

**Classroom Verbal Behavior and Learning Opportunities
in Selected Secondary School EFL Classroom**

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CLASSROOM VERBAL BEHAVIOR AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN
SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOL EFL CLASSROOM

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to describe and explain the nature of the verbal behavior used in English classes in selected secondary schools. The need for describing and explaining the nature of the verbal behavior used in a lesson arose from the need to get insight into the nature of the potential learning opportunities that can be created by the verbal behaviors used during a lesson.

The subjects of the study were grade 9 English teachers and their students. Two teachers who had a BA level qualification in English teaching were selected from two government senior secondary schools in Addis Ababa. Both teachers were teaching the new English textbook (English for Ethiopia) when the data was collected. The data was collected in the same academic year (1997/98) in which the new textbook was introduced to grade 9.

Two groups of students ('strong' and 'weak') were selected from the two teachers' classes to write diaries on their English lessons for three weeks. Classifying students into 'strong' and 'weak' group was made by the teachers themselves on the basis of their perceptions of the extent of the students' participation in English classes.

Lesson transcript data was the core data used in the study. Grammar and vocabulary lessons taught by the teachers were audio-taped. The audio-taped lessons were transcribed, analysed and interpreted. Supplementary data were also obtained from classroom observation, teacher interviews and student diaries.

The findings of the study indicate that the classroom discourse moves, *structuring*, *soliciting*, *responding* and *reacting* are in place as was noted by the previous studies made in other contexts. Except for the responding move, the other three moves are restricted to the teachers.

Further analysis of the transcript data shows that teacher soliciting behavior is the recurrent verbal behavior used in both lesson types while the investigation of the nature of the solicits indicates that the solicits set the students tasks that do not require extended interactive work. This has limited the students' verbal behavior to single words, phrases, and single/simple sentences.

The teachers' informing behavior, their explanation behavior in particular, has been noted to have the potential to leave the students' mind in confusion. In addition, the study has shown the teachers' feedback behavior to be tending to have a prescriptive nature. This means that they emphasize what ought to be said more than what the students could say to communicate using the target language they are learning.

Relevant conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study. Implications for future study were also suggested.

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INTRODUCTION

English had once been a medium of instruction at all levels of the educational system in Ethiopia. However, as will be made clear later in Chapter I, Amharic replaced English in the early periods of the 1960s and served as a medium of instruction in the elementary school while English continued serving as a medium of education from grade 7 upwards (see Bender et al. 1976). As a school subject, English used to be taught beginning in grade 3 until recently, but with the change in education policy (1994), the grade level at which English is started to be taught has changed from grade 3 to grade 1. This partly gives the language a central place in the students' academic life at school. There is also increasing demand in the skills in English in the occupational life after school as there are a large number of national (e.g., banking, airlines) and international organisations (e.g., OAU, ECA) in the country that use English as a working language and as a medium of communication.

Despite the importance of the English language in the individual student's life both in and after school and in the country's over all development endeavours, there is one general dissatisfaction that is invariably expressed by English teachers at different levels of the educational system: student performance.s in the English language skills is generally less than adequate to meet the demands that their classroom level requires of them. What might explain that? This was a particular aspect of the problem that prompted the present study.

1 Statement of the problem

There are some studies that were conducted at AAU to investigate freshman students' needs for and weaknesses in the English language skills (see unpublished MA and Ph.D studies conducted by Gebre-Medhin 1984 &1993; Haile-Michael 1984 & 1993 and Mekonnen 1984, inter alia). One of the findings that the studies noted was that they identified secondary school English learning background as the principal, though not the sole, source of first year students' inadequate performances in English.

The cumulative findings of the studies eventually led the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature and the authors to write a more skills-based teaching materials to teach freshman students at the university. Although it is not a solution to the secondary school students' English language problem, the introduction of the new teaching materials reinforced further the then recently introduced more communicatively oriented teaching methodologies in the department. For example, the College English (FIEEn 101 & 102) which is given to all first year university students is a skills-based course from which the students are assumed to acquire the skills that they need for their academic career. In addition, the students learn from the new course book study skills which will encourage the development of independent learning in their lives after school. The classroom processes of teaching/learning the course are also believed to enable students to learn the language for communication.

However, there is one thing that needs to be noted here: there is a wide gap between the communicative demands that some of the tasks in this course book place especially on

many students who have completed their secondary education in government schools and the students' communicative skills. For example, the first chapter of College English requires learners to get to know each other in English. This requires them to talk and write about themselves and about their secondary school. A number of first year students whom I have taught College English in the last few years have found it difficult to use English to perform the tasks. The inspiration for the present study arose mainly from the recognition of such problems.

In fact, seeking an immediate solution to this problem is not the purpose of this study. Perhaps what is missing and, indeed, what is needed in order to seek a solution is the knowledge of the state of the art. This means that we need to know in sufficient detail how English is taught /learned in secondary school classroom. To understand better how English is taught/learned in the secondary school we need to investigate closely the nature of the verbal behaviour used during lessons and the potential learning opportunities that arise during lessons. Essentially, therefore, the purpose of the present study is not just to describe what teachers and learners do with language in language lesson classes but it also investigates how what they do with language during a lesson relates to potential learning opportunities.

Admittedly, the cause of the freshman students' inadequacy in using English to do the tasks to the extent their level requires them to do might partly (though not exclusively) lie in the content of the secondary school English course books that have been in use over the last few decades. It may, therefore, be possible to argue that in recognition of this problem new textbooks have already been written to be used in the secondary

school. Admittedly, this is a commendable achievement on its own. However, it needs to be pointed out that writing a new textbook is only part of the effort made to improve the textbook side of the classroom processes of language teaching/learning. This is because the textbook is not the sole, though it could be the main source, of the target language input for students in the classroom. Apart from the textbook, anything that involves language in the classroom can potentially serve as material for students to learn the language from. In reference to this Allwright (1978) state [A]ny use of the target language to explain a grammar point, or the procedure of group work constitutes a sample of the target language which any learner may use as an input (1978: 16). This means that the classroom processes of teaching/learning language have in general a crucial effect on the nature of the learning opportunities that arise during a lesson. The general objective of this study is, therefore, to account for student general performances in English through describing and explaining in a sufficient detail the nature of the verbal behaviour used in selected secondary school English classes and of the consequent learning opportunities. In particular, the study has been planned to provide insights into: 1) the nature of the existing classroom verbal behaviour in selected secondary school English classes; 2) how the classroom verbal behaviour during lessons influences the patterns of classroom interaction, and c) the relationship between the patterns of classroom interaction and potential learning opportunities during a lesson.

2 The purposes of the study

This study has been designed to answer the following questions.

- 1 What is the nature of verbal behaviour in the secondary school EFL classroom?
- 2 How does the recurrent verbal behaviour determine the patterns of classroom

interaction during a lesson?

Research questions 1-2 will provide relevant data to describe and explain the verbal behaviours used during English periods and the nature of classroom interaction that are created by the verbal behaviours. This means that they will serve to provide relevant data to yet another question that will enable us to gain insight into the potential learning opportunities that arise during classroom interaction. Research question 3 (see below) has been designed to serve this purpose.

3 In what ways do the patterns of classroom interaction during a lesson determine learning opportunities?

3 Significance of the study

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literature is training students to teach English in the secondary school. In the absence of a prior study (especially in the context of the new textbook), the present study is hoped to serve the department as a feedback tool on matters related to secondary school English classroom verbal practice vs. learning opportunities. In particular, the study is hoped to enable the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature to make informed decisions pertaining to the a) methods of initial and in-service training of teachers for English language teaching in the secondary school, and b) content of the syllabus to be used for training English teachers. In addition, the findings of this study can be used as a baseline study for future in-depth studies of selected verbal behaviours in English language teaching classroom.

4 Delimitation of the study

Useful insights into the nature of the potential learning opportunities that arise during a lesson can be obtained through an in-depth analysis of the verbal behavior used during the classroom processes of teaching/learning. This study also concerned itself with an in-depth analysis and explanation of the verbal behaviour used during English lessons and the nature of the potential learning opportunities created during classroom interaction.

The need for an in-depth analysis of lessons in the study arose from the need to get better understanding of the classroom processes of English teaching/learning. The effort made to explore the nature of various verbal behaviours in detail has limited the number of the lessons that were studied in this work. However, it needs to be made clear here that in compensation for the limited number of lessons considered in the study, care has been taken to provide comprehensive descriptions and explanations of various verbal behaviours and potential learning opportunities in whole lesson interactions.

5 Organization of the study

This study has been planned to investigate the classroom verbal behaviour and the potential learning opportunities that could arise during lessons through studying the classroom process of English teaching/learning in selected secondary schools. The study has 10 chapters. It begins with the description of the general background of the study in Chapter I. Chapter II reviews related studies. Chapter III describes the research methodology and the subjects used in the study. Chapter IV presents the analysis and

interpretation of the data on the nature of the verbal behaviour and the potential learning opportunities in a grammar lesson. The analysis and interpretation of the nature of the recurrent verbal behaviour in a grammar lesson will be presented in Chapter V. Issues related to student verbal behaviour and learning opportunities in a grammar lesson will be dealt with in Chapter VI. Chapters VII – IX serve in a vocabulary lesson the same purposes that Chapters IV – VI served in a grammar lesson. Chapter X reviews the findings of the study in terms of the research questions and concludes the Thesis.

Now let us turn to Chapter I. Chapter I describes the **general background of the study**.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The general purpose of this chapter is to describe the contextual background of the study. The chapter has 3 sections. Section 1 presents a brief overview of the beginning of modern education in Ethiopia. Section 2 deals with the nature of English language teaching beginning from 1947/8 – mid 70s while matters related to English language teaching from mid-70s up to the present time are presented in section 3 of the chapter.

1.1 The beginning of modern education in Ethiopia

The Orthodox Church and the Mosque are believed to be the sources of traditional education in Ethiopia (Pankhurst 1976, inter alia). These religious institutions apparently wanted to help their followers to read their respective doctrines through teaching them how to read and write. According to the 1994 Education Sector Strategy issued by the then Transitional Government of Ethiopia, modern education has a century long history in Ethiopia. Modern education, as stated in the official document, is believed to have initially started in Ethiopia with the view to training people to serve in the bureaucratic machinery that was beginning to take shape in the early decades of the 20th century. The document notes that the Second World War particularly the 1935 Italian invasion disrupted the initial attempt that had just began to introduce education to the country. In Bender et al.'s (1976) opinion, the disruption caused by Italian

occupation appears to have made accessing earlier official documents on educational matters virtually impossible. Bender and his associates have written extensively on Languages in Ethiopia.

1.2 English language teaching in Ethiopia (1947/8 – mid 60s)

1.2.1 1947/8 – 1958/9-

Dejene (1990) in his Doctoral Dissertation describes the introduction and the expansion of English language teaching in Ethiopian education system as follows:

At the beginning of modern education in Ethiopia, English served as the medium of education from the beginning of schooling up to and including tertiary education. So, all English books and examinations were imported from the United Kingdom. It was during that period that the English language teaching series as the **New Method Readers**, and **Pictorial English Grammar**, were used as textbooks at the elementary and junior secondary schools whereas books like **The prisoner of Zenda**, **Round the World in Eighty Days**, **Kidnapped** were used at the secondary school level. Shakespeare and other literature formed the core of English at university (college) (1990: 14).

The aims of teaching English in the order given in the 1947/8 Elementary English curriculum, as reported by Bender et al (1976: 382) is, first, reading and understanding; second, hearing and understanding. Teaching to speak the language fluently and correctly came next while teaching the language to write correctly and clearly was the last skill to be taught. As can be understood from Bender et al's citation from the curriculum (quoted below), the order of teaching the skills does not follow the suggested order of the aims of teaching English in the curriculum.

For the teacher, reading can be very easy, and oral English very difficult, but with the latter the 'child learns twice as much'. Thus,

'if you wish your pupils to "learn English" you must teach them to *speak*' (1976: 382) (italics original)

The difficulty teachers face to teach speaking and the importance of teaching speaking is now an issue with over half a century history behind it in Ethiopian educational system. Much still remains to be done in this regard as many students even after learning English for ten years at school are not sufficiently capable of expressing themselves using the language. As will be explained later in the chapter, the motivation for undertaking the present study arose from the recognition of this problem.

Bender et al (1976: 382) notes that the content of the 1947/8 Elementary English curriculum is listed for each grade level although reference to curriculum – book begins in the second term of the third grade. A wide ranging items of grammar were listed and accuracy was also stressed in the Elementary English curriculum that was issued to be taught at different grade levels although it was stated in the document that there is "little use in teaching a great deal of grammar" (1976: 382).

According to Bender et al (1976), the 1947/8 Elementary English curriculum covered grades 1 – 6 while the Secondary English curriculum covered grades 9 – 12. The junior levels (grades 7-8) were not mentioned in both the elementary and the secondary English curricula. The Elementary English curriculum suggested ten periods a week to teach English in some grades while the English period allotment for the secondary school was 8 periods a week.

From among the 15-16 school subjects taught in grades 9 and 10, English still has the highest period allotment (6 periods) in a week. In all the English curricula issued at different times, the periods prescribed for the teaching of English have always tended to reflect the role English is accepted to play in the Ethiopian educational system and in the overall development endeavors in the country. It is perhaps in recognition of the wide ranging roles that English plays both within the educational system and outside of it that Bender et al. stated the following as early as 1976 (although over the last quarter of the last century the extent of the need for English has undoubtedly been a lot more in the country in general than it was at the time of their observation).

English has a negligible number of native speakers in Ethiopia, but at the present time it has a crucial position in education, commerce, government, and international communication, and from this point of view it can be regarded as a major Ethiopian language.(1976: 12)

As Bender et al. (1976) report it, it was also mentioned in the (1947/8) Secondary English Curriculum that the English courses in the secondary school lead to the Ethiopian Secondary Schools Leaving Certificate Examination (ESLCE for short), or they lead to the London General Certificate of Education. The Secondary English Curriculum, like the document for the Elementary level, stressed the need for accuracy and had, therefore, a long list of items of grammar to be taught at different grade levels in the secondary school. The document also had lists of textbooks and simplified readers to supplement the development of the students' reading skills. Suggestions regarding the quality of compositions that students had to produce were also offered in the curriculum.

1.2.2 1958/9 –1963/4

Some major changes were introduced to the educational system a few years after the first introduction (1947/8) of the Elementary and Secondary English Curricula. In connection with this, Bender et al. (1976: 385) state that a Long -term Planning Committee was set up in 1953 and produced 'A Ten – year Plan for the Controlled Expansion of Ethiopian Education' in June 1955. The Plan introduced a new structure of school system. This means that 'elementary' level was from grade 1 to grade 8 with grades 1 to 4 being 'primary', and 5 to 8 'middle' elementary. The (then) new document recommended expansion of community schools to teach basic education..

The Elementary and Secondary English curriculum and the curricula for other subjects which were issued in 1947/8 stayed in use until 1958/9. In 1958/9 Elementary Community School English Curriculum was introduced to experiment the (then) new development in the educational system. The document suggested that English be taught through the 'natural' order of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In particular, Bender et al. quote the following from the document:

The first approach to the language is through the ear: the children listen and respond through action or by pantomime. Next, practice in speaking in meaningful situations is provided, using the vocabulary that the children have become acquainted with through listening. Later still, when the children are ready, they are given instruction in reading and writing English through appropriate meaning experiences (1976: 387)

The 1958/9 curriculum, like the curriculum that it replaced, specified the content to be taught and recommended the textbooks to be used at different grade levels in the elementary school. In 1962 a conference which mainly concerned itself with Secondary

Education in Ethiopia was held. The conference, as Bender et al (1976) state it, coincided with the opening of the department at the University College to train Education 'majors'. The final report of the conference which was published by the Department of Education of the Faculty of Arts at the University College had many important issues on the situation of English teaching including the need for Ethiopianization of studies and better qualification of English teachers. This was the time when the issue of qualification of English teachers appeared for the first time since the official document of English curriculum appeared in 1947/8.

In the same year (1962), a general assessment of the elementary school education system was also made. Many recommendations were made following the assessment. One of the recommendations revised the level at which English used to be introduced. English was recommended to be introduced at the third grade level on the ground that introducing two languages, namely, Amharic and English, simultaneously as early as grade one to non-Amharic speaking children would be too much demanding.

1 . 2 . 3 The 1963/4 English curriculum

The 1963/4 document stated Amharic to be the medium of instruction from grades 1 – 6 with English to be taught as a subject from grade 3 upwards. The 1963/4 Secondary English Curriculum covered six years of secondary school with the first two years being 'exploratory' years which later became junior secondary level. It is stated in the curriculum that intensive course in English language skills would be given at the 7th and 8th grade levels for 9 periods a week. As regards the teaching of French and English in the senior secondary school, as Bender et al. report it, it is stated in the document that

the study of theoretical grammar and the history of literature should be reduced as far as possible. The emphasis should be placed on the knowledge of the contemporary language as a practical working tool (1976: 391 – 392).

The document also emphasized the need for students' proficiency and accuracy in spoken and written English. Preparing for examination and note-taking were mentioned in the curriculum under 'methods' of studying English. In January 1967, a seminar was held at the University on Secondary School Curriculum Development and the ESLCE and evaluated the standard of the English language that was being taught at the time and issued reports that suggested certain significant changes. Some of the changes suggested at the time are quoted below as they still seem to be relevant to the current state of English language teaching in the country.

- a. The state of English teaching in Ethiopia is critical
- b. The crisis has its origin in elementary school
- c. Any recommendation pertaining to the secondary curriculum will prove largely ineffective until the following points referring to elementary schools are given priority.
 1. Specialist training in teaching English as a second language at the elementary level should be inaugurated as soon as possible.
 2. A scheme of in-service training for English teachers at present employed in the elementary schools should be set up as soon as possible (1976: 394-5).

Recommendations to revise the secondary school English curriculum were also made in the report. Following the report, as part of Ethiopianizing the textbook, a series of the **New Oxford English Course for Ethiopia** was introduced. According to Bender et al. (1976) “ an oral approach with writing primarily to reinforce speech; and more attention to drilling the basic structures of English...” (1976: 396) were among the changes

recommended in the report of the seminar regarding the English language teaching methodology

1 . 2. 4 Mid - 1960s - mid 1970s

The elementary and secondary English curricula and the textbooks through which the contents and the objectives of learning/teaching English were implemented (with not much reference made to teacher qualification) has been explained in the preceding sections. It is understandable from the material discussed in the section that textbooks of foreign origin had to be used at different levels of the educational system. At some point in the sixties, however, decisions were made to produce textbooks locally and relate the linguistic content to the needs of Ethiopian students.

