as opposed to a wide and varied field like vocabulary strategies?

Group work

The changes in metaknowledge and strategy knowledge/use in students working in the same group could be a potentially important area of research. How does reflection benefit different group members in one group? I am now thinking of a study along the lines of Donato (1994) which looked at group work and consequent improvements in performance, but instead of tackling improvements in performance, it would be fruitful to consider the changes of the students in metaknowledge and in strategy knowledge/use. How varied would the changes be, if the students' co-knowledge was created in the same group? (Helen's and Rachel's consciousness as co-knowledge stemmed from two different activities, although the task given to the students was the same.) What reasons could we find for the possible different kind of changes? Is it the initial motive as suggested by Gillette (1994) that steer the change?

Change and proficiency

A fourth area worth further research is the relationship of the change in metaknowledge/strategies with the proficiency of the students. My study did not tap the performance aspect of Helen and Rachel, and, although we do know they both passed the course, there is no indication of improved performance, because data of that kind were not collected. What my study did point out were the subjective accounts on improved confidence because of success in various tasks where the learner employed a changed approach. This would imply that conceived change in a feature such as confidence has a relationship with improved performance. Williams and Burden (1997: 75-76) claim awareness of change may lead to taking control of learning, but it is still not clear whether control equals improvement. For Bruner, reflection is the generator of change in beliefs and in doing (see figure 3 in chapter 5), but he does not say changed doing is necessarily better doing. There clearly is room for more research in this area.

Less active students

Fifth, I want to raise a potentially significant issue. Helen and Rachel showed, on the whole, interest in what they were doing. It is because of their active presence in the

classes that they became the focus of my study, i.e. it is because they were always in the classroom when I collected data and thus supplied me with full sets of data. Being able to carry out research similar to my study, but with a focus on the less active students would be intriguing (with less active I do not allude to less proficient students, since there can be several reasons for not attending a course of the type I taught). Would they change? What would the incentive for change be?

Keyword method

It would also be interesting to see whether learners in other contexts where they have been "trained" or helped in vocabulary learning through the keyword method have become aware of it but not found personal relevance in it. Laboratory studies (as briefly reviewed in 2.7) give ample evidence for the benefits of the approach, but Helen and Rachel, when given a free choice either to start using the keyword method or not, did not warm for the approach. Were the adults in my study so tied with their pasts that the new method felt too constrained? Or was it the reading course that made them perhaps more interested in finding out meanings than stopping and memorising meanings? When trying to find answers to these questions in my study, Helen and Rachel could not explain their shunning of the method. Different instruments could perhaps have explained why such a widely promoted method did not gain ground in my study. With appropriate instruments the issue could be pursued further in another situation to explain the discrepancy between what is thought to be useful and why it is not.

In this chapter, I have concentrated on some of the implications of my study. Because of the nature of my research (a case study in my own classroom), the implications noted here stem from the richness and constraints of my classroom, my students and my study. A reader with different background knowledge and experiences is likely to have discovered other implications which are equally noteworthy.

11. Conclusion

At the beginning I had a reading comprehension course for social science students to teach and some knowledge of the problems the type of students normally conceive as having. My aim was to find answers to the problems of vocabulary and reading.

My initial interest in the vocabulary learning strategies of the students remained throughout the study, but my horizons on the issue widened. The study was first and foremost about the changes Helen and Rachel reported in their strategies and in themselves and about the support for these changes. In the process of discovering these changes, the notions of consciousness and consciousness raising, the individual's quest for meaning and the inter-individual/intra-individual meaning making of the students were of enormous help. With the help of these notions and, most importantly, with the help of the students' reporting, I began to see vocabulary learning strategies as part of a whole - they are intricately connected to other language use/learning strategies, such as ways of reading, and to metaknowledge features, such as feelings of confidence, perceptions of one's speed in reading and one's background. A change in a strategy does not take place alone, but interrelated to other changes. A change in strategy does not take place unless the learner finds personal relevance in it. Moreover, the changes discovered in my study did not happen unassisted, but were supported by the group work Helen and Rachel engaged in and by the topics raised in the teacher-led consciousness raising sessions and quite likely by other aspects of the course as well.

At the end, it is easy to notice what a fertile ground the reading comprehension course for social science students was to carry out research. With no major setbacks and with an increased interest in the matters of my study, I pursued a track which was not clearly signposted at the beginning. I discovered many answers that will help me and my students in the future, but I will also continue to look for more.

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Appendix 1

Translation of the handout on four successful language learners used in the first training session (5.6.1996), original in Finnish

Laurent Tran-Nguyen, a refugee, arrived in Finland in the autumn of 1990. Five years later, a book on Finnish grammar translated by him into Vietnamese was published. It is the first ever book in Vietnamese published in Finland.

...

- I believe I inherited my language talents from my father. It is easy for me to learn languages and I have a good memory, Laurent tells.

His interest in languages started when his sister was allowed to enter the United States and the rest of the family was meant to follow. His father started to teach the 14-year-old son English. However, none of the family members got to go to the United States; his parents and his brother died, Laurent is in Finland. It is good that the language remained.

Laurent studied Swedish at school in Finland. He studies a page of German words independently every day. He is planning to put his mind into it on his own.

- My technique is to form a sentence of each new word. This is the way to remember the words. One needs a lot of entries before it is worth starting to read a text in a foreign language.

text: Urpu-Kaarina Yli-Laurila, in "Opettaja" ("The Teacher") 4, 26.1.1996

Since you are now asking me about memory rules in language learning, ha haa, they are what I have, and, in fact, it is quite nice that you should ask because they form a massive archive and they have for all my life been a big part of my personality as I see it. I have amused myself with them and by thinking about them and, thinking now, I don't think I have really ever explained them to anybody. So in what follows you may peek into what is my uttermost private.

First, when you ask how I learn new words, I would like to answer: not easily, **nowadays.** It seems to me that with ageing the self-evident easiness of learning words diminishes. I hope this change is an illusion and, in fact, due to the fact that I don't keep up the same routines of language learning as in school times. In fact, in the past year I have tried to acquire them again, look up words in my big dictionaries and commit words to my memory.

Strategies are, of course, dependent on the language. In some languages, the words themselves are sunk into memory quite easily, but the meanings are foggy, whereas sometimes it is difficult to remember the words themselves. To illustrate the latter let's take Russian at school: the words in Russian are normally quite different from words in other languages and therefore they must be learnt from point zero. I started studying

Russian two years after the rest of the class and I really studied words hard. But in English a word is often somehow familiar, but its meaning is unclear and this is also the case in German, for some reason. I remember the word but forget the meaning.

I have two ways of learning words that I would dare to call strategies. One is **free association** and **analogies**, the other is **"phonetics-gymnastics"**, and the first one is more important. In free association, it is most often efficient to create association s or connotations which can be and may best be absurd, because they then stay in memory. I have two examples from Russian which I remember having studied in summer 1975 using the following associations - it may well be that I haven't used them since which in itself is some sort of a proof of the efficiency of the rules.

"provitelstvo" is (I think, ha haa, you may laugh at me if I remember the meaning wrong, but it is quite good to remember a word from 20 years ago) a committee, meeting, council, etc. It is pronounced more or less like proviitelstva. I remember having imagined how in a meeting in Russia people are offered mineral water and somebody praises it to another person in Swedish saying: bra Vittel, vad? (Nice Vittel, isn't it.) And Vittel is a French mineral water known to me from my childhood in France.

In the same context, I remember having learnt the following word effortlessly:

"Gosydorstvennyi" or of state, state (adj.) and it is pronounced more or less *gasudarstvennii*. This was to follow the story of mineral water because at the beginning there is *gasu*, "gas" and, of course, the carbonic acid added to water in French is *gas* just like in Italy where they drink aqua gasata. I can't remember that the end of the word was connected to any further associations, but remembering gas was a good beginning. It was, of course, easy to connect carbonated water with some *state* committee. Well, I remember to have laughed at the fact that Vittel is as a matter of fact a still water - but in the Soviet Union the state system was very twisted.

I have examples like the ones above from all languages but in particular from Russian, because I really had to study it.

With the second, phonetic strategy I mean that any language seems to be physical and loud. When I have had to learn many new words from a text I have simply read the text out loud like Juhani Jukola, with a loud voice and with exaggerating muscular movements [Juhani Jukola is a stubborn character who learns to read as an adult in the play The Seven Brothers by Aleksis Kivi, one of the authors to write in Finnish at the end of the 19th century]. I still do it, it is my experience that any language sinks in better with a bit of gymnastics so that the "feel" of the language settles into mouth, tongue and lips. I read, for example, Proust and Nietzsche at home, exaggerating the exceptionality and difference of the lips and the tongue (because I hardly get a chance to speak French or German). I believe that if I was a language teacher I would make my pupils shout, grin, vomit the French uvular r's, hiss the s's with the help of cheeks and tongue and on top of this I would get the voicing by hitting them at the back. On the other hand, it is essential that in the same context one has the written form of the word

available so that an association is created between the shamanistic repetition of the movement of one's own lips and the objectivity of the written word.