In reference to this, Dejene (1990), in his Doctoral Dissertation, quoting a source, notes that the United Kingdom was the source from where English teaching textbooks and examinations used to be imported at the beginning of modern education. He further states the changes and the developments seen in the trend of Ethiopianizing the content of the educational system as follows:

Gradually, however, the policy of Ethiopianization was introduced which gave rise to the production of textbooks and examinations locally. Some of these books included: Shlomo Bachrach's **Ethiopian Folk Tales**, Bright and Wingard's **English for Ethiopia**, the Ministry of Education's **Ethiopian Life**, Margaret Last and Guenet Zerihun's **The New Oxford English Course for Ethiopia**. These books gradually replaced one another until eventually the Contact Series took over and was in use during the period immediately before the 1974 Revolution...However, it had to be replaced especially after 1974 because some of the values which it was supposed to reflect were found opposed to the new

philosophy of socialist principles. As a result there was a need to write another book which not only reflected but also upheld socialist principles. That is how the current series of English for New Ethiopia and the accompanying syllabus ...came into existence (1990:107).

The next section deals with the current English teaching series mentioned in the text quoted from Dejene's work.

1 . 3 From mid 1970s –up to the present time

1 . 3 . 1 The English for New Ethiopia (ENE)

The ENE series has now been in use for nearly three decades. The series consists of ten books for teaching English from grade 3 up to grade 12. This means that there is one textbook for each grade level. Each of the four books for grades 9 – 12 has 20 units. In grades 9 to 11, the first 10 units are taught in the first semester, and the second 10 in the second semester. The textbook for grade 12 also has a similar number of units but the units are not to be taught in two semesters as there are no regular classes for grade 12 students in the second semester. The second semester starts in mid - February for secondary schools and grade 12 students sit for the ESLCE in March. Therefore, teachers in grade 12 teach only the grammar parts along with questions of similar structures selected from previous years of ESLC English examinations.

Each unit begins with a new reading passage. The reading passage with which each unit begins serves as a carrier topic of all the activities in the unit. The passage is followed by comprehension questions of various types. Multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill in the blank type and very few open – ended questions follow reading passages in all the units. After comprehension questions, the textbook has a section on word practice in

which students are first required to match words selected from the passage with a list of suggested meanings. Then, there is a section which requires students to fill in blank spaces in sentences provided in their textbook using the word they think to be fitting. The words to be used are selected from the passage. There are also other comprehension questions in the form of 'true/false' or 'multiple choice' type that follow the reading passages in the textbooks. The textbook for grades 9 and 10 have sections on pronunciation practice.

The grammar and usage part is an integral component of the series especially in the secondary school. Discrete grammar items, grammatical terms and rules are provided in the textbook for drills in the classroom. The drills require students to change decontextualised sentences from one form to another (from active to passive form, for example). Dejene (1990) discusses a number of important issues related to the teaching of the English language in the context of the ENE in the secondary school. One of the points he raises is related to the emphasis afforded to usage of language in the textbook.

He writes

[U]sage rather than use of language has been a common feature throughout the series of English language textbooks and syllabi used in Ethiopian secondary schools of which the current one, namely, English for new Ethiopia, is a good example (1990: 108).

Dejene also argues that, with some variations among schools, the negative effect of the ESLCE is the problem that is felt in common by the secondary schools in the country. Apparently, this happens to be so because English is a compulsory subject in which a passing grade is required if students wish to join any institution of higher learning in the country. Even if some students postpone joining higher learning institution for reasons

other than their grade in the ESLCE, the grade they score in the ESLC English language examination has still a crucial role to play in their future opportunities for not only getting a job but also for sustaining the job. Recognition of this has made it important for teachers in the secondary school literally to train students to pass the English examination in the ESLCE.

Before we move on to the next section, the section in which the new series of English textbook will be reviewed, briefly though, let us look at how Dejene explains the wash back effect that the format of the English language examination in the ESLCE has on the teaching of English in the secondary school. He writes

The present day teaching/learning of English has therefore been closely geared to the preparation of multiple-choice examinations which ... have negatively affected the English language proficiency of students from year to year (1990: 16).

1 . 3 . 2 English for Ethiopia Series (1997/8 --)

So far we have seen the nature of the content of the English syllabi that have been in use over the last decades. This section deals with the new English teaching series of course books that are currently being introduced to the secondary classrooms.

The syllabi for grades 9 – 11 contain 14 reading topics through which the intended objectives are planned to be achieved. The textbooks for grades 9 and 10 have already begun functioning. Each reading topic is developed into a unit in the textbooks that have already begun functioning. There are two books (Books I and 2) for each of the grades 9 and 10. Books 1 and 2 in both grades contain 7 units each. I have not had access to the

textbooks for grades 11 and 12 but the number of units listed in the syllabus for grade 11 is 14. The units might require two textbooks like the units in grades 9 and 10. In grades 9 and 10, Book 1 is taught/learned during the first semester and Book 2 in the second semester. Each unit has 7 sections presented in a fixed order. These are (reading) comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, writing and reading. The first 6 language aspects are done in class while the last one is intended to be an extensive and independent reading to be done by students out of class time.

The reading passages serve as a basis for the activities in the units. The textbooks for grades 9 and 10 have appendices in which the past tense and past participle forms of irregular verbs are listed. There are also lists of grammatical and phrasal verbs in the appendices. It is stated in the syllabus for grade 9 that in grades 1 – 8 the students have learned about 2000 words. In grade 9, at least another 500 words are recommended to be learned. A list of what the syllabus calls ‘core’ vocabulary is also provided in the syllabus. There are Teacher Guides for the textbooks. Teaching techniques are suggested to teach the skills given in the textbook. Teachers are also advised (in the Teacher Guide) to be flexible whenever they feel other options to be more fitting the situation in the classroom. In the syllabus for grades 11 and 12 emphasis is suggested to be given to listening, oral work, reading, writing, and grammatical structure. The target students at grades 11 and 12 level are those who intend to go for a higher learning.

Before we turn to the 2nd chapter, the chapter which reviews literature related to the present study, let us quickly sum up the main points of the story so far.

The Introduction chapter has provided us with the description of the nature of the problem to be investigated in this study. Chapter I described the contextual background of the study. In the chapter, sufficient seems to have been done to trace the historical background of English teaching in Ethiopia. In particular, English syllabi and the textbooks used at different times have been described. With this background knowledge about the present study, it is now time for us to turn to the chapter which reviews literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 General Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature. As stated in the first chapter, this study has been planned to gain some insight into the classroom verbal behaviour in the secondary school and the consequent learning opportunities. The selection of the literature reviewed in the chapter is, therefore, based on the conceptual and methodological relevance of the material to the present study. In addition, the literature is used to develop the story line of the present study.

The chapter has five main parts. Each part has sections. In Part I, previous work on verbal behaviour in the studies conducted in general education will be reviewed. Part II presents a brief overview of language teaching research traditions with a particular emphasis on what has been done in the area to understand classroom processes of language teaching and learning and the methods used at different times. The notion of learning opportunities will also be discussed in this part of the chapter. Part III reviews work in general education on verbal behaviour and classroom questions. Part IV also looks into the studies on the nature of the verbal behaviour and questions in the ESL/EFL classroom. This part of the chapter also has a section on related studies made in the local context. Part V presents Summary and Conclusions. The research questions which have been scattered in the sections of the chapter to build the story line of the study will also be pulled together and stated more clearly in the last section of the chapter.

PART I CLASSROOM VERBAL BEHAVIOUR: focus on work in general education

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews previous work on classroom talk. Much of the classroom talk in the section is on teacher talk as learner talk has rarely been afforded due attention in the early work on classroom talk.

2.1.2 Focus on classroom talk

2.1.2.1 Bellack et al.'s perspective: concern with classroom language

As will be made clear later in the section, several of the studies made in the language classroom in the 1960s concerned themselves with comparing methods on a large-scale level with the view to identifying and, thus, prescribing the most effective method of foreign language teaching. The parameters for measuring effectiveness were students' improved performances in language skills or/and their improved performances on tests. Many of the studies made in general education in the same decade, however, had their own different line of enquiry: they took interest in designing a scheme for observing and recording teaching behaviour in the hope of improving the teacher's verbal behaviour during a lesson.

Bellack et al. (1966) had a purpose different from designing classroom observational system to study behaviour to cause improved teacher or learner performance. They conducted the study simply because they wanted to understand how language was being used in the classroom. To do this, they recorded, transcribed and analysed the linguistic

behaviour of 15 teachers and 345 social studies students of grades 10 and 12 in 7 high schools in New York city. Bellack et al. tape- recorded 4 class lessons for each of the 15 teachers and altogether transcribed and interpreted 60 class lessons.

The assumption behind the need to describe the linguistic events from the perspective of teachers' and students' expressions of meaning originated from the intuition that language is primarily used by teachers and students for communication of meaning. Their conception of meaning was influenced by Wittgenstein's, (n.d) (cited in Bellack et el. 1966) notion of meaning. That is, according to Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word lies in its usage in a language. Following Wittgenstein, Bellack et al. equated meaning and usage of a word in a language. This necessitated the need to identify the distinctive functions for which teachers and students use language in the classroom. One of the things they did in their search for meaning in teachers' and students' language use was to identify the pedagogical significance of the words spoken by teachers and students at a given time. In reference to this, Bellack et al. state:

We were first of all concerned with the pedagogical significance of what the speaker was saying, whether, for example, he was structuring the class discussion by launching or focusing attention on topic or problem, eliciting a response from a member of the class, responding to a question posed by a previous speaker, or reacting to a comment previously made (1966: 85).

The methodology Bellack et al. used to capture the verbal behaviour of the teachers and students in the process of classroom communication was again influenced by Wittgenstein's notion of language games. Language games, as described by Wittgenstein and reported by Bellack et al. refer to "a metaphor used to point up the fact that linguistic

activities assume different forms and structure according to the functions they come to serve in different contexts” (1966: 85-86).

The participants’ communication processes in the classroom verbal activities according to Bellack et al. follow definite language rules that determine the uses of words to express meaning in language in the classroom. Participation in language activities, in Bellack et al.’s opinion, therefore, presupposes participants’ knowledge of rules that govern the uses of words in the activities. Similarly, participants in a game need to know the rules that govern the game. Describing Bellack et al.’s perception of language in the classroom, Allwright (1988) writes

They were trying to understand how the classroom worked as a learning environment ... they saw classroom interaction more as a social “game” bound by convention, and consisting of an implicitly agreed set of moves by all participants rather than a set of teaching “acts” (1988: 126).

The analogy between playing a game and classroom discourse enabled Bellack and associates to establish a framework to analyse teachers and students verbal behaviour. They classified the teacher’s and students’ verbal interactions into 4 major categories. They called the categories ‘pedagogical moves’, a name based on the functions of the moves in classroom discourse. Bellack et al. describe the pedagogical moves as

1. Structuring (STR): Structuring moves serve the function of setting the context for subsequent behaviour by (launching or halting excluding interaction between teacher and pupils,) and indicating the nature of the interaction in terms of the dimensions of time
- 2 Soliciting (SOL): Moves in this category are intended to elicit a) an active verbal response on the part of the persons addressed; b) a cognitive response, e.g., encouraging persons addressed to attend to something; or c) a physical response.
- 3 Responding (RES): Responding moves bear a reciprocal relationship to eliciting moves and occur only in relation to them. Their pedagogical function is to

fulfil the expectation of soliciting moves and is, therefore, reflective in nature

4 Reacting (REA): These moves are occasioned by structuring, soliciting, responding, or a prior reacting move, but are not directly elicited by them (1966: 18-19).

Investigating their classroom data further, Bellack et al. noted that pedagogical moves follow a cyclical pattern of occurrence. This, they called a 'teaching cycle'. A teaching cycle, they note, begins with a structuring or a soliciting move. Both moves serve an initiating purpose. Responding and reacting moves are reflective in nature, and, therefore, they do not begin a cycle. Bellack et al.'s study noted that the teachers did more talking than the students. They reported their finding as follows:

Structuring moves account for about six per cent of the discourse in terms of moves spoken. Soliciting, responding, and reacting each account for approximately 30 per cent of the moves...Analysis of teaching cycles centers on the dimensions of initiator (teacher or pupil) of the cycle, pattern of pedagogical moves within the cycle and the rate at which cycles occur. Classes differ in the extent to which teachers initiate teaching cycles; generally, teachers initiate about 85 per cent of the cycles. Analysis of the cycle pattern indicates that the basic verbal interchange in the classroom is the soliciting – responding pattern (1968: 94).

To sum up, Bellack et al. established the pedagogical significance of language in the classroom and clearly noted that teachers do the majority of classroom talk. They also established I-R-F as a unique discourse style practiced in the classroom. However, it should not remain unnoticed that Bellack et al.'s study was based on the content classroom in only the North American educational system although as will be made clear later studies made in the language teaching classroom in many other contexts generally confirmed that teachers do more talk than learners.

2.1.2.1.3 Flanders' perspective : concern with classroom observational system

Flanders' perspective is essentially different from Bellack et al.'s tradition. As will be made clear later, while researchers in second/foreign language were trying to make comparisons between different methods of teaching with the view to identifying and thus prescribing the best method to be used to teach language, educational researchers were already using observation as a crucial tool for collecting data for various research work (Allwright 1988).

A notable example to mention in this context is Flanders' System of Interaction Analysis. In its original or modified forms, Flanders' system of interaction analysis has been widely used to study verbal behaviours used in both the content area subjects and in language classrooms. A whole book has also been written by Flanders himself on the content and procedures of using the observation schedule. In his book, under the title **Analysing Teaching Behaviour** (1970), Flanders' states that the observational system of interaction analysis was developed between 1955 and 1960 by Flanders himself and associates at the University of Minnesota, North America.

A look at what Flanders has stated about classroom interaction analysis will perhaps enhance our understanding of the instrument and how to use it for systematically observing and coding verbal behaviours used by the teacher and the students in the classroom. He writes:

Classroom interaction analysis refers not to one system, but to many systems for coding spontaneous verbal communication, arranging the data into a useful display, and then analysing the results in order to study patterns of teaching and learning. Each system is a process of encoding and decoding, i.e., categories for classifying statements are established, a code system is assigned to each category, and a trained observer records

data by jotting down code symbols. Decoding is the reverse process: a trained analyst interprets the display of coded data in order to make appropriate statements about the original events which were encoded, even though he may not have been present when the data were collected (1970: 28-29)

2.1.2.1.3.1 The Categories

Flanders' system of interaction analysis consists of 9 categories to code teacher and students verbal behaviours. Seven of the categories in the system were used to record 'teacher talk' while two of them were used to record 'pupil talk'. Teacher talk categories reflect the nature of the teacher's influence on the class. Two types of teacher influence have been identified in the Flanders system of interaction analysis. One is direct influence. Direct influence is associated with authoritative teacher behaviour. The other influence is indirect influence. Indirect teacher influence is associated with more flexible teaching behaviour. The tenth category in Flanders system of interaction analysis is for recording silence or confusion. Altogether, then, Flanders original system of interaction analysis has 10 categories.

2.1.2.1.3.2 Coding Procedure

Flanders' observational system is a real time-based tool to be used by a trained observer in the classroom. The observer watches the classroom verbal behaviour and codes every three seconds the behaviour that he or she observes in one of the ten categories that constitute the observational system. Following that the analyst enters the coded behaviour into a ten by ten matrix. To determine the type of teacher behaviour and the classroom interaction observed, the analyst later calculates the percentages of the amount of talk (teacher vs. learner) and the type of teacher influence (direct Vs indirect)

from the matrix. This coding procedure has been a source of criticism in Flanders' systematic classroom observational.

2.1.2.1.3.3 Flanders' system in the Foreign Language classroom

The introduction of Flanders' system of classroom observation to general education as a research tool has been discussed in the preceding section. Originally, the need for a classroom observational system in general education seems to have been associated, perhaps loosely, with the perceived need supervisors had to evaluate the teaching performance of in-service teachers. Eventually, however, the practical problem of the lack of a tool for giving feedback that teacher trainers were facing at the time made itself increasingly felt. This could be among the impetus for teacher trainers to look for something that could help to reflect teacher classroom behaviour. Flanders interaction analysis was, thus, developed mainly to meet the purpose of research in general education. Apparently, the observational system at the time managed to secure itself a place in the teacher training as a feedback tool to 'solve' a long - standing problem. Shortly afterwards, it also proved to be fruitful to be used as a feedback tool for in-service teachers.

Luckily, so to say, the time during which the observational system developed in general education work coincided with the time when language teaching classroom research was desperately looking for a method that could replace the methods comparison research. Flanders systematic classroom observation at the time, therefore, appears to have managed to fall in safe hands beyond the territory of general education. That is to say, language classroom researchers like Moskowitz (1968) and Wagner (1970), among

others, carried over the tradition of interaction analysis into the foreign language teaching classroom. They took the observational system both in its original and modified forms.

(For complete descriptions of the various observational systems of Flanders origin as well as other innovations in observing classroom, interested readers are referred to read Allwright's (1988) **Observaion in the Language Classroom**. To a limited extent, Malamah – Thomas's (1987) **Classroom Interaction**, is also useful material to read in this area.).

In this section, I will discuss, briefly though, Moskowitz's contribution in this area with the view that her approach may represent the attempts made by many others in this regard.

2 . 1 . 2 . 1 . 3 . 3 . 1 Moskowitz's FLint

The acronym 'FLint' as used by Moskowitz stands for foreign language interaction. In her study, Moskowitz extended Flanders system of interaction analysis in such a way that it could be used to capture and analyse verbal interaction in the foreign language classroom. In her attempt to adapt the observation instrument to the foreign language teaching context, Moskowitz left all the categories in the original Flanders system of interaction intact but made some extensions to them. Moskowitz, as cited in Allwright (1988), describes the extensions she made to Flanders classroom observational system as follows:

The following are categories included in Flint: (a) *the teacher* – jokes, repeats student ideas verbatim, corrects without criticism, directs a pattern drill, criticizes student behaviour, and criticises student responses; (b) *silence*, (c) *confusion* (divided into two types: (1) enthusiastic-eager to participate, and (2) out of order); (d) *laughter* -, and (e) *English*. (1988: 76) (italics original).

Moskowitz stated in her description of the FLint that it is possible with the FLint to calculate the ratio of the native language to the foreign language used by the teacher and the students together with the information on the behaviour in the categories which required the use of the native language. Moreover, calculations of the ratios of direct vs. indirect teacher influence in both the native and the foreign language could, according to Moskowitz's view, be made and compared using the FLint.

In connection with the subjects of the FLint, Moskowitz reported that 28 in-service teachers who were attending a graduate course at Temple University in summer 1967 took training in using the FLint as an observational system. The subjects joined University Temple from different countries with varying linguistic background. They were also teachers of different languages, French, English, for example, as a second language in their countries of origin. Moskowitz is quoted in Allwright as saying the purpose of the training was “to increase their sensitivity to their own classroom behaviour and its effects and influence on students” (Allwright 1988: 76).

The result of the training, as was apparently hoped for by Moskowitz, was ‘positive’. As evidence for this Mokowitz has reported a long list of the teachers’ anecdotal reports

that describe the pedagogical benefits the teachers after the training had claimed to have obtained.

2.1.2.1.3.3 1.1 Is Flanders' interaction analysis adequate?

Flanders interaction analysis and its derivatives had been extensively used both in general education work and in the foreign language classroom mainly in the 1960s and early 1970s. In fact, it arrived in the field of language teaching and filled a gap between the short-lived methodological comparisons and the unknown future of the time. It was, therefore, accepted with unquestioning enthusiasm at the beginning apparently to serve as a tool for revealing to the teachers in training and to those who were already in the profession their verbal behaviour in the classroom. Shortly after its arrival, however, what it managed to do began spotlighting what it failed to do. Dissatisfaction grew increasingly among classroom researchers and teacher trainers regarding the various inadequacies of the observational system.

In this section, I will discuss only a few of the inadequacies, most of which have been raised by Allwright and Bailey (in Allwright:1988) of the system of observation.

Firstly, the Flanders system of observation focuses only on the verbal aspect of classroom communication and disregards the potential role played by nonverbal behaviour. The system does not take into account a multitude of sociological factors underlying the verbal behaviour it is designed to show (Allwright and Bailey in Allwright 1988). Secondly, the system only shows the teacher what his classroom verbal behaviour is like. It is up to the teacher to give meaning to the behaviour and decide

whether or not some sort of change is desirable. Even when the teacher decides on making some changes in his verbal behaviour, the observational system does not provide him with clues or options for change.

Another point to be mentioned pertains to the categories and the recording procedures. The categories lack precise definitions. This leaves much of the verbal behaviour to be recorded to the subjective interpretation of the observer. (In fact, current research thinking seems to tolerate the notion of 'subjectivity' (Allwright (2000) personal communication)). What may exaggerate the subjectivity of the observer's interpretation is the time constraint exerted on the observer. The entire business the observer does about verbal behaviour involved in a communication event including-identifying, deciding the category, recording-is done in only three seconds. The identified behaviour is represented by tallies in the categories designed for recording behaviour.

An observer has no access to the quantity and quality of an individual student's talk because of the indiscriminate nature of the 2 categories of pupil talk. Bailey's (in Allwright 1988) comments on the categories briefly summarises the faults of Flanders system of classroom observation.

The lack of precision in the definitions of teacher and student verbal behaviour categories, the complex and ambiguous tasks the classroom observers must perform, the lengthy and formidable training procedures which the neophyte must undergo are perhaps the most obvious deficits of the system, without taking into account several weaknesses of the research done to evaluate interaction analysis (1988: 123).

So far we have been reading a wide range of studies of classroom talk mainly in the content area classroom. Part II will present a review of work on language teaching classroom..

PART II WORK ON THE LANGUAGE TEACHING CLASSROOM

2.2.0 Introduction

In the preceding sections, we have read reviews of studies that investigated various aspects of classroom verbal behaviour in general education. This section reviews studies made in language teaching classroom.

2.2.1 Focus on Teaching Methods Comparisons

In the history of language teaching research, as Allwright (1988) notes it, the 1960s mark the shift of attention away from the study of 'aptitude' to the search for the effective method of language teaching in the classroom. This called for large-scale comparisons to be made between methods such as the audiolingualism and the traditional methods and to compare the students' achievements. The method that could lead to better students' achievement was planned to be recommended to teachers. Among other reasons, therefore, the pedagogic impetus for the methods comparison seems to have arisen from the desire language teaching researchers at the time had for prescribing the best method teachers should follow in order to cause improved learning. (Readers are referred to Allwright's (1988) **Observation in the Language Classroom** for a very comprehensive review of the studies made in this regard.)

Allwright (1988), having carefully reviewed the studies that were conducted to compare methods in general and the results that were reported by Keating (1963) and Scherer and Wertheimer (1964), in Colorado, in particular, states that none of the methods studies reported a result that shows the superiority of one method over the other. Allwright comments that the experimenters, among other things, did not even keep the different groups taught by different methods apart. This, in his opinion, has partly made it difficult for them to interpret the results of the experiments.

Another issue to be mentioned in connection with what made the interpretation of the results of the methods studies difficult relates to the lack in the entire design of the experiment of a systematic device for observing the classes during the lessons. This has, as Allwright notes it, cast doubt on whether or not different lessons and procedures were really followed to teach both groups of students.

Later developments seen in the methods comparison, as reported by Clark (1969) and reviewed by Allwright (1988), reveal that a team of researchers in the Pennsylvania Project incorporated systematic classroom observation into their experimental design and compared three foreign language teaching methods, namely, the traditional, functional skills and functional skills plus grammar teaching methods. The inclusion of systematic observation schedules into the design of the project did not push their finding any further. The research team in the Pennsylvania project, as Allwright reports it, did not seem to have obtained more instructive and informative result than the results of the earlier methods comparisons.

Clark's (1969), cited in Allwright (1988), a posteriori comments on the efforts that went into designing the Pennsylvania Project as well as the inadequacies seen in the design of the project is illustrative of both what the project staff managed to do at the time and their later awareness of what ought to have been done if the desired result of the study were to be obtained. He writes:

Although the procedures followed by the project staff in defining, developing materials for, and training teachers in the three methods seem to have been well conceived, the classroom observation procedure – which would have offered the most direct way of determining teacher adherence to a particular teaching method – was somewhat less precise and thus less useful than would have been desired (1988: 9).

To sum up, early method comparisons did not produce the result that was apparently hoped for by the designers. This means that at the end of all the experiments, none of the methods proved to be worthy of being prescribed. What came next, then? What came next appears to be a radically different thinking. Some language teaching researchers, Allwright, for example, began to propose the need to understand what happens when the teacher, learners and the lesson meet in the classroom. The next section has more on this.

2.2.2 Classroom Interaction and language pedagogy

The material in this section is based on the work of classroom researchers who proposed the need for comprehensive understanding of the classroom processes of language learning. As mentioned above, some language teaching researchers, Allwright, (1972), for example, began to argue the need for understanding what happens in the classroom

related to learning shortly after the methods comparison proved fruitless. This 'new' thinking which emerged in the early 1970s marks the beginning of the shift of attention away from studying teacher behaviour to studying interaction not only as an inevitable aspect but also as a crucial component of classroom language teaching and learning.

2.2.2.1 Allwright's perspective

Allwright (1984a: 216) traces the preliminary notion of minimizing the amount of teacher talk in favour of learner talk back to the period of Audiolingualism. In order to enhance the learners' oral production—the objective to which the approach committed itself at the time, supporters of audiolingualism, as noted by Allwright, argued the importance of keeping the learners active in the classroom. Doing this at the time required only extending learners' talking time by putting them into pairs and groups of some sort. In principle, there is nothing wrong in trying to keep learners actively doing language work in pairs and groups or in any other form that can be considered to be convenient with the view to increasing their talking – time.

In practice, however, this requires caution to ensure that the extended talking time is not used for exclusive drill with forms of the target language they are trying to learn. In this regard, as Allwright puts it, Audiolingualism left much to be desired by making controlled drills of forms of language the primary focus for learners to practice in pairs and groups. Extending learners' talking-time did not prove to be fruitful in bringing about the result that was apparently hoped for - improved learner oral production. This dissatisfaction eventually gave rise to the need for extending learner time for doing

communicative activities. Put crudely, this appears to have eventually cleared the ground for what was later to be called 'communicative language teaching'.

Communicative language teaching drew increasing attention to learner participation in interaction in the classroom. Work in classroom research under communicative language teaching, thus, gradually began to reveal that interaction is a fundamental fact, not just a simple feature, of communicative language teaching (Allwright: 1980). The underlying assumption of this approach was the conceptualisation that learners are somehow autonomous, though not entirely, to determine when and how to participate in whatever happens in the classroom. Allwright illustrates this when he states:

Teachers may have definite plans for any particular learner, but learners are in some sort of bargaining position. In short, the management of participation, by teachers and by learners, is a negotiated process, and potentially a crucially important one. Given a teacher with a declared aim of securing an even distribution of participation, some learners will negotiate for more than their 'fair' share, others for 'less', some consciously, some unconsciously (1980 : 166).

Allwright argues that in order for us to understand how learners do respond to whatever demand learning places on them during classroom interaction, we need to study learners themselves closely because they are the people, not the teacher, who primarily respond to the demand by doing the learning. This brought to language classroom research a new challenge. The new challenge that faced the field was the challenge of developing a method of investigating how learners manage, not necessarily as a class as was done by the Flanders because that had already proved to be unhelpful, but as individuals or in smaller groups to do their share of the contribution to classroom interaction.

To tackle the challenge, Allwright explored the case-study approach which had already been in use outside language pedagogy and found it useful if developed into a system for analysing data recorded during a foreign language lesson. The ultimate objective of the case-study approach, as Allwright notes it, was to identify from the data episodes that involve a particular learner or a group of learners for closer and deeper investigation with the view to understanding the very nature of their involvement in the episodes that constitute language lesson for them.

2 . 2 . 2 . 2 Allwright's Framework of language teaching and Learning

If any attempt to be made towards understanding the nature of negotiations in language classroom disregards the various aspects of the management of learning and concentrates only on the observable language work learners perform in public, then, that attempt, in Allwright's view, will eventually end up with a too simplistic notion of negotiation in learning. The need to understand participation in which negotiation is apparently present, as Allwright notes it, presupposes understanding what constitutes the whole notion of language teaching and learning. To understand this, we need a framework that underlies language teaching and learning. To serve this purpose, Allwright established and used the framework cited below. The framework, as Allwright notes it, is based on a macro-analysis of language teaching and learning. It consists of three elements to describe whatever happens in the classroom.

- 1 Samples, instances of the target language in isolation or in use
- 2 Guidance, instances of communication concerning the nature of the target language
- 3 Management activities, aimed at ensuring the possible occurrence of (1) and (2) (1980: 166)

2.2.2.2.1 Samples

Learners cannot benefit much from samples of the target language in the absence of elements of guidance. As an example, Allwright states that monologues on the radio do not constitute guidance, and therefore, may not be sufficient material from which a beginning learner can benefit much. Another crucial point Allwright points out about samples of the target language is that not all the samples made available in the class will be attended to by all learners as models of the target language. What becomes a model for learners may not necessarily be what was intended to be so by the producer. There are also variations among learners in choosing models of the target language. In

connection with samples of the target language Allwright (1978) had earlier commented on their source as : “...any use of the target language to explain a grammar point or the procedure for group work constitutes a sample of the target language which any learner may use as input (1978 : 106)

2.2.2.2.2 Guidance:

Like samples, guidance is essential but not sufficient on its own if given in language other than the target language. Allwright states three ways in which guidance can be realized. The first one relates to rules and explanations given by anyone on any aspect of the target language. The other aspect of guidance consists of hints and cues of any sort to assist learners to focus on the crucial feature of the target language. The third category of guidance relates to the feedback offered to learners.

2.2.2.2.3 Management activities:

Allwright states that learning in classroom requires the presence of someone who could make certain that ‘proper’ elements of samples and guidance are made available to learners. If that someone is a teacher then his task, as noted by Allwright, is not only ensuring that a certain amount of guidance and samples of the target language are present but he also has to make sure that students are involved in the management activities. Let us see how he develops his argument in this regard.

...if the ‘language teacher’s’ management activities are directed exclusively at involving the learners in solving communication problems in the target language, then language learning will take care of itself, and the teacher can be fairly sure of not being guilty of unwarranted interference in the process (1976: 5

Put briefly, Allwright argues that the approach to language teaching research and pedagogy needs to orient itself with the general conceptualisation of learners' power to provide samples of the target language, and guidance as well as the recognition of their roles in doing the management activities in the processes of language teaching and learning.

2.2.2.2.4 On learning opportunities

The notion of learning opportunities seems to have its origin in Allwright's (1984b) work entitled: "Why don't learners learn what teachers teach? – the Interaction hypothesis." Allwright took interest in investigating why different learners happen to have different ideas about the same lesson when he observed differences in the learners' perceptions of the same lesson that they had been taught from the same textbook in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He reports his observation as saying:

[A]bout half of the class was unable to tell me, 'correctly', what the lesson had been about. That is, they failed to identify the teachers' main teaching point and this in spite of the fact that the teachers' teaching point had come from the textbook each learner had in front of him or her, which clearly labelled the point in question.' (1984b: 3).

In fact, as reported by Allwright, the students did not fail to remember the lesson altogether nor did they fail to answer the question. They had in Allwright's term "alternative ideas about what the lesson had been about" (ibid.). The need to investigate what might explain the cause of the alternative ideas was what inspired Allwright's work on matters related to learning opportunities. As background to the question Allwright reviews various literature in second language acquisition and concludes the following.

Recent work on second language acquisition, then, supports the presupposition of my title that learners do not in fact learn what teachers teach, and reinforces our interest in the research questions that follow from it. There is, it seems, a real problem in the relationship between language learning and language teaching, and not just one in the minds of a small group of students in New Mexico'' (1984b: 4)

He pursued looking into the relationship between teaching and learning further and identified 3 points as the problematic aspects of the relationship. These are

- A. Why learners do not learn everything they are taught
- B. How learners manage to learn things they are not taught
- C. How learners manage to learn things they are taught. (1984b: 4)

How learners manage to learn things they are taught investigates the contribution teaching makes to facilitate learning. This is the issue that seems to be more relevant to the purpose of this study.

Allwright reviews various hypotheses that would explain the extent of the complexities of the relationship between teaching and learning as background to the investigation of the central issue in his study: the Interaction Hypothesis. (Interested readers are referred to the original source to read the hypotheses.) He then suggests an alternative way of looking at language teaching and learning and argues in favour of the need to reorient our perceptions of the language teaching/learning classroom happenings if we wish to make sense of the complexities of the relation between language teaching and learning.

In particular he states:

I believe it helps if we look at language lesson as co-produced events in which all the participants are simultaneously involved in the management of interaction and, ipso facto, in the management

of their learning. Following this line of thought we can look upon language lessons as sets of learning opportunities, some deliberate but many incidental, all created through the necessary processes of classroom interaction (1984b: 5)

Allwright states that in the classroom processes of language teaching/learning, teaching is not the sole factor, though it could be the major one, that determines the provision of learning opportunities. Learning opportunities that are made available in the processes of language classroom interaction, therefore, seem to account for whatever learning that anyone student claims to have gained from any one language lesson. He sums up his argument related to an alternative way of looking at teaching and learning by stating:

What we need to account for is the process by which learning opportunities are created and the process by which different learners take different things from the sum total of learning opportunities that each lesson offers. (1984b: 5)

Whatever happens in the processes of classroom interaction, including the explanations given, feedback on learner performances, etc. have thus the power to determine the nature of learning opportunities during a lesson while learning opportunities themselves have in turn the potential power to determine what is to be learned.

To account for the differences in the learners' perceptions of the same lesson, Allwright developed a research strategy that would enable him to get an access to what each student claims to have learned from a particular lesson. He did this by developing an 'Up-take' report chart in which learners were asked at the end of a particular lesson to fill in all the points that arose during the lesson. After sometime (about an hour or so later) the learners were asked to identify from the original list the 'new' items they thought to have learned or items that they thought to have learned more about. Allwright

followed up the procedure with interviews and asked the learners to explain what made them able to identify and claim the 'up-taken' items in their lists. He then looked for evidence of episodes that would relate to the learners' claimed 'up-taken' items in the transcript data of the audio-recordings made during the lesson. The need to search for clues in the transcript data of what enabled learners to feel able to report the items as 'up-take' was, on Allwright's part, an expression of the work done to locate learning opportunities that could give rise to the items the learners claimed to have learned during the lesson.

To sum up, Allwright's work reviewed here was reported to have been work in progress when it was reported but even the results obtained at the time had evidence to hold the nature of the interactive work that learners did during a lesson as a factor that may explain the differences in the learners' perceptions of what a given lesson is about. Subsequent studies that adapted Allwright's alternative conceptualisation of classroom lesson and the strategies of accounting for the complexities of the relationship between language teaching and learning (see Slimani 1987 and Seime 1998, among others) have also confirmed the findings noted in Allwright's study. In particular, Slimani's study has noted the idiosyncratic nature of learning behaviour in the Algerian context.

The present study has also been planned to investigate closely the nature of the verbal behaviour used in the classroom processes of teaching/learning. This, it is hoped, will enable me to gain insight into the nature of the learning opportunities that each lesson offers learners. Investigation of the nature of learning opportunities will, in turn, help

account for students' general performances in English. The next section presents two other 'approaches'.

2.2.2.3 Two other 'approaches'

'Approach' does not appear to be so a precise term to be used here as it tends to create a sense of expecting more than is planned to be made available in the section. I used it here simply to distinguish the potential difference in the purposes of the two types of work reviewed in this section. The first approach, Fanselow's, relates to establishing a method of conceptualising and describing classroom language teaching processes while the second approach - Sinclair and Coulthard's - is much less related to language pedagogy than it is related to the development of the theory of applied linguistics.

2.2.2.3.1 Fanselow's perspective

FOCUS is an observational system developed by Fanselow (1977). It is an acronym that stands for Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings. Fanselow's approach to the language classroom and the subsequent development of FOCUS seems to be related to Bellack et al.'s approach but not so much as Moskowitz's Flint was related to Flanders observational system. As was made clear earlier in the chapter, Moskowitz enriched Flanders' observational system when she introduced FLint to the foreign language classroom. However, Fanselow borrowed the four pedagogical moves (i.e., structuring, soliciting, responding and reacting) from Bellack's work and used them in his own observational system called FOCUS. Fanselow's FOCUS was, therefore, not an extension or adaptation but an alternative to the Flanders observational system and its

derivatives. In effect, he developed a system in which the teaching act can be conceptualised and, therefore, described.