Perhaps the different methods can be connected. I remember how as a child I was amused by the fact that German *Kiefer* is both jaws (der) and a pine (das). I then imagined myself biting tightly a branch of a pine. When you bite hard and grin, it is easy to imagine uttering the sound *kii* which gives us Kiefer. Thinking back, this is a funny but I would think exceptional case because it combines the labial gymnastics to a mental image which in addition combines the two meanings.

So these were a few examples - and more come to my mind if I want to. They are, however, mainly from my school times because thereafter there have not really been lists of words to study. Now I can, of course, enjoy it that I slowly absorb Swedish without an effort. The only language really that I have tried to study independently lately is Italian and it is, because of French, nicely mystical: I read out loud an incomprehensible expression from a newspaper and try to recognise a sound structure that I know. But this is of course a fairly exceptional case in learning languages.

source: man 37 years, lived in France as a child, has lived in England, lives in a Swedish speaking environment, uses languages at work as a source of information and in his free time as medium of hobbies and social contacts.

I really put my mind into thinking about learning words. I wonder if you happen to remember how awful it was for me to study Latin at the University? The explanation is that I have never read or studied the words or structures of a language. Conscious learning is such a strange and unfamiliar concept to me that I believe I am not very good at teaching it. I have always only learnt material/such languages that I have been able to acquire, without consciously learning. There are gaps, a lot of gaps in my vocabulary knowledge, in all languages.

source: woman 34 years., English and German teacher, has lived in the USA and Germany

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This is a preliminary answer to your questions on learning vocabulary: it seems I use different methods in each language, but this is quite difficult to answer since I haven't really thought about it consciously. The vocabulary of the languages learnt at school has increased slow by slow so I cannot mention any memory rules. Perhaps learning from context is one method, that is what I do with English a great deal. In the "old" languages of mine I come across with so few entirely new words that I don't even try to learn them actively, since I get by the way I am. When living in England, practical situations taught me quite well, for example, some word corresponded a concrete, visible thing and you didn't easily forget it after the first learning instance, but I wonder how many of those words have been forgotten after the point of reference is missing now!

My vocabulary knowledge in Italian hasn't really increased in the recent years, so here too the rule applies that the words that were learnt as young will not be wiped away, but

new ones are more difficult to make stick to mind, especially when I haven't even tried actively. So this is lazy language knowledge! This laziness is perhaps the reason that I have found Estonian surprisingly difficult to learn. Just now I am not even studying it, but last year after the elementary course I was faced with harsh reality: my learning skills have decreased considerable because of my age or the difference of Estonian in comparison to all other languages I know or both of these reasons. I think I will have to develop some totally new learning strategy to learn Estonian, including memory rules to learn words, but I still don't know what they could be like. So are going to get material when I start tackling Estonian...

It would feel natural to use Finnish and Finnish structures and words as learning aids but I am not quite convinced about that either, since I am aiming at spoken Estonian (...) I think that I should forget Finnish altogether and learn Estonian as a whole new language. Then I am faced with a real problem, since I just don't remember words and structures after one learning instance like I do with my strong languages.

source: woman 36 years., has lived in Italy and England, work connections to Estonia, uses languages at word mainly as a source of information.

Appendix 2

Examples of the following methods

1) The keyword method
2) Associations in general
3) The use of word families in a mind map (such as thematic and semantic clustering)
4) Making a new sentence with the word

1) The keyword method

mental

The English verb "irritate" may remind a speaker of Finnish of the Finnish noun "irvistys" (a grin) and this association may evoke a mental image where someone who is irritated is grinning.

verbal

The English verb "accumulate" may remind a speaker of Finnish of the Finnish noun "akka" (an old woman) and this association may help in forming the sentence "Akat tietävät paljon/Akat ovat keränneet paljon tietoa" (Old women know a lot/have accumulated a lot of knowledge).