2.2.2.3.2 Sinclair and Coulthard's perspective

One relatively early work worthy of consideration on the scene of classroom language is the study which was conducted by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). Sinclair and Coulthard adopted Bellack et al.'s notion of classroom language in their study. However, unlike many of the earlier researchers who went to the classroom to develop some kind of observational instrument as a feedback tool to change teaching behaviour, Sinclair and Coulthard went to the classroom to develop a description of the linguistic structure of a spoken discourse. They thought they would find in classroom a structured discourse suitable to their purpose.

Sinclair and Coulthard expressed the structure of exchange in the classroom using Bellak's conception of moves. They identified three, not four as Bellack et al. did, categories of moves to represent a teacher – student exchange. They reported that their categories are in many respects analogous to the pedagogical moves - structuring, soliciting, responding and reacting - that had already been identified by Bellack et al. (1966). They describe the categories as:

A typical exchange in the classroom that consists of an initiation by the teacher, followed by a response from the pupil, followed by a feedback to the pupil's response from the teacher'' (1975: 21).

From examining a series of exchanges, Sinclair and Coulthard discovered 'frame' and 'focus'. According to them, 'frames' refer to a set of words that teachers use to mark boundaries in the lesson while 'focus' is teacher utterance which is functionally very much like Bellack's structuring move described earlier in the chapter. Focus, as the name implies, refers to teacher utterance that draws students' attention to what is to come next. Their further examination of classroom spoken discourse enabled them to distinguish two types of exchanges: boundary exchanges and teaching exchanges. They noted that "Framing and Focusing moves realise boundary exchange whereas Opening, Answering, and Follow-up moves realise teaching exchanges" (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975: 44).

In their descriptive system 'transaction' refers to a unit above 'exchange'. Lesson - the highest unit of classroom discourse according to their descriptive model-comprises 'transactions'. One or more than one transaction make up a lesson. The model they eventually developed to analyse classroom discourse (the rank scale hierarchy) in a descending order, constitutes, lesson, transaction, exchange, move and act. This means that within the lesson there is transaction (s). Transaction, in turn, constitutes exchange - teaching exchange and boundary exchange. Moves create exchange and acts realise moves. Their system altogether consists of 22 acts.

Before we move on to a review of a few studies reviewed by Chaudron, let us sum up this section. Sinclair and Coulthard's work, as the authors themselves admit it, was not designed to study language pedagogy although they used classroom data in the entire work. Their work is considered as contribution to discourse analysis. Different

classroom researchers have criticised Sinclair and Coulthard's Discourse Analysis. One reason for the criticism is its being too complex for practical use. For further aspects of the criticism, interested readers are advised to read Van Lier (1988). But now let us see the section on Chaudron.

2.2.2.3.2 Chaudron's perspectives

This section reviews briefly a few of the few studies made to understand ESL/EFL classroom talk. Chaudron (1988) reviewed some studies that had been conducted in the ESL classroom. The studies Chaudron reviewed focus on investigating the quantity of teacher talk mainly in kindergarten classrooms. This section discusses a few of such studies.

One of the studies reviewed by Chaudron is the study conducted by Ligarreta. Ligarreta's (1977) study was made on bilingual kindergarten classrooms. She adapted Flanders' observation system to code segments of teacher and learner talk. The teachers Ligarreta observed and their aides did between 70% to 89% (median 77%) of the classroom talk. In Chaudron's opinion this apparently high quantity of talk could partly be ascribed to the program type, the methodology used for coding, and the particular teachers involved.

Another study Chaudron reviewed reported a result different from Ligarreta's. The study was conducted by Enright (1984). Like Ligarreta, Enright considered two bilingual kindergarten classes. The finding of the study indicated that teachers and their aides talked less (with the median 64.5%) than what was reported in Ligarreta's study.

Chaudron comments that since Ligaretta and Enright used different instruments for coding classroom talk, whether the difference in the amount of teacher talk is due to the differences between the individual teachers or between the instruments used for coding the talk is not known. Having reviewed a range of studies on the second language classroom, Chaudron concludes that :

Notwithstanding Ligarreta's slightly higher values, and some variability in [others'] finding, these results confirm the standard first language finding of about two-thirds of classroom speech being attributable to the teacher."(Chaudron 1988:51-52).

Before moving on to the third part in which questioning behaviour in the content area subject classroom is reviewed, we need to briefly sum up the main points discussed in part 2 of this chapter.

2 . 2 . 2 . 3 . 3 Interim conclusion

In Part I of the chapter we have read the reviews of various studies and observed that teacher talk dominates classroom talk. We began Part II with a review of the early research tradition in language teaching classroom. There we observed that on one side of the language teaching scene some researchers concerned themselves with the search for the best method of teaching language. To distinguish the best method for prescription, the researchers at the time conducted experiments to compare different teaching methods. The results of the studies turned out to be inconclusive.

On the other side of language teaching research, some researchers were looking for a tool that would help them to give feedback to teachers with the view to improving their

classroom behaviour. To make this possible, innovations for classroom observation that were developed in general education were applied to language teaching classroom both in their original and modified forms. This attempt also did not promote the field of language teaching any further. In both the methods comparison and the search for the feedback tool, teacher and teaching behaviour were treated in isolation from the learners and the lesson.

Apparently, this eventually gave rise to the thought that what happens in the classroom matters more than anything else to determine learning. This was fundamentally different thinking which gave rise to 'new' perspectives of looking at classroom interaction and the potential learning opportunities that are inherent in the very nature of classroom interaction. This recognition, naturally, carries with it the need to study the roles learners play in classroom interaction in their own learning. The prevailing assumption that underlies studies in language teaching and learning, therefore, considers classroom interaction as a crucial aspect of the processes of language teaching and learning. The present study is designed in this global context.

In the second section of this chapter, we have also read Fanselow's and Sinclair and Coulthard's ' contributions in the area. The former concerned himself with proposing a method of conceptualising and describing communication according to the setting in which it occurs while the latter is more of a contribution to the theory of discourse analysis. We have also noted in the section from the review of the studies reviewed by Chaudron that teacher talk dominates classroom talk. Part III reviews studies made in the content classroom on teacher soliciting behaviour.

PART III TEACHER SOLICITING BEHAVIOR

2.3.0 Introduction

This section reviews work on teacher soliciting behaviour in general education.

2.3.1 Focus on work in general education

Stevens' (1912) study is one among the earliest attempts made to study teacher question empirically. Stevens studied the question asking and answering behaviours of teachers and students in high school. She made 100 classroom observations of teaching in 1910 and found that the teachers she observed did 64% of the classroom talk. Stevens also reported that the teachers she observed on average asked 2 to 4 questions in one minute. Orlich et al. (1990) reviewed Stevens' study and estimated that the teachers Stevens' observed spent about 80% of the school time on questioning and answering. Sixty years later, Hudings (1971) and Cunningham (1971) commented that little change had been observed on teacher questioning behaviour since Stevens' time.

Cunningham (1971) seems to concern himself less with the number of questions teachers ask than with how questions are asked during a lesson when he comments: 'Teachers often ask too many questions. The real concern, however, ... is not the amount of question - asking but the method of asking and using questions' (1971: 85). Good and Brophy (1987), on their part, relate wait-time to question type and situation. In their opinion, complex problems require of students longer time to think than questions of a

specific fact. Drill questions require less time to think of their answers. A study conducted by Rowe (1974) noted a teacher who waited for only less than a second before nominating a student to respond. This teacher's wait-time after nominating a student to respond to the question was also observed to be only one second. Rowe trained teachers to increase their wait-time to 3-5 seconds. It has been reported that, despite the training, many teachers could not extend their wait-time but in the few classrooms where the training was successfully put into practice by teachers, positive results were recorded. For instance, Rowe reports that there was an increase in the length of student utterance and a decrease in failure to respond. Yet, it should not remain unnoticed that attributing changes in students' answer to change in wait-time solely might raise questions of validity unless other relevant factors are held constant during the lesson.

Nunan (1991) in the context of language teaching and learning also argues in favour of the increase in wait - time for extended exploitation of students' potentials. The increase in wait-time, in Nunan's opinion, enables pupils to have enough time for comprehending the question and processing the answer. However, Nunan, later in Nunan and Lamb (1996) seems to be more cautious about wait-time when they state:

We believe that it is particularly important for second language students to have a sufficient time to think about questions before being required to answer them. However, we also acknowledge the fact that, from the perspective of managing the learning process, silence tends to break up the flow of the lesson; students' attention gets distracted and it is hard to pick up the pace again once it is lost. Maintaining interest through appropriate pacing is a real problem, which is rarely acknowledged by commentators on wait-time (1996: 84-85).

None of the studies discussed above have referred to the extent to which learning can be influenced by the number of questions asked during a lesson. In addition, the studies do not point to the relative value of questioning as a teaching device in comparison with other aspects of classroom verbal behaviour like explanation or demonstration. The studies tend to have concerned themselves mainly with the number of questions teachers ask and teacher behaviour related to wait-time. Although the studies discussed so far suggest 3 – 5 seconds to be sufficient time for students to process answers, they do not seem to report empirical evidence to show that the change in students' answer occurred solely due to the change in the wait-time.

In fact, it needs to be noted that the method of measuring wait-time in terms of seconds or sometimes in units less than the second itself appears to create a practical problem that is similar to the problem that Flanders three second-based observational system is agreed to have faced. This is because, listening to a recording, identifying a question from other competing utterances, consulting a clock, (or wrist watch or stop watch, or any other gadget) and determining how long or short the teacher waits before and after asking a question does not seem to produce accurate information about time. The very need for precise information about wait-time at the level of the second or a unit less than

the second does not itself seem to be a rewarding job when seen in terms of the amount of work yet to be done in classroom research in order to know more about how learning happens. Equally important is also the issue of the observed tendency, on the part of the studies, to disregard the busy-ness of the classroom and expect the teacher to think in terms of 3 or 5 seconds when he is faced with a multitude of competing things that seek instantaneous decision in the classroom process of teaching and learning.

From the findings of the studies of classroom discourse, we understand that teachers, apart from asking questions, have many other verbal duties to perform (directing, informing, reacting, to mention a few) in one period. As mentioned earlier, studies of classroom questioning also note that teachers ask a large number of questions in one period. This could perhaps be evidence not only for the length of the wait-time to be short but it also tells us that teachers switch between the various verbal behaviours that are available and accessible to them during a lesson. Apparently, teachers do this because they have to cope with the demands emerging from the busy nature of the classroom. Some language teaching classroom researchers appear to hold a similar view of wait time although theirs is from slightly different perspective. Nunan and Lamb (1996), for example, have the following to say:

The researchers and writers on wait – time tend to present the issue in a rather simplistic manner, suggesting that less wait - time is bad. Although we generally go along with the argument that learners should be given the mental space to process the question and respond, we also accept that there are also certain high-pressure situations in which prolonged wait – time will be ultimately detrimental to the dynamics of interaction (1996: 87).

2.3.2 Classifications of questions

This section reviews various taxonomies of questions that have been used in previous work in general education. The purpose of reviewing the various taxonomies/categories of questions used in different studies is mainly to show the various aspects from which teacher questions have been investigated in the studies made in general education. The ideas gained from the studies reviewed in this section have enabled me to classify the questions in the present data into categories that are relevant to the nature of the data used in the study.

2.3.2.1 Bloom et al.'s perspective

As will be made clear in this section, a number of studies have concerned themselves with developing categories of classroom questions in general education work. Bloom et al.'s (1956) is perhaps the classic example to be mentioned in this area. Bloom et al. (1956), in their attempt to develop a system for classifying educational objectives, needed to deal with the intellectual, emotional and physical aspects of education. To do that, first, they concerned themselves with identifying the cognitive (intellectual) domain from the emotional (affective) and physical (psychomotor) domains of education. Then, they developed taxonomies of thinking that constituted all the cognitive objectives. Finally, they exemplified each category by questions. The questions were believed to demand of students the thinking represented by the categories of cognitive domain. Here is the hierarchical list of the categories in their educational objectives: “knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation” (1956: 18)

Bloom et al. state that problems that require of students knowledge of specific facts are easier to solve than one which require knowledge of universals and abstractions. Problems requiring knowledge of principles and concepts are less difficult to solve than those that require the knowledge of the principle and some skill in the application of the principle. The relationship between the study of questions and the taxonomy of Educational Objectives lies in the question's capacity in engaging the student in one or the other level of thinking represented by the categories used to define the cognitive domain of educational objectives. In reference to the classification of the categories, Bloom et el. write (1956: 12) "what we are classifying is the intended behaviour of students-the ways in which individuals are to act, think, or feel as the result of participating in some unit of instruction."

2.3.2.2 Sanders' perspective

QUESTIONS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN the major stock in trade. At all level students are plied with different kinds of enquiries. Throughout his academic career, questions both oral and written, exert a major influence upon the student. In some cases, the future professional activities of the student will reflect the result of examinations (Sanders1966: ix).

Sanders' observation that was made as early as 1966 about questions still seems to make three things clear about classroom questions. The first point relates to teaching and questioning: teaching has always involved questioning at all levels of school education. Another observation relates to learning: questions have determined students' learning. The third observation points to the long-lasting effect of questions on students' future working opportunities.

Sanders wrote a book entitled **Classroom Questions: What kinds?** as early as 1966. She comments on the main topic of the book by saying that it is as old as education itself. In fact, the notion of ‘What kind of question should be asked in order to cause improved learning ?’ might, as noted by Sanders, be as old as that but work in questioning behaviour does not seem to have led to the desired result. For example, Hudgins (1971) and Cunningham (1971) report that about 60 years of research into teacher questioning behaviour did not lead to a change in teacher questioning behaviour that is worthy of mentioning. Available literature since Hudgins’ 1971 observation also does not report much improvement

The thinking that underlies Sanders' study of questions comes from Bloom et al.'s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives discussed earlier. Sanders' categories of questions have been slightly modified from the categories that had been originally developed by Bloom et al. Sanders' taxonomy has 7 categories. She established separate categories for two of the elements (interpretation and translation) that Bloom et al. earlier put in the category of 'comprehension'. She also re-named Bloom's 'knowledge' as 'memory'. The changes that the categories underwent, as Sanders notes it, did not cause a substantial change in the tradition introduced by Bloom et al. Here are the sequential categories that underlie Sander's taxonomy of questions: 'memory, translation, interpretation, application, analysis synthesis,' and 'evaluation.'(Sanders : 2 – 3).

In recognition of the subtle distinctions between the categories and the possibilities of disagreement among teachers in classifying a question into one or the other category, Sander writes: *"The important point for teachers to remember is that difficulty in classifying any question is no distraction from the quality of the question (1966: 8) (italics original).*

She suggests three factors for consideration to determine the type of questions to ask in the classroom. The first thing relates to considering the nature of the question in light of the characteristics of its classification in the taxonomy. The second factor has to do with the student's prior knowledge about the content of the question. Different students go to the classroom with different knowledge of the subject they are learning. The third point to consider is the lesson that was taught previously. Sanders suggests the importance for teachers to know the format of each type of question so that they can vary the type of question to give students the opportunity to think at different cognitive levels.

2.3.2.3 Barnes' perspective

Barnes' tradition is one among the available options of classifying questions. Barnes classified teacher questions into different categories. The first category consists of 'factual' or 'what?' questions. Factual questions require students either to name a phenomenon with no need to give further information about it or they may require students only to give information about the phenomenon with no need for naming it. Reasoning questions are the second category in Barnes' classification of questions. 'Reasoning' questions have 'how?' or 'why?' that suggest to students the need for explanation in the required task.

Barnes again subdivides reasoning questions into subgroups. Some 'closed' reasoning questions ask students to recall facts that were committed to memory while other closed reasoning questions do not require students to recall facts from memory. 'Open' reasoning questions and observation questions also fall within the category of reasoning questions. 'Observation' questions are, according to Barnes' classification, very much like factual questions which require students to name some sort of phenomena. Observation questions require students to interpret their perception of phenomena.

'Open' questions are the third category of questions that Barnes concerned himself with. One of Barnes' contributions to the study of classroom questions seems to lie in the distinction that he made between 'open' and 'closed' question. 'Open' questions permit a range of acceptable answers while 'closed' questions have only one right answer. Relying on the way questions are framed is, however, confusing to classify questions into 'open' or 'closed' categories. Barnes makes this point clear when he states:

It is necessary to check apparently open questions by examining the teacher's reception of pupils' replies, which may show that he will accept only one reply to a question framed in apparently open terms. Such questions might be called 'pseudo questions' (1990: 15).

'Social' questions, which Barnes further puts into subgroups, are the fourth category of questions. Teachers, according to Barnes, use 'control' questions when they wish something to get done by students. That is, teacher questions serve controlling function when they force students to do something but when teachers ask students to, for instance, share their own experience or attitude with them with no so obvious tone of control, the questions are said to be 'appeal' questions. Barnes dumps other social questions that do not fit into 'control' or 'appeal' categories into an 'other' category.

Barnes notions of 'open', 'closed' and 'pseudo' questions seem to have contributions to make, though preliminary, to the notions of 'display' and 'referential' questions in the study of questions in second/foreign language classroom.

2.3.2.4 Cunningham's perspective

Cunningham (1971) states that studies made on questions reveal that the level of students' thinking that questions stimulate and the nature of responses they elicit determine subsequent learning. He classifies questions into two general categories: 'narrow' and 'broad' questions.

2.3.2.4.1 Narrow questions

Questions the answering of which require of students low-level thinking are what Cunningham calls 'narrow' questions. Narrow questions elicit usually short and predictable responses. The answers that narrow questions elicit from students are said to be predictable in the sense that only a limited number of specific answers could be taken as acceptable or right answers. Questions which encourage 'yes' or 'no' answers are, in Cunningham's opinion, examples of narrow questions. Teachers, Cunningham states, ask narrow questions particularly during drill sessions. They also use narrow questions to review previously studied material. In Cunningham's opinion, overusing narrow questions deters the development of students' higher level thinking.

Cunningham classifies narrow questions that are limited to the lowest level of thinking under 'cognitive/memory' questions. Cognitive/memory questions, as discussed earlier, encourage simple reproduction of facts, remembered information or definitions. Answers to cognitive/memory questions may sometimes be a single word. Answering cognitive memory type questions does not involve more than recalling material that has previously been committed to rote memory. According to Cunningham (1971: 108), cognitive memory questions usually begin with such word as '*who, what, where, which, when, and sometimes how and why*'.