2) Associations in general

If one does not easily remember the meaning of the words "appropriate" and "adequate" but knows that the two possible meanings are "sopiva" and "riittävä" correspondingly, one may remember that "appropriate" and "sopiva" go hand in hand because they both have the letter "p".

To remember the word form "grommets" when knowing the meaning, one can think of the comets out in the space. To know of the comets, we use high technology which is also used to produce grommets which are sometimes fitted into children's ears.

3) The use of word families in a mind map (such as thematic and semantic clustering)

Figure 4: **Word family in a mind map, semantic**
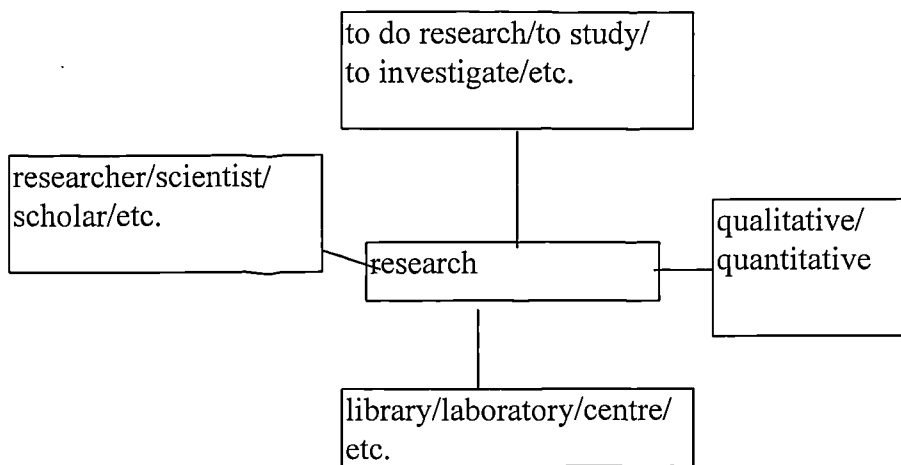
Figure 5: **Word family in a mind map, thematic**
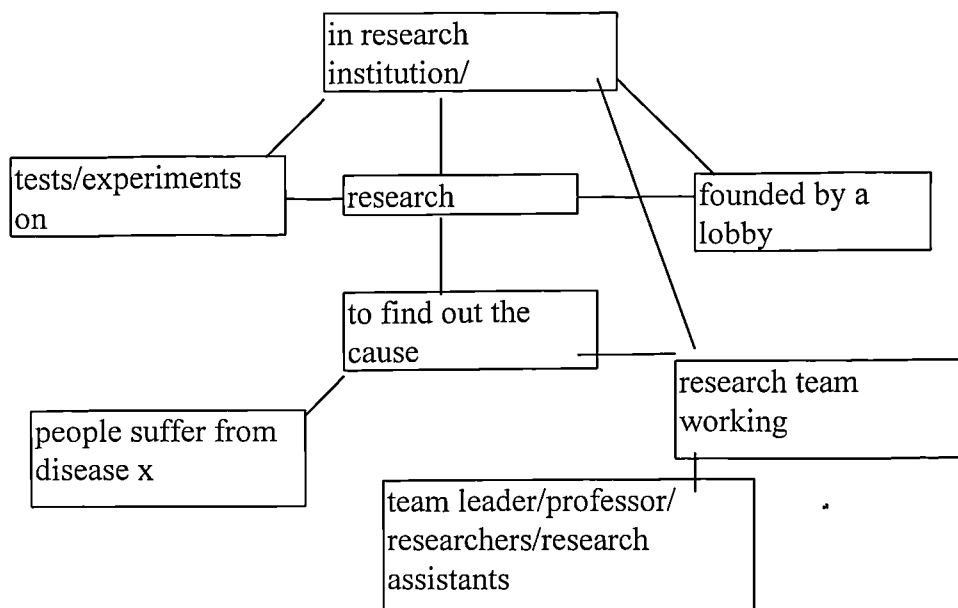
4) Making a new sentence with the word

When meeting the word "disciplines" in the sentence "Social science textbooks define social sciences as a family of disciplines" (from text "Defining the Social sciences, appendix 4), one can make up a sentence of one's own, e.g. "Psychology is the discipline I like".

Appendix 3

1) **Translation of questionnaire 1 (beginning-of-course questionnaire) (with altered lay-out)**
2) **Translation of questionnaire 4 (end-of-course questionnaire (with altered lay-out)**

1) **Translation of questionnaire 1 (beginning-of-course questionnaire) (with altered lay-out)**

ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND

By filling this questionnaire in you will help me to plan this course to meet your needs. In addition, you will supply me with valuable information for my dissertation. All your answers will be treated confidentially. Thank you! Tuula Lehtonen

name: _____

How many years have you studied English?

When did you last study English?

Where did you last study English?

How often do you read in English?

What do you read in English?

Why do you read in English?

How often do you use English otherwise?

What other languages have you studied?

Why did you decide to take this English Reading Comprehension course?

What are you expectations of this course?

What is your problem or what are your problems when reading in English?

How important do you consider vocabulary knowledge in reading?

What sort of vocabulary learning techniques have you been taught?

When have you been taught vocabulary learning techniques?

Where have you been taught vocabulary learning techniques?

When you read English, you may come across unknown words. How do you find out the meaning of an unknown word when reading? (Will you please tell all the ways you use!)

2) Translation of questionnaire 4 (with altered lay-out)

By filling in this last questionnaire you will provide me with valuable and interesting research material. Thank you!

name: _____

Please answer the questions on your opinions using your own words.

- What is your opinion on the training in vocabulary learning which has been one of the themes of this course?

- Which ways to find out the meaning of an unknown word in the context of reading did you prefer before this course?

- Which ways to remember the meaning of an unknown word in the context of reading did you prefer before this course?

- Which ways to find out the meaning of an unknown word in the context of reading do you prefer now?

- Which ways to remember the meaning of an unknown word in the context of reading do you prefer now?

- Which ways to find out the meaning and remember it did you not know about before this course?

- Which new ways to find out the meaning and remember it have you used in this course in the classroom?

- Which new ways to find out the meaning and remember it have you used in this course at home?

- Why have you used the ways you mentioned?

- Why have you not used any new ways?

- In what sense are the new ways good in your opinion? (their effectiveness, their appropriateness to you, etc.)

- Which old ways to find out the meaning and remember it have you used in this course in the classroom?

- Which old ways to find out the meaning and remember it have you used in this course at home?

- Why have you used the ways you mentioned?

- Why have you not used any old ways?

- In what sense are the old ways good in your opinion? (their effectiveness, their appropriateness to you, etc.)

Thank you for your answers! Have a nice summer! Tuula Lehtonen

Appendix 4

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1) Translation of task A.1 on the text "Defining the Social Sciences" (identical to task A.2 on the text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

2) Translation of task B.1 on the text "Defining the Social Sciences" (identical to task B.2 on the text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

3) Text "Defining the Social Sciences" (task A.1, task B.1)

4) Text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group" (task A.2, task B.2)

1) Translation of task A.1 on the text "Defining the Social Sciences" (identical to task A.2 on the text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

Step one:

♦ Read the text given to you on your own so that you find out what the writer of the text thought important.

Step two:

♦ Discuss the text with your group and make sure that you can reach an agreement on what the writer thinks is important.

Step three:

♦ Look at the text again on your own. Choose <u>seven</u> words in the text that made you stop or wonder when reading.

Step four:

♦ Fill in the given questionnaire [questionnaire 2a, see Appendix 5] as honestly as possible.

Step five:

♦ Read the text again at home and pay particular attention to the strange words in the text, in particular to the seven that you reported in the questionnaire. Tomorrow you will get a questionnaire to fill in dealing with the text and words in it.

2) Translation of task B.1 on the text "Defining the Social Sciences" (identical to task B.2 on the text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

♦ Discuss in the group the ways you processed words in the class yesterday and at home. Also, talk about your success.

3) Text "Defining the Social Sciences" (task A.1, task B.1)

DEFINING THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

The previous chapter established the case for including social sciences on hotel and catering courses. Before we go on to apply social science disciplines in a hospitality context, we must first of all gain some knowledge of social science disciplines and their central focus and main concerns.

A useful starting point in our discussion is to note that the social sciences are not a totally integrated body of ideas. Quite the contrary in fact, the social sciences are characterized by disputes and disagreements as to the boundaries of their subject matter and the methods of investigation and operation (Open University, 1976). Perhaps this is to be expected, given the complexity of human behaviour, for, as we will discuss, many aspects of social conduct are open to more than one interpretation. Dahrendorf (1968) defines the social sciences as follows

> Social sciences is an ambitious concept used to define a set of disciplines of scholarship, which deal with aspects of human society.