'Convergent' questions, in Cunningham's opinion, are narrow questions but they are different from cognitive memory questions in that they require students to do a higher level of thinking to put facts together in order to construct an answer. Reconstructing facts requires students to know relationships between various aspects of related things.

Question words such as 'why' and 'how' usually introduce convergent questions when they suggest the need for explanation. Answering convergent questions requires students to use their own words. Cunningham describes what answering convergent questions involves by saying:

'...to respond to a convergent question a child may be expected to perform the operations of explaining, stating relationships, associating and relating or comparing and contrasting (1971: 94-95).

In Cunningham's view, although convergent questions require students to compare or explain relationships between facts or concepts, they are, unlike divergent questions, not so useful when seen in terms of the contributions they make towards enabling students to form and test their own independent ideas. This is because all the effort they demand of students boils down to searching for the 'right' answer to a question from some previously studied material.

2.3.2.4.2 Broad questions

Unlike narrow questions, broad questions, Cunningham notes, permit a range of acceptable but unpredictable answers. They provoke a higher level thinking which gives the student the opportunity to hypothesise, predict or make inference. With the help of broad questions, according to Cunningham, a teacher can get access to students' feeling or personal opinion or judgement. Broad questions are divergent or evaluative in nature. Cunningham's view of broad questions is similar to Barnes' view of 'open' questions while what Cunningham calls 'narrow' questions resemble Barnes' 'closed' questions.

2.3.2.5 Kyriacou's perspective

The discussion of questions in terms of their potential usefulness for productive learning opportunities involves determining the type of thinking required of the learner to answer the question. That is, the capability of questions to promote learners' genuine thinking is an essential factor to consider in talking about questions. In connection with determining the quality of questions, Kyriacou (1986) refers to the potential usefulness of categories of cognitive processes produced by Bloom et al (1956). As discussed earlier, higher order questions require of learners higher level thinking in order to evaluate and apply information. Lower order questions, it is assumed, do not involve higher level thinking. Such questions check learners' comprehension and ability to recall facts.

In Kyriacou's opinion, making a distinction between 'closed' questions and 'open' questions enables teachers to determine whether or not the question, as a strategy of teaching, facilitates learning. In fact, Bloom's taxonomy of questions does not have categories for 'closed' or 'open' questions and Kyriacou appears to be eclectic in his approach.

He notes four points relating to classroom questions. Firstly, considering the quality, clarity and relevance to purpose, of the question is very essential. Good quality questions, in Kyriacou's notion of quality, require of the teacher to examine the question from the learners' perspective. In this regard, Sanders had stated as early as 1966 that "Good questions are directed towards learning and evaluative thinking, rather than determining what has been learned in a narrow sense" (1966: ix).

The target of the question is another important aspect worth considering in talking about classroom questions. Targetting, a term similar in concept to what various related literature calls 'turn allocation', in Kyriacou's opinion, refers to how learners are selected. In this respect, Kyriacou emphasises the need for distributing the question to the whole class rather than focusing only on volunteers. Good and Brophy's (1987), cited in Nunan and Lamb (1996) views on the need to distribute answering turns among all students strengthen Kyriacou's opinion. They write:

[S]tudents will learn more if they are actively engaged in discussions than if they sit passively day after day without participating. We all know reticent students who rarely participate in discussions but still get excellent grades, but most students benefit from opportunities to practice oral communication skills, and distributing responding opportunities helps keep students attentive and accountable (1996: 88)

'Interacting', as a technique in questioning, in Cunningham's opinion, involves the teacher's use of eye contact, tone of voice, pauses, prompt and follow-up from teacher either by other questions or elaboration of the initial question. Kyriacou also notes that teachers use several questions to develop the theme of the lesson. This, in Kyriacou's view, involves establishing a sequence between several questions. Sequencing of questions may enable the teacher to present the lesson clearly to the learner.

Kyriacou's notion of 'sequencing' questions seems to refer to creating links between questions to make them reflect the theme of the lesson at some point. In the present study also the notion of sequencing is one essential focus of investigation under teacher question, but for me, sequence has slightly different meaning from the meaning it has been made to have in Kyriacou's context. The study mainly endeavours to explore how

the teacher moves along the sequence of questions in the textbook. In the context of this study, in the secondary school EFL classroom, discussions of a series of questions given in the textbook usually dominate classroom verbal behaviour.

This involves how a teacher asks a question, how he reinforces it with prompts or clues of some sort, how he accepts an answer, what he does with the answer and how he moves on to the question next in the list of questions that they have to discuss in one period. All episodes in a lesson (such as the above and others as well) that involve verbal behaviours of the teacher and the learners are needed to be explored because of their potential relevance to learning opportunities that are created during a lesson.

Moreover, how teachers in the present study allocate turns to students to answer questions and what students do to show their willingness to take turns to answer questions are also other aspects of verbal behaviour to be explored in this study. Feedback is another important point in classroom questioning. Kyriacou's notion of feedback relates to the teacher's reaction to student answer. Answering questions in public contexts such as in the classroom involves risk taking on the part of the learner. In this respect, Kyriacou notes that " In order to protect a pupil's self-esteem and develop pupil self-confidence, the teacher needs to ensure that questioning takes place in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere" (1986: 64).

Before we conclude issues related to soliciting behavior, let us move on to Part IV and see a few of the few studies on questioning that have been made in the language teaching classroom.

Part IV Teacher soliciting behaviour in the EFL classroom

2.4.0 Introduction

“Research in classroom interaction confirms what a moment’s observation reminds us: in all school subjects, the most frequent teacher communication is a solicit ” (Fanselow 1987: 75). Fanselow’s remark is evidence of the pervasive nature of questioning in the classroom processes of teaching and learning.

This section reviews studies made to investigate teacher questioning behaviour in the ESL/EFL classroom. Like many other aspects of classroom verbal behaviour, not much has been done in the ESL/EFL context to study questioning behaviour. Long and Sato (1983) established that teachers in the language teaching classroom ask more display than referential questions. For nearly two decades now studies that concerned themselves with questioning in language teaching classroom appear to have had interest in confirming or disconfirming that finding in various contexts of their own. In the present study, this lack of variety in the objectives of the available literature necessitated reviewing a wide range of studies on questioning in general education research.

2.4.1 Long and Sato’s study

One study that has widely been quoted in the area of teacher question in the L2 classroom research is the study that was carried out by Long and Sato (1983). Long and Sato conducted an exploratory study into questions mainly with two purposes in mind. One, they wanted to investigate the forms and functions of teacher question in the classroom, and eventually compare the pattern with the conversation between NSs-

NNSs outside the classroom, and two, they wanted to explore the patterns between teacher question and other linguistic behaviour of teacher in the classroom.

Long and Sato used 6 (3 male and 3 female) experienced ESL teachers. The subjects were teaching at the elementary level in Hawaii, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. The students used in the study were adult new arrivals in the USA with varied first language background. Class sizes ranged from 13 to 35 beginning or false beginning level students. The learners needed English for different purposes including academic, vocational or professional purposes. For data gathering the six teachers were provided with a cassette tape recorder to record their regular class lessons themselves. In fact, they were instructed not to devise any particular lesson for the purpose of the study. Findings of Long and Sato indicated 21% of the questions to be referential and 79% display questions.

Long and Sato's study was made on adult learners who needed English for various purposes. The adult learners were also in a completely strange classroom and social context. Whether the results observed by Long and Sato could be replicated in the regular learners' classroom in the social context of their own is, of course, open to question. One can also develop a sense of uncertainty about the extent to which the audio - recording of the lessons was free of the teachers' bias.

The study made by Long and Sato has documented that the majority of the questions asked by their subjects in the EFL are display questions whose contribution to learners' opportunity for extended use of the foreign language is limited. This seems to have

inspired subsequent studies to do something towards changing teacher questioning behaviour. The next section picks up this issue.

2.4.2 Brock's study

Long and Sato explored teacher questioning behaviour in the EFL and reported that referential questions that characterise everyday conversation outside the classroom are nearly non-existent in the classroom. In language teaching/learning classroom, at least according to established assumptions, it is the referential questions more than the display ones, that are needed in order to maximise learner opportunity for using the foreign language.

Brock (1986) made a follow-up study of Long and Sato's finding. In particular, she took interest in investigating if higher frequencies of referential questions have an effect on ESL learner's classroom discourse. To do this, she assumed that through training teachers would increase the number and frequency of the referential questions they ask in the classroom.

The subjects of Brock's study were 24 NNSs, who at the time of the study, enrolled in the University of Hawaii's English Language Institute. Except for one student who was reported to have been from Afganistan, the rest were from different Asian countries. Two-thirds of the subjects had advanced level English proficiency. There were 4, two male and two female, ESL teachers who took part in the study. All had at least 5 years of teaching experience. They were enrolled in the ESL Master's program in the same university as their students at the time of the experiment.

The students were randomly put into 4 groups, each group having 6 students. The 4 teachers were also randomly assigned to the 4 groups of students. The teachers and the students did not have acquaintance with each other prior to the study. Brock divided the 4 teachers into 2 groups: control and experimental. She acquainted both groups of teachers with their expected roles in the classroom. They were also introduced to the passage and vocabulary they were going to teach to their respective group of students. Apart from telling them that the passage and the vocabulary would be used in the 40 - minute lesson, Brock gave no further instruction to the control group. The need for discussion in the second half of the lesson period was, however, emphasised. The purpose of the study was not made clear to the control group.

In addition to receiving the same instruction as the control group, the experimental group was given a twenty - minute training session on the differences between display and referential questions. They were also allowed to practice forming referential questions. The purpose of the study was also made clear to this group.

As predicted, the finding of Brock's study noted that, through training, the subjects increased the number of referential questions they asked. Referential questions also elicited longer and syntactically more complex responses from learners in comparison with the display ones. In response to the referential questions the learners were reported to have used a greater number of connectives in their sentences. Brock reported that referential questions gave learners wider opportunities for speaking turns. Like Long and Sato's study, the subjects in Brock's study were also not regular learners and the

reading and vocabulary lessons used for the study were designed to serve the purpose of the study. The study does not show what happens in regular learners' classroom who use regular teaching material.

Van Lier (1988), however, argues from a different perspective. In his opinion, making a distinction between display and referential questions does not seem to matter so much. In his opinion, both display and referential questions exert control on the kind of the language the learner is exposed to and the expected learners' contributions. More specifically he argues: "The display-versus-referential distinction, seemingly so basic, may turn out to be irrelevant when more basic interactional issues are considered (1988: 223).

The 'basic interactional issues' referred to in Van Lier's comments refers to looking beyond the simple distinction of question type with the view to exploring the linguistic production, the cognitive demands and the interactive purposes of questions in the classroom processes of language teaching and learning. While Van Lier dismisses studies of questioning that look for superficial features of questions (such as display and referential questions, presumably,) for quantitative treatment, he proposes studies that give insight into the tasks questions set and the effects the tasks have on learning.

My own view agrees with Van Lier's perspective of treating questions. That is, the emphasis on the distinction on its own does not seem to be a rewarding line to pursue as both seem to be relative terms representing context - bound concepts. What is a display question in one context may not be display in a different context. Language teachers,

therefore, may need to consider contextual factors such as learners' background, previous lesson, task type, the objective of the lesson, etc. to switch between the type of question they are using to cope with the demands the context places upon them.

2.6 Summary of the Chapter and Conclusion

We began the chapter with reviewing literature that reported the dominance of teacher talk in the content classroom. Bellack et al's study produced the evidence that confirmed this. Their study also established the discourse style Initiate – Respond - Feedback as a unique feature of classroom language.

Flanders' perspective is essentially different from the Bellack et al.'s tradition. He was motivated by the practical need teacher trainers had at the time to give teachers feedback to help them improve teaching behaviour at the time. He established a systematic observational tool to observe and record teachers' classroom behaviour. The feedback to be provided by the instrument was hoped to reveal to the teacher what classroom behaviour was like. Flanders classroom observational system was used widely in educational research despite the underlying assumption related to the prominence of teacher behaviour in the classroom processes of teaching and learning and the inherent practical problems in the application of the tool to real-time teaching in the classroom.

Part II of the chapter was concerned with reviewing work in language teaching classroom. The studies reviewed in the section began with tracing the development seen in classroom research tradition. What prompted the need to trace the development of research tradition lies not just in the curiosity to know how language teaching research

developed although that itself is worthy of knowing, but for the purpose of this study, the driving force was the search for how the link between classroom verbal behaviour and learning got realised at different stages in the development of the research tradition. To this end, the reviewed literature has revealed that early research in the field took interest in producing prescriptions of effective teaching behaviour. This necessitated global comparisons of the teaching methods available at the time. Findings of such studies proved to be discouraging.

Different studies were also made using Flanders classroom observational system in the language teaching classroom. Some modified or extended the categories in the tool while others used the unmodified form of the observational system. None seemed to have taken classroom researchers closer to understanding the mystery lied in the classroom processes of teaching and learning.

The dissatisfaction experienced from various unsuccessful attempts cleared the ground for 'new' thinking in the field. Language teaching classroom researchers began to argue that what matters the most is neither the method used by the teacher nor the teacher's teaching behaviour in isolation from the other crucial aspects of the classroom. For example, Allwright has at various times argued that regardless of whatever teaching method is used by the teacher, it is what happens in the classroom that is worthy of description and explanation if a relatively fuller understanding of the classroom processes of language teaching and learning is desired. The present study has been planned in line with this thinking.

We began the section on teacher solicits with early work on teacher questioning behaviour, namely, with Stevens' study in 1912. Her finding, mainly based on classroom observations, noted that teachers asked just too many questions. Two main reasons were mentioned for this: the need to grip students' attention and the urge to cover a large lesson.

There is a tendency for agreement across various studies reviewed here to associate questions of higher cognitive level, extended response and longer wait time. We have also seen various taxonomies of questions with the cognitive work the questions are believed to place on students. Questions of higher cognitive level are generally assumed to lead to improved learning. The association needs to be handled with care, however, as studies have reported that many classroom questions fall short of meeting their claimed purposes.

Following educational researchers' perceptions of classroom questions, researchers in the second language classroom also have investigated forms and functions of teacher question. Long and Sato can be cited as pioneers. Their study noted that nearly all of the questions asked in the second language classroom are display questions. Teachers ask questions whose answers they already know. The situation is different in everyday conversation outside the classroom. People ask questions when they want information not available to them.

Brock trained teachers to see if referential questions could really enable learners to produce extended foreign language forms. Her study was a success. Some language

teachers who are at the moment teaching English in the secondary school. This has made English teachers with a BA level qualification to be more relevant subjects of this study.

3 . 2 . 1 . 3 Selecting the subjects

The only access that an ‘outsider’ has to the secondary schools in Addis Ababa is through school directors. For the purpose of the pilot study, therefore, first, I contacted four secondary school directors for permission to get access to their schools. They granted me permission and arranged for me to contact their school English department heads. When I contacted the department heads, I discovered that in three of the schools, none of the teachers who were teaching in grade 9 at the time had a BA level training to teach English. The fourth school had 3 English BA holding teachers who were teaching in grade nine at the time. Of the three teachers, one teacher was not found to be so willing to have an observer in his class for more than one period. The second teacher did not mind having an observer but he did not like the idea of lesson audio-recording. The third teacher who was used as a subject of the pilot study fully co-operated with the idea of classroom observation and lesson audio-recording.

3 . 3 Data gathering tools

The pilot data was collected through classroom observation, teacher interview and student diaries. This section describes classroom observation and teacher interview while a later section will describe student diaries.

3.3 1 Classroom observation

As can be recalled, various research methods and procedures that have been used in language teaching classroom research have been explained earlier in Chapter II of this study. More particularly, detailed descriptive comments have been offered in the Chapter on Flanders' (1970) systematic observation of classroom interaction (although this was originally from general education work), Moskowitz's (1977) FLint and Fanselow's (1977) FOCUS.

Various literature also indicates that classroom observation has been an integral research procedure in the general education work and in language teaching classroom research. Allwright, for example, has written a whole book entitled: **Observation in the Language Classroom (1988)** in which he combined a long history of systematic classroom observation as a research tool with the review of its status and role in language teaching classroom research. Bellack et al. (1966) used audio – recorded data in their classic study of the language of the classroom while Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) also used audio – recording to gather classroom data that they used in their discourse analysis.

This section presents how classroom observation was used as the data gathering procedure in this study. The primary purpose of classroom observation was to collect data on what lessons were taught and what the teacher and students did during lessons. This data was mainly obtained through the audio recording of lessons. During the audio-recording periods, I took notes on observable things that happened during the period and that I considered to be relevant to the purpose of the study but that which I thought

recorded the interview using the same recording machine with which lessons were audio-recorded.

3.4 The students

Twelve students from grade 9 were originally planned to take part in the pilot study. They were selected from the pilot teacher's class. I asked the teacher to select three groups of 4 students each on the basis of his perceptions of the extent of their oral participation in English lessons. He selected 4 'more than average', 4 'average' and 4 'less than average' students. Data from students was collected using student diaries.

3.4.1 Student diaries

Many language teaching classroom researchers, Allwright (1983), Chaudron (1988), among others, state that student diaries are an integral component of a growing body of literature on classroom research. Bailey (1990) also states that diaries "investigate issues not normally accessible through outside observation" (1990: 216).

In this study student diaries were used to obtain data from students on their English lessons. In particular, it was hoped that information on the students' perceptions of and reactions to the lessons they learn, what they do to learn and what their teacher does to teach them during the lesson would be obtained through the diaries.

As explained above, twelve students who were selected from the pilot teacher's class were planned to write diaries on their English lesson. The students were required to write the diaries on any 12 of the 18 lesson periods they were going to learn in 3 weeks'

time. I had two reasons for extending the diaries up to three weeks. On the one hand, 2 – 3 weeks (12 – 18 periods) are suggested in the Teacher' Guide to finish working on one unit. On the other hand, since the classroom observation was 3 weeks long I would get repeated opportunities to follow – up the progress of the student diaries during the three weeks I went to the school. The fact that they could see me there could also remind them of the diaries they were asked to write.

Before they started to write the diaries, I gave the students orientations on what a diary is and on how to write it. To do this, the teacher arranged for me to contact the students in their classroom during the break time between the morning and the afternoon shift. Grade 9 students were learning in the morning shift. Morning shift students finish learning at 12. 20 p.m. There is a 25 minute – break between the morning and the afternoon shifts.