This definition draws our attention to the fact that the social sciences cover a range of subjects. Indeed, many of the social science textbooks define the social sciences as a family of disciplines (Trigg, 1985), an idea which implies that the disciplines have some relationship with each other. The nature of this relationship is found in their common subject matter, that is human behaviour, and the factors and processes which influence that behaviour. Authors disagree as to which disciplines should be included in this family and where the family should begin and end. However, within the literature, the following disciplines are most commonly included as part of the social sciences (Brown and Brown, 1975):

- sociology
- psychology
- economics
- history
- anthropology.

These subjects are considered to be the central, or core, social science disciplines which, from their inception, have spawned sub-disciplines or branches (Trigg, 1985). By examining the list above, it is clear that while the social sciences are concerned with the study of human beings, there are many different types of focus and interest within the social sciences and their sub-disciplines. For example, some social scientists are concerned with specific aspects of behaviour, e.g. the structure of societies; others may focus upon social issues, such as crime (Giddens, 1992). It is also clear that some social sciences are concerned with activities which pervade all social action, such as economics or political science; yet it is just as common for social scientists to take as their subject matter the family, child development or the role of leisure in contemporary society. Indeed, areas of our lives which may seem mundane and ordinary to us are just as likely to be the subject of social scientific enquiry as are the larger social issues, like wars, from which we might feel far removed (Giddens, 1992).

SPECIALIZATION IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

The development of specialization within social science can be attributed to many factors (Duverger, 1964). First, the growth in specialization, or sub-disciplines, came about because of the complexity of human behaviour. Given that it is not possible to study every aspect of human behaviour, it makes sense to divide the areas of study. Sub-disciplines allow specialization to occur within the discipline. However, as the sub-disciplines evolve from the same core of knowledge, they hold the same assumptions about the factors which influence behaviour and offer the same types of explanations at similar levels. For example, educational sociology is a sub-discipline of sociology, therefore, an educational sociologist, when investigating behaviour within educational settings, will focus upon the societal influences on education policy, the relationship between gender, the family and schooling and peer group influences upon educational achievement. Similarly, within psychology, psychologists working within the field of organizations will draw upon the individual's perceptions and values about organizations, and will largely explain behaviour in terms of the individual.

A second, and related, reason for specialization is the way in which social sciences have been researched and developed by academics. For example, research funds have been offered in particular areas (Trigg, 1985), which has encouraged the growth of specialisms. As much of research funding comes from government, various governments can influence, to a certain extent, both the direction of research and the types of issues which are investigated. If, for example 'lager louts' or 'football hooligans' become defined as a social problem, this can lead to research in that area. As part of their investigations, social scientists often reach conclusions which are far from popular with governments and policy-makers (Giddens, 1992). This may be one reason why social sciences have not always enjoyed a favourable press. There can be no doubt that while specialization within the social sciences has provided a great deal of knowledge and insight about the social world, it has also had some negative influence on the disciplines.

Specialisms can lead to fragmentation, with the result that artificial boundaries between social science disciplines are created (Open University, 1976). This would be exemplified when economists study the effects of the economy on, for example, international expansion, without regard to the social and cultural contexts in which that occurs. Furthermore, as knowledge becomes specialized, the idea of an integrated body of disciplines moves further away. Not only this, but as specialization occurs, different disciplines may compete to furnish an explanation, i.e. a psychologist's explanation of alcohol consumption as opposed to one suggested by a sociologist. In fact, as we have previously stated, these disciplines should complement each other in order to fully understand and explain complex behaviours.

from: Garmouche, R. and N. Kelly. 1995. *Behavioural Studies in Hospitality Management.* London: Chapman and Hall.

4) Text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group" (task A.2, task B.2)

Factors Affecting Changes
in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group

1. The acculturation and hybridization processes begin again when new ethnic groups or individuals arrive in the United States and experience the push-pull of cross inclinations about maintaining their traditional foodways. Some try to find and eat foods as similar to those in the old country as possible. Others give in to pressures from within and without the group to change their food habits. Both processes operate as ways of easing adjustment to life in the new country: one provides a continuation of the old lifestyle and makes the break less abrupt; the other process speeds acculturation. In his study of factors that retard or accelerate the acculturation of recent Hungarian refugees, S. A. Weinstock found those who cooked Hungarian food exclusively to be in the lowest acculturation group.[10] Although the tendencies to maintain and to let go of traditions affect many aspects of the culture of new immigrant populations, observers have noted that foodways seem particularly resistant to change.[11] It has been suggested that this is because the earliest-formed layers of culture, such as foodways, are the last to erode.[12]

Susan Kalčik, "Ethnic Foodways in America: Symbol and the Performance of Identity" in Brown and Mussell (ed.), Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The performance of Group Identity, The University of Tennessee Press, 1985.

Several key factors are involved in affecting changes in the foodways of an ethnic group. One is generation. Generally the immigrant generation, especially those who were older when they migrated, hang on to their foodways longer than the second generation, and children are often observed to adapt first to American foodways and to introduce adults to American foods.[13] Gregory Gizelis qualifies this pattern by pointing out that the second-generation Greeks he studied altered foodways by simplifying food preparation, but they continued to make Greek food.[14] Margaret Arnott points out that the third generation may take up the cooking and serving of ethnic foods skipped over by the second generation.[15]

2.

Frederick Fliegel finds that in addition to age, the occupation of the breadwinner, the education of the cook, and the state of the family (for example, if there are young children) all influence the kinds of foods people eat.[16] Other researchers have shown how economics (whether foods are affordable), convenience (easy purchase and preparation), commercialization, and urbanization affect the retention or loss of ethnic foodways.[17] Gizelis suggests that changes he observed in Greek-American foodways in Philadelphia were not the result of Americanization but of urbanization. Although city life resulted in the dropping of some difficult foods and the adoption of easier preparation methods, it also included the addition of ethnic dishes to the family's repertoire because of more convenient technology and because stores made certain foods available all year which formerly had been available seasonally or only in some parts of Greece.[18]

3.

Status is another factor in changing foodways. Many individuals choose to drop ethnic foodways because they are signs of low status.[19] In some cases, only certain foods are perceived to be of low status (such as the blood sausage which Illinois Germans found was offensive to their American neighbors), and these are dropped.[20] Women seem particularly resistant to change in foodways and can be significant in maintaining foodways if they are in charge of the family meals.[21] Among the Japanese immigrants in Hawaii, for example, the older-generation females remained at home to cook, and although there were changes in the food items, the methods of preparation remained much the same.[22]

4.

All immigrants and their succeeding generations find their traditional foodways altered to some degree. All have to make compromises which they pass on. Sometimes traditional foodways are relegated to a particular meal, usually dinner, since breakfast, snacks, and lunch seem more responsive to acculturation pressures.[23] Herbert Passin and John Bennett describe our food habits as comprised of a core

5.

diet, secondary core, and peripheral foods. They found the greatest emotional resistance to changes in the core diet; hence, these foods might continue to be served with others dropping away and new ones added on.[24] For example, the Japanese kept rice in their diet but added rice substitutes such as crackers.[25] For most immigrants and ethnics, ethnic foods are often still served on special occasions.[26]

6.
The struggles of the immigrant generation to keep, adapt, and shed their traditional foodways affect the repertoire of foodways that suc-. ceeding generations can call upon to use in symbolic displays of ethnic identity. In many cases the struggle to keep or give up ethnic food habits continues into the succeeding generations as they struggle to adjust their sense of ethnic identity and their relationship to the larger unit of American society. One influence on that struggle, for both immigrant and ethnic, was how the rest of American society, the non-ethnic part, felt about ethnicity in general and ethnic foodways in particular. Our history includes periods of toleration for ethnics and periods of antipathy toward them. The prevailing attitude affects discussions of ethnic food habits in a given period.

Appendix 5

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1) Questionnaire 2a, filled in after task A.1 (identical to questionnaire 3a, filled in after task A.2)

2) Questionnaire 2b (identical to questionnaire 3b)

3) Questionnaire 2c (identical to questionnaire 3c)

1) Questionnaire 2a about the words in the text "Defining the Social Sciences", (identical to questionnaire 3a about the words in the text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

This questionnaire deals with the seven words that you paid attention to in the text "Defining the Social Sciences". Thank you for filling it in!

name: _____

1. word
The word in question is _____ and its meaning in this context is in
my opinion _____ .
The way I used to **find out its meaning** was the following
The way I used to **memorise its meaning** was the following

+ an identical box concerning word 2, word 3, word 4, word 5, word 6 and word 7

2) Questionnaire 2b about the words in the text "Defining the social sciences", (identical to questionnaire 3b about the words in text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

Please answer the questions below. Thank you!

name: _____

---

1. word _____

Do you remember having seen this word before?