During the orientation session, I told the students to write every evening, or at any other time that was convenient for them but after school, a few things about what they and their teacher did during the lesson that day and how they would relate that to their learning/not learning of the lesson. I gave each student a pen, a pencil and a - 50 - page lined notebook for keeping the diaries. They were advised to use the local language, Amharic, for writing the diary. At the end of the third week, the teacher collected diaries from ten students. Two students did not hand in their diaries.

3 . 5 The pilot data analysis

Before doing the preliminary analysis of the data, the audio – recorded lessons were transcribed by two students who at the time had just completed their secondary school studies. Later I got the transcripts checked by one of my colleagues against the audio – recordings. I did the final checking myself before doing the preliminary analysis of the audio recorded lessons. Student diaries were also translated into English before the preliminary analysis was made. The translation of the diaries was first made by two teachers who were my former colleagues in the secondary school. The teachers did not have much work load as they had completed teaching grade 12 students at the time. I got the translations checked by two other English teachers before I did the final checking myself. The interview with the teacher was in English.

To do the analysis, first I studied the transcripts of the three audio-recorded lessons to be able to identify the most frequent verbal behavior during the lessons. Then, I developed analytical categories and procedures and analyzed the transcript data. Lesson transcript data is the core data in the study. I used data from interview, field notes and student diaries to supplement the analysis of the core data. The purpose of the pilot data analysis did not make an in-depth analysis necessary. As will be explained in the next section, I gained useful lessons from the first pilot study.

3 . . 6 Lessons gained from the pilot study

As stated at the outset, the pilot study was primarily needed to see the effectiveness of the intended tools for gathering data for the main study. The secondary purpose was to

acquaint myself with lesson audio – recording and interviewing people. What is reported here is therefore the lessons learned from the pilot study.

1. Experience gained from the pilot study enabled me to give more clear instructions to teachers in the main study when I gave them the audio – recorded lessons to listen to them before the interview.

2. The pilot interview with the teacher tended to cover relevant but broader incidents that may happen in the classroom in general but the interviews with the main subjects were made to be more focused on the audio – recorded lessons and below average participation of students did not seem to work as planned as the diaries written by some of the about average students turned out to be either like the above or the below average student diaries. This suggested the need to retain only two categories, namely, ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ in the main study.

3. The fact that the pilot students were required to write diaries on 12 lessons tended to impose a limit on their interests. This was evidenced by the diaries written by some of the students in which they either wrote brief summaries of lessons or only the topics of the lessons to make the diaries have just 12 lessons. This suggested the need for keeping the actual number open – ended in the main study. This seems to have increased the quality of the diaries in the main study although it reduced the number of the lessons each student diaries covered.

4. I collected the diaries from the teacher a few hours after he had collected them from students. Later, I read the diaries and realized that some of the points in the diaries referred to what some students did not like the teacher to do during lessons. If the teacher had read the diaries, this might either help him to re-think about the effect the teaching behavior mentioned may have on learning or he might altogether get angry with the students who dared to say they did not like some of what their teacher did in class. I arranged to collect student diaries myself in the main study in order not to allow a similar thing to happen again.

3 . 7 Summary of the pilot study

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, the pilot study was mainly needed to test the intended data gathering tools and procedures. The subjects of the study were one grade 9 teacher who had a BA level training in English language teaching and students selected from his class. Three audio – recorded lessons, field notes taken during classroom observation, teacher interview and student diaries were the data used in the pilot study. Transcripts of the audio-recorded lessons are the core data base used in the study while interview data, student diaries, and field notes were used to supplement the data obtained from the audio - recorded lessons. The preliminary analysis of the pilot data showed the effectiveness of the methods for collecting data for the main study. The analysis also suggested the categories and the procedures to be used to analyze the data of the main study.

3.8 The second pilot data

With the experience gained from the pilot study, the data of the main study was collected from May – June 1998/9. I got the audio – recorded data of the main study transcribed in July when schools were closed (see a later section for the details of the main study and how the recorded data were transcribed). As explained earlier, after the transcripts of the audio-recorded lessons of the main study were made ready but before analyzing them, I studied the transcripts in detail and further realized that a more comprehensive description and explanation of classroom verbal behavior could be obtained if the data to be analyzed consisted of a period-long single lesson.

The first pilot data which was analyzed consisted of more than one lesson taught in one period. This gave rise to the need for analyzing a whole period data that consisted of a single lesson type such as a reading or a grammar lesson only instead of reading and grammar lessons taught in one period. I, therefore, decided to audio – record another set of lessons when schools would re-open in September (1998/99) academic year and look for a whole period that consisted of a single lesson. This time I decided to record lessons from grade 10 because, as explained earlier, not all secondary schools can afford to assign teachers who have a BA level qualification to teach in grade 9 during the first semester.

As planned, I collected data from grade 10 from mid-October to mid November 1998/99. I followed the same procedures used earlier for selecting a school and the subjects. Only one thing new was introduced, however. Apart from audio – recording two lessons, this time I also video recorded another two lessons. The need for the video

recording arose out of the curiosity to see if the video – recording had any advantage over the audio – recording in the context of this study.

The video recording was made by a trained technician who works in the language laboratory at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Addis Ababa University. I explained the purpose for which I needed the recordings to the technician prior to the time of the recordings. To avoid interruptions that the video recording machine might cause to the school system on two days, I arranged for the video recording to be made on the day on which the class had two consecutive English lessons.

Unfortunately, due to the large number of students in class during the recording (there were 76 students), the video recordings turned out to be full of noises. The data was transcribed after having copied it onto an audio tape. Three teachers, one from junior and two from senior secondary schools, did the transcribing and counter checking of the audio-recorded lessons. In fact, all the recorded lessons were transcribed but only a single lesson of full period length was analyzed in the same detail as the one I was planning to do in the data of the main study. In-depth analysis of the second pilot data taught me a crucial lesson (see 2 below) to analyze the data of the main study. .

To sum up, the experience gained from the first pilot study cleared the ground for collecting data for the main study. As explained earlier, the need for the second pilot data arose from the desire to analyze a full period data on a single lesson before analyzing the data of the main study. A full period in-depth analysis of a lesson

transcript which was made during the second pilot study was found to fit the purpose of the study. This also gave me an additional opportunity to try out the analytical procedure that the preliminary analysis of the pilot data suggested.

Before moving on to the section on the Main Study, let us look at two lessons (one of which helped me in the main study) that I learned from collecting and analyzing the second pilot data. These are:

1. The transcript data of one period full single lesson on 'Letter Writing' was analyzed from the second audio recorded lessons in the same depth that the main data was later analyzed. From the abundance of the episodes that involved verbal behavior in the transcripts of the analyzed audio –recorded lesson, I realized that a more comprehensive understanding of language teaching classroom verbal behavior would be obtained if a more in – depth analysis is made on a fewer lessons than was initially planned. This pointed to the need to do a more in-depth analysis of two whole - lesson interactions rather than the originally planned four lessons.

2. My experience might save people in future from wasting their time trying to get decent video recordings particularly from large classes such as the ones in this study.

3 . 9 The Main Study

This section describes the subjects of the main study and the tools used for data gathering.

3.9.1 The subjects

Grade 9 English teachers and students were used as subjects of the main study.

3.9.1.2 Selection of teachers

As explained in the previous chapter, this work was planned to study the classroom processes of English teaching/learning through studying the verbal behaviors used during lessons. The criteria used to select teachers in the study and the grade level they teach have been explained earlier in this chapter. The experience obtained from the pilot data suggested the need for minimizing the number of lessons to be used and maximizing the depth of the analysis of the lessons in the main study.

At the beginning of my plan, I intended to select the subjects of the main study from the secondary schools that are located in the proximity of my place of work to minimize the inconvenience that might arise from the mismatch between my teaching schedule at the university and the subjects' teaching schedule in their schools. There are three government secondary schools and one non-government school close to the university. Non-government schools are excluded from this study. The reason for the exclusion has been explained earlier in the chapter.

The school official in one of the three government schools did not want the study to be conducted in their school. The other two schools did not have the teacher 'type' that I wanted to be the subjects of the main study. I, therefore, asked four secondary schools which are relatively further away from the University for permission to collect data from their schools. All granted me the required permission but only two schools had one

teacher each who fitted the required criteria. I used both of them as the subjects of the main study.

3.9.1.3 Selection of the students

A total of 20 students, i.e., 10 students from each of the 2 teachers' classes were selected by the teachers. As noted in the preceding section, experience gained from the pilot study suggested the need to drop the 'average' and retain 'weak' and 'strong' groups of students for the main study. It needs to be noted again that 'weak' and 'strong' is based on the teachers' perceptions of the students' participation in the lessons. Altogether, therefore, 10 'strong' and 10 'weak' students were selected for diary writing.

3.10 Tools of data collection for the main study

Like the pilot data, data of the main study was collected using classroom observation, teacher interview and student diaries.

3.10.1 Classroom observation

The same procedures that were followed during the pilot data collection were followed during the main data collection. This means that I observed both teachers' classes for 6 periods each. Three of the 6 observed periods from each class were audio-recorded using the same recording machine described earlier. Of the 6 periods that were audio-recorded, two lessons, i.e., one grammar lesson and one vocabulary lesson, were found to fill whole periods from both teachers' classes. The audio-recorded data used in the main study were, therefore, one grammar lesson taught by one of the two teachers and one vocabulary lesson taught by the other teacher. (See Appendices 2 & 7 for the

transcripts of the grammar lesson and the vocabulary lesson respectively). In the remaining 4 periods the teachers taught more than one lesson type in one period. This means that they, for example, taught either reading and vocabulary or vocabulary and grammar.

3.10.2 Teacher interviews

Both teachers in the main study were interviewed at the end of classroom observations. Before conducting the interviews but after finishing classroom observations, I gave both teachers copies of the audio-recorded lessons and asked them to listen to them at home. Experience gained from the pilot interview prompted me to give them more clear instructions on why listening to the recordings was needed. The interviews were made in English.

3.10.3 Student diaries

Following the procedures used in the pilot study, in the main study also a total of 20 students (10 students from each teacher's class) were asked to write diaries on their English periods using the local language. One change that was made here was that the subjects of the main study were asked to write diaries on as many periods as they could in three weeks rather than on any fixed number of periods as was done for the pilot study. This seems to have increased the quality of the diaries in the main study although it has reduced the number of the periods each student's diary covered. At the end of the second week, 18 students handed in their diaries to me, not to the teachers as was the case during the pilot study. Two students from one of the teachers' classes did not hand in their diaries (see Appendix 5 for the English translation of the grammar student diaries, and Appendix 10 for the vocabulary student diaries).

3.11 Transcription and translation

As noted above, the data of the main study was collected towards the end of the (1997/8) academic calendar. July and August are opportune months to ask a favour of teachers. I copied the audio-recordings of the lessons and the interviews onto different tape cassettes and distributed them to three of my friends who are teaching in the secondary schools. After 10 days I collected the tapes and the transcripts from the teachers. Then, I wanted to get the transcripts checked against the tapes by two other people who are not teachers just to see if classroom experience of the teachers who first transcribed the lessons had biased them to write what should have been said instead of what was actually said and audio-recorded during the lesson. The two people changed a few things in the first transcripts when they did the counter checking.

Before giving the transcripts back to the teachers to check their original work again, I wanted to get the transcripts counter checked by students who had been in grade 9 in that academic year thinking that students would understand other students' and teachers' language better. Four students did the counter checking in my presence at my home. The students identified some words that were judged to be inaudible by the previous two groups of people. Finally, I returned the transcripts and the tapes to the teachers who made the original transcripts to listen again and see if they would agree with some of the changes made in the transcript. All of them agreed with the changes made.

Student diaries were written in the local language. Before giving the diaries to the teachers to translate them into English, I studied them myself and marked the diaries

that I considered to be relevant to the intended purpose. Then I distributed the diaries to the three teachers who earlier assisted with transcribing the data. This was in August shortly after transcribing the lessons and the interviews was over. After the draft translations were made by the teachers I collected both the original diaries and their translations from the teachers and exchanged their work with each other and required them for counter checking. They made minor changes in each others' work and returned the original and the translations. Later I got the translations re-checked against their original language by two of my colleagues during their spare time.

3.12 Key to transcriptions

The transcripts of the lessons were written like the script of a play with no special marks used to indicate tone of voice, speech overlap, or other linguistic features. Wherever necessary comments were provided in double brackets. For example, 'inaudible' is used in double brackets against the turns in which what was said was not clear from the tape.

There are limited instances in the transcript data in which unnominated answerers offered answers. I have indicated all unnominated answerers by writing 'unnominated' in double brackets against the relevant turns but not all nominated answerers' turns are marked 'nominated'. Capital letters were used to transcribe the local language used during the audio-recorded data. The following initials were used to identify participants:

T	Teacher speaks
S	Student speaks
Ss	Students speak
I	Interviewer
E	Grammar teacher
K	Vocabulary teacher

3.13 Final comments

As will be made clear in the next chapters, the analysis of all sorts of data used in this study has, in qualitative terms, established the nature of interaction during lessons and the

potential learning opportunities that arose during lessons. Therefore, the investigative approach used in this study is mainly qualitative as the data themselves (as shown in Table 1 below) are largely qualitative in nature.

Table 1

<u>Type of data</u>	<u>Source of data</u>	<u>Amount of data-----</u>
1. Audio – recorded lessons	grade 9 English lesson	two periods – long lesson
2. Teacher interviews	grade 9 English teachers	2: 40 hours interview data
3. Student diaries	grade 9 students	18 student diaries
4. <u>Field notes</u>	<u>classroom observation</u>	<u>field notes -----</u>

Now that we have read the nature of the contextual background of the study in the 1st chapter, the theoretical assumptions underlying the study in the 2nd chapter, and the description of the Subjects and of the Research methodology in the 3rd chapter, it is time for us to move on to the chapters that analyze and interpret the data. It is the task of the next 6 chapters (i.e., Chapters IV-IX) to do this.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.0 Preliminary comments on the data and the analytical procedure

As stated in the previous chapters the purpose of this work is to study the classroom processes of English teaching and learning in the secondary school through studying classroom verbal behaviour. Classroom verbal behaviour as it is used in this study refers *not to selected aspects of the verbal behaviour but to all the verbal behaviours that were used in the lesson – long classroom interaction*. This means that whole lessons have been analysed in the study to explore the nature of the verbal behaviours that were used during the lessons.

Should the analysis appear to emphasis some behaviour over others, it needs to be noted that emphasis is directly related to the relative abundance of certain verbal behaviour in the audio-recorded data. However, as will be shown in the analysis and interpretation sections later, an attempt has been made to explore a wide range of episodes in the lessons in order to obtain insight into the nature of the verbal behaviours used throughout the lessons. This, I should hope, has enabled me to give a comprehensive description and explanation of the verbal behaviours used and the consequent learning opportunities that could arise during the two lessons used as data in the study.

The analysis of the whole lesson interaction with the view to exploring the nature of the verbal behaviour used during the interaction has dictated the subtopics in the analysis to emerge from the various episodes that constitute the lesson. At first glance, the various subtopics in the analysis may tend to look distinct and independent from each other but it should be noted that their interconnection lies in the fact that they all constitute the verbal behaviours to be explored - and exploring the verbal behaviour used in the lessons is the main purpose for which the present study has been planned.

To see the extent to which classroom verbal behaviour could help understand the classroom processes of English teaching and learning, 2 hours of lessons taught by 2 teachers in the secondary school were audio-taped and transcripts of the lessons were made. Supplementary data were also obtained from classroom observation, teacher interview and learner diaries. Chapters IV - VI present the analysis and the interpretation of the data obtained from a grammar lesson. Chapters VII - IX present the analysis and the interpretation of the data obtained from a vocabulary lesson. Chapter X concludes the whole Thesis.

The need to analyse and report the results of each lesson in separate chapters arose from the desire to show the specific nature of the verbal behaviours in the different lessons. The search for the nature of the verbal behaviour to explain the potential learning opportunities that arise during the lessons is the common theme that runs throughout the seemingly disparate chapters.

4 . 1 Notes on categories of questions in the data

Because of the extent to which they have been used in the present data, teacher solicits in this analysis have been dealt with in a relatively more detail than any other verbal behaviour. For convenience of the analysis and explanation, the solicits in transcript data have been classified into 5 categories. As discussed in the 2nd chapter of this work, various studies have categorised classroom questions from their own perspectives. Two things in general appear to underlie the principle of developing categories used in many of the studies discussed in the previous chapter. On the one hand, the studies that were conducted in the content area subjects seem to have considered the cognitive level of questions as the underlying principle of developing question categories. In Chapter II, for example, we have read Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives as a source of cognitive questions. On the other hand, Long and Sato (1983) classified language teaching classroom questions on the basis of 'forms' and 'functions' of questions.

Van Lier (1988) appears to hold a basically different position in connection with categorising questions. He states that emphasising the superficial features of questions (their categories, presumably) does not enhance much the attempt to be made to promote the potential that questions have as a teaching device. Instead, he suggests more emphasis be given to the pedagogic value of the tasks that questions set students. More clearly he states his position as:

If the power of questions is as strong as observations in other contexts suggest, it is a methodological tool that can be exploited in many different ways, including the promotion of language development. An analysis must go beyond simple distinctions such as display and referential questions, yes/no and open-ended questions, and so on, to investigate what different tasks questions

set, and the different commitments they place on the answerer (1988: 224).

As suggested by Van Lier, classifying solicits into categories is not an issue that should matter so much. Whichever way the questions are looked at, the crucial point lies in obtaining access to understand the nature of the control the solicit type exerts over the students' learning opportunities.

In this study, the grammatical form of the soliciting utterances and the context of their occurrence in the data were used as the main criteria to determine the categories of the solicits. Categorising soliciting utterances on the basis of their structural forms might tend to create the impression of simplifying the issue because the process to be followed appears to be simple and straightforward. But it should be pointed out that such a straightforward system of classification leaves little room for inference. It is also less complex but easier to handle. What seems to matter more in working with data on soliciting behaviour is not developing a highly sophisticated category system but exploring the nature of the interactive work that the solicits set students and the nature of the linguistic production the tasks demand of the students. This has been made possible in this data using a seemingly straightforward category system.

N. B. To avoid unwanted repetitions in the chapters, the data are interpreted as they are presented. This means that there are no separate sections for data presentation and interpretation throughout the chapters.

4.2 What is the nature of the verbal behavior in a grammar lesson?

4.2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the nature of the verbal behaviour in a grammar lesson. (See Research question 1). The data that has been analysed in this chapter is based on one grammar lesson that was taught to grade 9 students. There were 76 students in the class during the lesson. Each student had been given a book at the beginning of the school year although not all had their books with them during this lesson. The lesson consists of two grammar topics. The first grammar topic is on joining pairs of sentences using 'so' to express result. The second grammar point is based on reporting direct speech. English for Ethiopia, Grade 9, book 2 was the textbook that was being used during the lesson. (See Appendix 3b for the photocopied pages of the lesson.). The textbook was published in 1996 by the Educational Materials Production and Distribution Agency (EMPDA) under the Ministry of Education. The lesson was recorded during the 6th period (11. 40 – 12 . 20 p.m.) of the morning shift in the school system. The 6th period is the last period for the morning shift students.

4.2.1 What is the nature of the teacher's lesson opening behaviour?

Let me begin this section by quoting what the teacher's verbal behaviour with which he began this grammar lesson is like.

T In our today's lesson we're going to have a look at the usage of the word 'so', the word 'so'. We are going to learn how to make use of the word 'so' in different kinds of sentences.

Consistent with the available literature, this teacher started the lesson by what is in the classic Bellack et al.'s (1966) conceptualisation of classroom language called the 'structuring move'. As noted in the extract, the teacher was setting the scene for what was going to happen. He set the scene by focusing the students' attention on what they were going to learn during that lesson period. Contrary to what observation of many classrooms in the context of this study makes one expect, this teacher did not begin the lesson by asking students to check what they could recall from the previous lesson. Unlike the other teacher in the study (Chapter VII presents this), this teacher also did not 'open the lesson' (to borrow from Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) by trying to get the students to 'tell' him the topic of the lesson for the period, either. He began the lesson just by telling the class straight away that they were going to learn the grammatical functions of 'so'.

Beginning a lesson without first talking about or preferably without getting students to talk about the lesson that was taught/learnt in the previous period seems likely to create

in the students the impression that each period's lesson is about a discrete linguistic point - discrete in the sense that each lesson period consists of different bits of linguistic information for students to learn. It is possible to think that each lesson may have, and indeed it has, linguistic information that is in some way different from that what they learned in the previous period. But even the bits of linguistic information that apparently seem to be different from each other are essentially related.

In the case being discussed here, this means that the grammatical notion of 'clauses' and the function of 'so' seem to be related. This implies that the students knowledge of clauses may enhance, although there is no evidence for the lack of it to retard, the students' learning of the function of 'so'. Recognition of this suggests the need for the teacher to build the linguistic information about the 'new' lesson on their previously studied linguistic framework that is relevant to the 'new' lesson i.e., on what the students know so far about clauses. One access for the teacher to what the students already know is through creating opportunities for them to display that knowledge before beginning the 'new' lesson. The missed opportunity, apart from enabling the teacher to build the 'new' lesson on the students' prior related knowledge, could have created incidental opportunities for students to use English to talk spontaneously about their previous lessons. (Here I feel the need to note that my intention in referring to 'missed teaching/learning opportunities' is only to draw attention to potential options rather than to criticize what was done at the time.)

The teacher, after orally announcing what they were going to learn, began the actual lesson for the period by reading himself aloud some examples of the grammar point that

they were going to learn from the textbook. He then wrote them on the blackboard and read them again. Here are the sentences that he read after writing them on the blackboard.

T Here are two sentences. The first sentence reads: He was hungry. The second one reads: He went to a restaurant for a meal. Now we're going to join these two sentences by using the word 'so'. So, we can say: He was hungry, then you find a comma, so he went to a restaurant for a meal. He was hungry, so he went to a restaurant for a meal.

The need for the teacher to read the text loud out to the class while the students could have done the reading themselves silently perhaps with a better comprehension might have come from the need he had to keep control over the students' attention and discipline. From informal communication with teachers during classroom observation for this study, I have noticed that students' lack of discipline and attention during lessons is a matter which highly worries the teachers. The issue of discipline and lack of attention gets worse when all the students are asked to do silent readings at their seats. During my observation of this class, at least no noticeable disruption to the progress of the lesson occurred when the teacher did the reading himself. Teacher talk in this context, as Allwright and Bailey note it, is not the only means through which the teacher conveys information but it is also the "primary means of controlling learner behaviour" (1991: 139).

As explained in Chapter III, student diaries were another source of data for this study. The disruption of classroom discipline during individual reading time has been noted by some of the students in their diaries. The student quoted below, for instance, is one from the 'strong' group ('S' for short here after) who complains about this issue.

We learned two lessons today: reading and vocabulary. The passage was very interesting but I couldn't enjoy it because other students who were not reading were disturbing. We were angry with the teacher because he did not try to keep them quiet. (S)

As mentioned earlier, the teacher not only read the examples from the textbook aloud but he also copied them from the book onto the blackboard. In the school culture in which this study has been conducted, teachers give explanations after having written the teaching/learning point on the blackboard. In fact, not much seems to have been done in classroom research to show the effect the blackboard has on learning but Banatwala (1989) has the following to say about the effect of teacher's failure to use the blackboard.

Even when a word is in an overall way adequately treated, its uptake may be impeded by one or the other drawbacks in the teaching, for example, the teacher's failing to highlight the spelling of the word on the blackboard (1989: 461)

Two pieces of evidence on using the blackboard are quoted below from student diaries. From the first quotation, we notice how the way the blackboard was used (not the general use of it) impeded the student's participation in the lesson while from the second quotation (W for 'weak' student) we notice the blackboard to be serving as an aid to another student's learning

1. Today many students went to the blackboard and filled in blank spaces drawn on the blackboard. I had the answers to all the questions but I did not raise my hands because I don't like to go to the blackboard. (S)

2. I found my teacher's way today to be better than the previous ways. He was writing examples relatively more clearly on the blackboard. Yet because of his speed his handwriting was not legible enough for us to read. (W)

The cases of the students quoted above in general and that of the first student in particular makes it crucial for the teacher to know how his students would like to learn lessons. In an interview, this teacher was asked if he had ever asked how his students wanted to learn English. Here are his reply:

I never did [asked] it. To tell you the truth I never did that. I'm supposed to do that but since I'm a teacher who was taught by teachers who were not democrats so since I'm a product of that ...

Prompted by this reply, I asked him if he has had opportunities to attend workshops, seminars or any other thing in the area of language teaching since his graduation in 1987. This was his reply:

Well I attended a workshop 8 years ago at Addis Ababa University. Since then, nothing has happened.

On the one hand, as can be understood from the teacher's replies to the interview questions, the teacher himself had been taught in the language teaching tradition which never gave him a chance to negotiate with his teacher on how he liked to learn. On the other hand, in-service 'compensatory' opportunities such as workshops, symposiums or seminars that are believed to play at least a re-orienting role, if not a re-training one as they could be limited in scope, are reported to be scarce. As a result of both sorts of lack, as reported in the student diaries, classroom participation and perhaps learning not only of that particular student but perhaps that of many others' taught by this teacher is feared to be suppressed

4.2.2 The nature of the teacher's feedback behaviour

As reported in Chapter II, several researchers from work in general education as well as language teaching classroom have investigated classroom talk. For example, the classroom discourse moves that constitute the teaching exchange, as explained by Bellack et al. (1966) are: *Structuring*, *Soliciting*, *Responding* and *Reacting move*. Except for the responding move, the three discourse moves identified by Bellack et al. are usually performed by the teacher. As will be shown later in this section, teacher 'reacting' move which in various literature is referred to as 'feedback' or 'follow-up' move consists of teacher evaluative feedback.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), prompted by Bellack et al.'s (1966) conceptions of classroom discourse moves, distinguished two types of exchanges from spoken classroom discourse. They called these 'teaching exchange' and 'boundary exchange'. The classroom discourse moves that are referred to as *soliciting*, *responding* and *reacting* moves in Bellack et al.'s work are named in Sinclair and Coulthard's as 'opening, answering' and 'follow-up' moves. Sinclair and Coulthard also identified from classroom spoken discourse 'framing' and 'focusing' moves as the moves through which boundary exchanges can be realised.

As reported in the previous chapters, this study concerned itself with exploring the verbal behaviour that is used in the classroom processes of teaching and learning. This section presents teacher verbal behaviour that was used in giving feedback to student

responses. Teacher soliciting behaviour and student responding behaviour will be dealt with in the later sections.

Consistent with the findings of previous classroom studies on classroom verbal behaviour (see, for example, Bellack et al. for classic work in the content classroom and Chaudron (1988) for reviews of work in the language teaching classroom, among others), this lesson follows the teacher question - student answer – teacher feedback (IRF) pattern of classroom discourse. Before turning to the section on the nature of the teacher's verbal behaviour that was used in giving feedback to student responses, let us look at what Coulthard (1977) has to say about the structure of teaching exchange. He writes:

[T]he structure is...T - P - T, T - P - T, T - P - T. In other words, the teacher almost always has the last word and two turns to speak for every pupil turn. This goes some way to explaining the consistent finding that teachers talk on average for two-thirds of the time. The teacher asks a question, the pupil answers it and the teacher provides evaluative feedback before asking another question (1977: 103)

In this study, evidence obtained from transcript data reveals that students have usually been given feedback to the answers they offered to teacher questions. In fact, the form of the feedback was sometimes simple repetition of the student answer. There is no obvious clue in the transcript data that explains why the teacher sometimes repeated only part of the student's answer while at other times he either repeated the whole answer or he did not repeat anything at all after the student. The teacher's part repetition when followed by student repetition seems to indicate his detecting of error of some kind in the student's answer. When errors were detected, the teacher sometimes did not

only repeat part of the answer to initiate repetition in the next turn but he also made the repetition inevitable by demanding it in explicit terms as shown below.

In the following extract, the task the student was required to do was joining the first two sentences in the exercise using 'so'.

The sentences were: We were very tired. We travelled by bus.

The expected answer was: We were very tired, so we travelled by bus.

Looking at the episode will enable us to see the deceptive nature of the form of some classroom questions. This means that some solicits appear to be setting light tasks for students to do, but the actual linguistic work that a seemingly light task requires of a student is so complex that sometimes the students fail to successfully solve it. In the extract below, for example, the student commits two errors (one is pronunciation and the other, omission of subject). As will be seen in the extract, it is at the 11th turn that the class managed to 'finish' repairing the errors. Even at the end of the 11th turn, it still remains to be seen the extent to which the corrections made could change the performance behaviour of the students. Now let us see what happened at the time.

1S We were very **tried** , so travelled by bus.

(**N. B.** 1. Used bold type for layout saliency purpose only. 2. Errors: one is misreading 'tired'; the other is oversight: 'we' was not read.

2T: Again. Again

3S We were very tired, so travelled by bus

4T We were very tired, very tired, say 'tired'

5S Tired

6T Tired

7S Tired

8T Tired. Would you mind doing it again? Do it again.

The language used by the teacher in turn 2 in the extract above shows the teacher's reaction to the errors committed by the student. As revealed in that turn, the teacher offered the student the opportunity to repeat the answer perhaps with the hope that the student may realise the errors in the answer. As shown in turn 3, the student managed to take care of one of the two troubles he encountered earlier. It remains unknown whether the error in 'tired' vs 'tried' was a simple misreading or a result of something else. The influence of the local language does not explain this but there are two other instances in the same transcript data in which other students committed similar errors in reading 'many' people as 'my' people; 'travel' as 'leave'. Whatever the underlying reason for the error might be, its being repaired in turn 3 seems to have solved one big problem that could have faced the teacher if he is assumed to be the ultimate person to do the correction. That is to say, if the student had repeated the sentence the same way that he had done it in the first turn, how would the teacher choose which of the two errors to handle first?

Both seem to be essential for the meaning to be communicated but one will, in some unobservable way, be more essential than the other to deserve the teacher's first attention. Perhaps the 'first come first served' principle works well in this regard. In turn 4 we observe the teacher to be doing two things. As part of an expression of his suspension of attending to the second error he used that turn, first, to officially

acknowledge his acceptance of the self-correction that was made by the student. He did this by saying:

T We're very tired very tired. Say 'tired'.

The second mission of the 4th turn was to get the student to repeat the troublesome word after him. He did that and got the word repeated in turn 5. Functionally, turn 6 seems to have done two things. One, it shows the teacher's accepting of the item that the student repeated after being required to do so. Two, it played a soliciting role as it managed to elicit a response from the student. At first glance, what the teacher has intended to do in the turn appears to be 'accepting' of the response offered by the student. What happened in turns 7 and 8, in retrospect, may enable us to say turn 6 has played a double role. That is, in turn 7 the student offered a response and this makes turn 6 a solicit while in turn 8 the teacher accepted the response elicited by turn 7. We note the same behaviour of the teacher in both turns: turns 6 and 8. This means that the teacher accepted the student's response in turn 8 (tired) in the same way that he accepted the same answer (tired) earlier in turn 6.

In turn 8, like in the 4th and 6th turns, the teacher's language generally served more than one purpose: accepting and soliciting. Turns 4 and 8 are more similar to each other than they are to turn 6 in that in both cases the teacher's language of the solicits is different from the language he used for accepting the student's responses. Functionally again, the teacher's utterances in turns 2 and 8 are similar in that both required the student to repeat answers. The forms of the utterances in the two turns are different, however.

One apparently obvious rationale for the required repetitions in 8T appears to be related to the teacher's offering of an opportunity to the student to do another self-correction. The over-sight, if it really was an oversight, that survived the first repetition is still there in the student's answer as shown in turn 9S below. 'If it really was an oversight' was deliberately needed to be included in the preceding comment to show some reservations I have because it is possible to think in terms of an alternative possibility: the influence that the student's local language may have in the use or non-use of the subject of a sentence. In the local language, the verb inflects and makes the use of the subject redundant. The redundancy is felt to be exaggerated when a sentence consists of the main and subordinate clause(s). The sentence the student being discussed was working on has one main and one subordinate clause.

In 10T, (see below) the teacher is observed raising another question. The student's failure to do self-correction seems to have initiated the question. The teacher's comment that followed his own question skips the question and refers back to the answer previously offered by the student. Let us see this.

- 9S We were very tired so travelled by bus
10T How about the subject of the second sentence?
11T 'We' 'we' ' we' shouldn't be left. 'We' shouldn't be left.

The comment seems to be doing 3 functions. Firstly, it informs the student as well as the whole class that 'we' is the subject of the verb in the second part of the sentence. Secondly, it is an answer to the question he asked at 10T. It is also a correction the teacher has offered to the error committed by the student.

Teacher repetition of the comment and the tone of his language of the comment, i.e., 'we' shouldn't be left ' seems to be more an expression of his indignation than an expression of the need he had to emphasise the importance of retaining 'we' as a subject of the verb in the second part of the sentence. This assumption emanates from the absence of the teacher's effort to enable the student to realise why the same subject that has been used in the main clause has to be maintained in the subordinate clause as well. Such feedback behaviour seems to have the potential not to lead to improved learner performance behaviour.

The question in 10T, if it were a question any longer because the teacher has already offered the answer, was not directed at the student who was still standing. Another student was given the opportunity to answer or rather to repeat the answer. The teacher repeated the answer twice after the second student and raised another question based on the answer he now received as an adequate answer. This happened as follows.

- S2 We were very tired so we travelled by bus.
T We're very tired so we travelled by bus.(2 times)
Where do you put the comma? (Repeats the question)

Evidence investigated from the transcript data so far reveals how the lesson is made to move forward through the chain of question and answer exchanges. As seen in the quoted extract, a single question in the textbook could lend itself to a wide range of questions. The range of questions created offered students a wide ranging opportunities of exposure to the language being learnt. The case of the first student in the example discussed above might be relevant to be mentioned here again. This means that because of the incorrect answers he offered rather than because of the correct ones, as the

incorrect answers themselves created other speaking turns for him, the student has had turns to use English in class. The initial turn excluded, his errors earned him 4 speaking turns. Even if the quality of the linguistic work that he has done in the 4 turns is taken to be not so encouraging, there is still some hope to believe that the turns have given him opportunities, perhaps more opportunities than many other students in that period, to get publicly involved in person - to - person conversation with his English teacher using the target language that he was trying to learn.

The participation behaviour of this particular student is similar, weakly though, to the participation behaviour of Igor – a student who, in Allwright's (1980: 165) study, took a wholly disproportionate share of the identified turns.' Allwright describes Igor's behaviour as

Igor did not get more than his share by stealing from others very often or by interrupting. He got it by being asked more often, by responding more frequently to general solicits, and by taking advantage more often of opportunities for discourse maintenance (1980: 173)

Like Igor, this student did not steal a turn. He also did not interrupt the current speaker. He did not respond to general solicits as often as Igor did, however. He was just afforded frequent opportunities of maintaining his own discourse. Igor was reported to have not made much progress at the end of the course despite the disproportionate turns he is noted to have taken in the interaction while the progress of the student in this study was not measured.

It is possible to assume that students in the context of this study might feel privileged to get the opportunity to be talked to by the teacher in the classroom. This perhaps arises

from the lack of opportunities to talk either to the teacher or to other fellow learners in English during lessons as often as they wish. Primarily, what limits the opportunity is the limited options that the teacher's verbal behaviour makes for students available to participate in classroom interaction. Questioning, for instance, was the only official option used by this teacher to draw students to participation in classroom interaction during this lesson. Even if the teacher attempts to evenly distribute questions among the students in class, not much interactive work is hoped to be gained when seen in light of the interactive potential of the textbook questions or the questions asked by the teacher.

There is also another instance to be discussed in connection with the teacher's verbal behaviour that was used in giving feedback to students' answers. Let us first look at the episode from the lesson and then move on to the discussion that follows it.

- 1T What's the past tense of 'want'? (repeats)
2S1 **Went** (N.B. used bold type here for layout saliency purpose only)
- 3T Went? No. Past tense of want? How about you? Past tense of want?
 (re-directs the solicit to another student)
- 4S2 **Went**
- 5T Went ? go – went 'went' is the past of 'go'. What is the past tense of 'want'?
- 6S3 **Wanted**
- 7T Wanted. O.k. Joseph said that he wanted ___ What is the next word? (cont.)

If we look at 3T in the above extract, we notice how the teacher reacted to an incorrect answer. In that turn he rejected the unwanted answer straightaway. No comment followed his curt rejection. As if nothing unusual happened, he repeated the solicit once again and 'randomly' nominated one student from among the middle rows of seats. The way he nominated this student itself tends to imply, if only weakly, uncertainty about getting the answer that was being sought from the second student as well. In the same

turn, the teacher, after nominating the student, repeated the solicit once again. He did the repetition perhaps for the sake of the nominated student. Before the nomination was made, this student also had apparently heard as much as others. Now that she had been allocated a turn to answer, she deserved to hear it again. She gave him the response off-hand and sat down quickly.