What is/are the meaning(s) of the word?

How did you recall the meaning(s)?

+ an identical box concerning word 2, word 3, word 4, word 5, word 6 and word 7

3) Questionnaire 2c about the words in the text "Defining the social sciences", (identical to questionnaire 3c about the words in text "Factors Affecting Changes in the Foodways of an Ethnic Group")

Please answer the questions below. Thank you!

name: _____

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1. word _____

Do you remember having seen this word before?

What is/are the meaning(s) of the word?

How did you recall the meaning(s)?

+ an identical box concerning word 2, word 3, word 4, word 5, word 6 and word 7

Appendix 6

Tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 showing frequencies of the codings in analysis 1

The codes used in the tables are explained in detail in section 6.1.

HELEN

1. METALEVEL - the level of saying

1.1 metaknowledge of oneself as a person and a learner, of one's learning and of one's awareness of language

Table 12: Helen's metaknowledge

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	interview	
AFF			4	3	3		5	15
AG	1					1		2
BAC	3		1				6	10
CO	1	2	2				2	7
CONF	2	1	4		1	1	8	17
CONS	3		2	1	2		5	13
CHAN				1		4	11	16
ME	1		4			1	7	13
SPE	1	3		2			2	8
STR		1	2		3	1	5	12
SYS					1	1		2
TRA	3	1		2			2	8
VARI							3	3
total	15	8	19	9	10	9	56	126

1. METALEVEL - the level of saying

1.2 saying/metacognition of one's doing

Table 13: Helen's saying of her doing

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	inter-view	
CONT2	1					1	7	9
DICT2	1			1	1	1	6	10
EVA2			1				3	4
INF2	1					2	5	8
LOOK2							2	2
LOU2			3				1	4
MEMO2	1				1	1	1	4
PLA2	3		1		1	3	3	11
SEL2	1			1			5	7
SKI2				1				1
SUP2							3	3
WRIT2			1	1			10	12
total	8		6	3	4	8	46	75

2. Strategies: "doing"

Table 14: Helen's doing

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	inter-view	
DICT1		3		1				4
EVA1	8	3	5	6	5	3	22	52
EX-PLAIN1		3	1	4	1			9
INF1				3				3
LOU1		2		1	1			4
MEMO1		4		4	1			9
NEG1		6	7	7	5			25
PLA1				1	1			2
total	8	21	13	27	14	3	22	108

RACHEL

1. METALEVEL - the level of saying

1.1 metaknowledge of oneself as a person and a learner, of one's learning and of one's awareness of language

Table 15: Rachel's metaknowledge

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	interview	
AFF		3	4	5	6		14	32
AG	1						1	2
BAC	1		1		4		15	21
CO	1		3		2		2	8
CONF			1	1	4		3	9
CON	1				2		2	5
CHAN					2	1	21	23
DIFF			1					1
ME	1		1		1		7	10
SPE							2	2
STR			2				2	5
TRA	1		1		1			3
VARI							2	2
total	6	3	14	6	22	1	71	123

1. METALEVEL - the level of saying

1.2 saying/metacognition of one's doing

Table 16: Rachel's saying of her doing

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	inter-view	
CONT2	2		1				8	11
DICT2	1		2		1	1	2	7
EVA2							2	2
EX-PLAIN2							1	1
INF2	1		1		2	1	11	16
LOU2		·	2				3	5
MEMO2	1						1	2
PLA2	1						1	2
SEL2							1	1
SKI2			1	1	2		1	5
SUP2	1		1			1	3	6
WRIT2			2				1	3
total	6	-	10	1	5	3	35	61

2. Strategies: "doing"

Table 17: Rachel's doing

code	source of data							total
	question-naire 1	task A.1	task B.1	task A.2	task B.2	question-naire 4	inter-view	
CONT1					1		1	2
DICT1			1	1				2
EVA1	5	6	10	4	11	4	44	84
EX-PLAIN1		6	1	1				8
EXP1		7	6	1	2			16
INF1		1		1				2
LOU1		1	4	3	2		2	12
MEMO1		3	1					4
NEG1		7	7	4	5			23
PLA1		1					1	2
total	5	32	30	15	21	4	48	155