As was perhaps expected, her response turned out to be incorrect. It was the same incorrect response that was rejected earlier. It remains unknown whether her repetition of the previously rejected answer was intentional or accidental. Future research is needed to find out why and when students repeat answers that are already publicly judged by the teacher to be incorrect. Until then, however, repetition by this student of the previously rejected answer could probably be assumed to be intentional because the question caught her off guard and she couldn't think of another answer. If this is the case, it means for this student, and perhaps for some others as well, repeating of a wrong answer might be a less embarrassing strategy than having nothing to say once they have been allocated a turn.

Alternatively, it is possible to think that her repetition of the answer that was already proved to be wrong could be unintentional. This happens to be so as answers offered by some students can remain inaudible to some of the students in the class. This appears to be truer in large classes such as the class under discussion. Teacher frequent repetition of answers after students may also develop in other students in the same class the tendency to listen only to the teacher when he repeats student answers.

Still another instance of teacher feedback behaviour is quoted below. Here the class were working on pronoun inflections. The problem begins when the teacher asked a student what the pronoun 'they' is as opposed to the 'you' that they had already discussed. Let us first look at the following extract taken from the data.

- 1T 'You' can be second person singular or plural. How about 'they'? 'How' about 'they'?
- 2T 'They' is known as -----?
- 3T What do you call it?
- 4S Plural
- 5T It is plural but is it 1st, 2nd or 3rd person?
- 6S 2nd person
- 7T No. 2nd person is this (underlines 'you' written earlier on the blackboard)
- 8T 3rd person plural. 'They' is known as 3rd person plural (repeats)
O.k. Now (cont.)

As can be observed from the extract, the teacher stopped for an answer after repeating and paraphrasing the solicitation different times. It is not known why he happened to stop for an answer at turn 3T rather than, say, at turn 2T or instead of repeating or paraphrasing the solicitation still further. Some assumptions about the rationale for the repetitions/paraphrases could be suggested. On the one hand, the repetition might have arisen out of the teacher's need to give students time to think about the answer. Or it might be an expression of his effort to increase the number of students who would be willing to participate in the lesson. Still another possibility for the repetition might arise from the nature of the class size. There were 76 students in class during this lesson and the teacher perhaps used repetition/paraphrasing to ensure hearing of the whole class. It is also possible to think about it in terms of the learning opportunities the teacher wanted to create for students - that is, opportunities for listening to various ways of asking for the same thing.

As seen in the extract, the answer the solicits managed to elicit from one student did not happen to be the answer the teacher was expecting. What misled the student might be the 'plural' in '**you** can be second person singular or plural' in the previous turn, i.e., turn 1T. The 'plural – singular' concept appears to be a more frequent encounter for students than the elusive pronoun inflections. Later sections will have more on this.

The teacher seems to have recognised this confusion when he delayed rejection of the answer altogether and skillfully commented on the 'correctness' of the answer perhaps in a different context and its 'incorrectness' in that particular context. In other words, in turn 5T the teacher, acknowledged that what was proposed as an answer is one grammatical feature of the item in question. In the same turn and at the same time he also showed the student (and other students in the class as well) that what was being asked for was actually not that aspect of the item. It appears that he did not find it necessary to pursue the 'plural - singular' issue raised by the student any further as they had already dealt with that a few turns earlier in the same lesson.

Turn 5T seems to have done also another task. The teacher used the turn to narrow the solicit to 'person' by eliminating the candidate answer 'number'. To tell from the extract quoted earlier, the attempt made by the teacher to make the solicit easier only succeeded in making it rather more complex for the student to answer. Initially, the student did not seem to have the inflections in the pronoun - i.e., 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons in his limited repertoire of pronouns. When asked, he had to decide on one of the two forms that were perhaps readily available to him. The complexity that came with the new solicit is the introduction of the 3 new candidates - 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons. The students know the

surface features of the pronoun, i.e., the inflexions - I, we, you etc. - from their learning in the previous lessons, perhaps. That knowledge might, however, be latent - available but not easily accessible at that stage.

In turn T7; we notice the straight - away rejection that has been suspended earlier. In that turn, the teacher with a curt negative reply 'no' dropped the inadequate answer that the same student provided. This time he did not bother to narrow the solicit any further. Enough damage seems to have already been done. He did not want to re-direct the solicit to other students, either. He only said: "second person is this"(underlining 'you' on the blackboard). With no further comment either on the rejected answer or on the student who offered the answer, first, in short and, then, in a complete sentence. He repeated the answer once more in a complete sentence. The repetition in that context seems to have a warning tone - a warning against forgetting the previously learned lessons.

As part of the attempt made towards gaining insight into this teacher's perceptions of his own feedback behaviour, some questions were asked during the interview. One of the questions relates to how he reacts to student answers that he judges to be incorrect. Here are his replies.

I don't expect all students to answer questions. It depends on their ability. Some may be shy, others may not know the exact answers. Anyway, it doesn't discourage me. I try to know why they fail to give correct answers. After all, they are students and they've come to class to learn and I've to know their weakness.

Interview replies obtained from this teacher reveal that repeating answers after students creates on the student a sense of gaining recognition from the teacher. Here is how this teacher replied when he was asked of his opinion on repeating answers after students.

Sometimes it helps. The student feels that he has been given recognition if the teacher repeats but in high school we don't do this because it's time killing. We need the time to cover the portions in the textbook in a limited period of time. So we don't usually pay attention to students' answers.

Yet another but still a similar question was asked to get his opinion on what else he does, other than repeating after them, with the correct answers he obtains from students.

He replied to the question as follows:

I've never thought about that. You see if students answer successfully I get satisfied, become happy. It's natural. I write some of the answers which are answered correctly on the blackboard so that those who have not answered will take and learn from this. They can learn from their classmate.. it creates a competition among students.

The intended effect of the teacher's behaviour, i.e., creating a sense of competition among students appears to be being realised. The following quotation taken from a student diary, for example, is an expression of the student's determination to change her learning behaviour both in classroom participation and in doing tasks at home. Apparently, the determination is initiated by the teacher's evaluative behaviour.

Today I was very happy during English period. It was a reading lesson. We were taking turns to read and I got a chance to read. I think I read well because the teacher said, 'very good' when I finished reading. I wished I always had a chance to read or answer questions. After the reading lesson, we did vocabulary questions. There also I got a chance to answer a question. This again made me happy. I said to myself: Now that the teacher knows what I can do, I'll always do my homework and raise my hands to answer questions. (W)

Evidence obtained from student diaries has also another story to tell us about some students' responding behaviour. The content of the excerpts reminds teachers how important it is for them to know how their students feel when they are asked to answer questions and how they react when they are given feedback. Let see the excerpts.

1. The teacher asked me a question today although I didn't raise my hand. The student who was sitting next to me was telling me the answer when I got up but I couldn't even use that.(S)

- 2 In the middle of his teaching the teacher asked a question. I raised my hand to answer the question. I had the answer written on my palm. The moment I got closer to the blackboard, I failed to remember the answer and read it from my palm. This caused laughter in the class. Shame-faced, I returned to my seat. (W)

4 . 2 . 3 The nature of the teacher's verbal behaviour in turn allocation

This teacher's verbal behaviour that was used in allocating answering turns to students has soliciting characteristics. These characteristics of the verbal behaviour have made it important to refer to the category to which the solicit used by the teacher belongs. A later section will have more on the nature of the categories. Now let me begin this section by first quoting from the transcript data.

T Then 5?
Number 5?
Who can do the 5th one?

In this extract, the teacher used different solicits to identify a student who would do the 5th question they had in the textbook. Although all the utterances serve the same purpose and therefore their simultaneous occurrence makes them sound redundant, there is some hope to believe that the redundancy itself is, to a limited extent, an expression of

opportunities for learners to encounter different expressions in the target language. It is up to the students to make them later fit their own individual needs.

Unlike in the above case, in the following instance, the teacher perhaps took his announcing of which question in the list they were going to do to be a sufficient solicit to select answerers. In fact, it proved to be sufficient because as many hands as that went up when solicits were repeated/paraphrased went up following this single soliciting utterance. This could be taken as proof of the redundancy that repetition of questions creates. However, to a certain extent, redundancy is itself believed to enhance understanding.

There was also an instance in which the teacher read the question himself after informing the class which number the question is in the list. In this instance, the student's task was connecting the sentences with 'so' and reading the combined sentence. As discussed earlier, this behaviour highly reduces the student's task to a single word contribution. Let us see it.

- T The third sentence?
 The exam was too difficult. All the students failed.
S The exam was too difficult, so all the students failed.

In the extract below, the teacher made a series of solicits that were aimed at eliciting ideas that are related to re-constructing one lesson topic that they had apparently learned in one of their previous lesson periods. When the focus of the solicit is to develop a topic in a lesson by re-constructing the previously learned points, the patterns of putting the solicits to the class have predictable forms such as seen in the examples below. The

teacher seems to require students to suggest words to fit in the unfinished slot in the sentences. This type of soliciting behaviour has a damaging effect on the nature of the learners' verbal behaviour.

Functionally, the teacher's verbal behaviour that we shall see below is similar to his behaviour used in the 'what at the end' type of solicits to be discussed later. Such utterances are, in Cunningham's (1971) opinion, examples of cognitive memory questions. He also calls such unfinished teacher utterances 'fill in the blank' type questions. Answers to such solicits are usually obtained from students who forward them as soon as the solicits are posed. Therefore, it is only when the teacher feels the frequency with which the students offer answers as a threat to the loss of his control over the lesson that he demands allocation of answering turns to students as shown in 11T below.

- 1T This becomes____
That. These becomes -----?
Those (teacher offers answer)
Today becomes?
- S Today
- T No
- T Today becomes----?
- T That day
- T Tomorrow becomes----?
- Ss (raise hands)
- T No. No. One by one
- S The next day

4.2.4 The nature of the teacher's informing behaviour

Earlier in the text, it has been discussed that IRF is the nature of the structure of classroom discourse in this data. It has also been pointed out that the teacher accepts a student answer and then offers feedback before he asks another question. This pattern has been illustrated with Coulthard's (1977) T-P-T to include the possibility in which the teacher, after offering feedback to student answer, comments on the answer before he asks another question. In his comments that follow student's answer, the teacher provides linguistic information on any aspect of the language point in focus during the lesson. In limited circumstances student errors have been noted to initiate further linguistic information from the teacher. In other instances, however, what determines the provision of information by the teacher is not known because there are instances in the data in which incorrect answers do not necessarily initiate further information before new questions are asked.

Even in the circumstance in which extending the student answer was found to be necessary, what determined the amount of the linguistic information to be offered by the teacher remained unknown. In this section, we shall look at some of the instances in which teacher utterances were used for giving students extended linguistic information. Let us begin with the following exchanges in which the teacher informs and re-informs the students various aspects of number and inflexions of personal pronoun.

- 1T Which pronoun is known as the 3rd person plural?
2T Which pronoun is known as 3rd person plural?
3S Am they are
4T No. No. No. You see – 'he' 'she' 'it' - these are known as 3rd person singular.
5T Now which pronoun is known as 3rd person plural?
6S Is am are

- 7T look at the board 'I' the pronoun 'I' is known as 1st person singular, singular or plural?
- 8Ss Singular
- 9T Then 'you' is the 2nd person singular or plural. 'He', 'she' and 'it' these are known as 3rd person singular. How about 'we'? How about 'we'? How about 'we'?
- 10S First person singular
- 11T No. This is 1st person singular (underlines the 'I' on the black board).
- 12T 'I' is 1st person singular. 'We' is 1st person plural.

As shown in the text quoted above, grammar points such as number, personal pronouns and verbs to be used with the pronouns do not seem to be lending themselves to sound explanation. From what happened in the extract, there seem to be 2 things that might have been required but were not given separate attention. One of them is the students' problem in distinguishing between pronouns and verbs. Answers suggested by students in turns 3S and 6S, to the questions asked in turns 1T and 5T are good examples. The incorrect answers that were suggested by students in both turns as revealed in turns 4T and 7T managed to elicit answers from the teacher although in turn 7T the teacher, after offering the answer himself, produced a choice question perhaps to check comprehension.

If the status of the answers suggested in 3S had been made clear in turn 4T in the context of the topic under class discussion at the time, perhaps the same items would not have appeared in turn 6S only to be rejected again as incorrect answers. This incident is an example of a missed teaching opportunity for the teacher. Their re-appearance as answers might indicate the potential the language items have to attract different students specially under the topic being discussed. In turn 7T again the items faced the same fate. This means that in turn 7, the teacher by-passed commenting on why they are again

incorrect answers and continued with his own agenda of personal pronouns and offered the answer himself in the same way that he did in the previous turn. In turn 7T we notice the positive effect, as Bantawala (1989) notes it, of the use of the blackboard in keeping what was discussed earlier for reference in the later stage of the lesson. The same items had earlier in the period been written on the blackboard and the class had some discussion on the singular – plural forms of the verbs to be used with personal pronouns. In turn 7T, the teacher stopped for a moment the attempt to get elicited information from students and himself began to offer most of the remaining linguistic information on the topic under discussion. This decision seems to have enabled him not to suspend for a while but to eliminate for good the confusing verbs from the scene. In turn 9T, ‘you’ has been introduced, or re- introduced as this might have not been the first time for this to be done, as the second person singular or plural pronoun.

This decontextualised statement is potentially confusing specially when seen in terms of the various referents the English ‘you’ has in the local language. The local language has 2 different terms to refer to the singular and the plural ‘you’ in English. In addition, in English ‘you’ can be used in a direct address to a single male or a female while the local language has again 2 different terms to be used in a direct address. There is yet another difference to be mentioned between the way ‘you’ is used in English and the way it is used in a direct address in the local language. In English there is only the plural – singular distinction that has to be made. Otherwise, as said earlier, the same form is used for male-female, young – old, or to indicate a difference in a status and role relationship but in the local language apart from the distinctions discussed above, we use a different term to directly address a person for whom we have respect either

because of difference in age or in status. These differences cannot be catered for as was done in this transcript data by simply telling students: 'You is second person singular or plural'.

If we look again at turn 4T, the pronouns 'he' 'she' and 'it' have been introduced as the 3rd person singular while in turn 9T they are re-introduced to be contrasted with the plural or singular 'you' although the basis of their co - occurrence is not made clear. It is possible to speculate (of course with no intention of criticising how this was done at the time) by stating that perhaps the possibility to present right from the beginning the 3rd person singular number in contrast with the 3rd person plural number such as was seen in turn 11T might have stopped the confusions from happening at an earlier stage of the topic. A preliminary sign of this was seen when in turn 5T the teacher, after 'finishing' with the 3rd person singular number, asked for the plural form of the 3rd person pronoun. As shown in the extract, the answer that was required in turn 5T was suspended until turn T11, however.

As the preceding pieces of evidence taken from the transcript data have shown, some grammar points are so vague in that they do not seem to be lending themselves to sound explanation. If the system of the lesson to be taught is found not to be amenable to conventional teacher explanation such as indicated in the preceding extract and if explanation itself is believed to be betraying teachers by being so elusive, then it appears to be right if ways are sought to enable teachers in the context of this study to re-think about the long standing faith they have had in the value of this instructional device. Before concluding this section, let us first look at two excerpts taken from the interview

made with this teacher, and then, see what that might lead us to say. In both excerpts, the teacher seems to be sharing the blame for students' 'deficiency' in the target language

1. The cause for the students' deficiency partly rests on us. Instead of teaching them the language we teach them about the language. Concerning the grammar, a case in point can be the traditional noun, pronoun, adjective and adverb. These things and the rules of using them are not easy things to handle. The problem is that when we teach them, these points are put together and as I told you earlier it all depends on the teacher's creativity. We shouldn't give them more than is needed.
2. It's the teacher's responsibility to create the necessary situation for students to take part in the lesson. It all depends on the teacher's updateness. The teachers are losing interest in the profession at the moment, any way. The more you stay in the profession the less interest you have in the profession. Many of us are not by far better than our students. May be we were bright when we started teaching but now we've stopped reading and writing.

As seen in the extract, the teacher not only appreciates the existing problem in the teaching of grammar and shares the blame for students' failure, but he also recognises that the solution lies in teachers' hands - in their creativity. This might primarily point to the need to find out what caused the loss of teachers' interest in the profession, and to point out what it requires to re-cover the lost interest. What might initiate teachers' interest in their own profession might at the same time initiate their creativity to use their potential to cause better learning in the classroom.

In fact, it is not the immediate aim of this study to pursue this issue any further. The aim of this study is to reveal what the classroom behaviour that is being practised is like and to show how that behaviour potentially relates to learning. Much more needs to be seen

yet to state fully what the practice is like but evidence that has been obtained from the data so far tends to reveal that the teacher's verbal behaviour in this grammar lesson, and as is understandable from his replies quoted above, that of many other teachers' verbal behaviour in grammar teaching, leaves much to be desired yet. The obtained evidence also throws light on what lies behind the teacher's verbal behaviour. If we wish to make grammar lessons more sensible, then, future research is needed at least to tell us what might mobilise the teachers' potential that this teacher himself has suggested as a solution. Before we move on to Chapter V in which the recurrent verbal behaviour in this grammar lesson will be discussed, let us briefly summarise the salient points raised so far.

4 . 2 . 5 Summary of the chapter

Attempts have been made in the different sections of the chapter so far to obtain insight into the nature of the teacher's verbal behaviour that was used in developing the lesson. The teacher began the lesson straightaway without first asking some questions to check the students' understanding of the previous lesson and at the same time to link the 'old' lesson to the 'new' one. He started the new lesson without having had a brainstorming session as part of an attempt to obtain some insight into the level of the students' related knowledge on which the 'new' lesson was going to be built.

These aspects of the teacher's lesson beginning behaviour were pointed out in the discussion of the finding not to draw attention to missed opportunities but to draw attention to potential alternatives with which to begin a lesson. After all, there is no research – based evidence at least in the context of the present study to inform us the

way that leads to better learning. In fact, previous studies that revealed the idiosyncratic nature of learning (Allwright 1984; Seime 1998 and Slimani 1987) tend to carry the implication that whatever gets done in class during a lesson, students have implicit ways of their own to make sense of the lesson in the classroom.

It has also been noted in the discussion of the results that the teacher after reading the examples from the textbook loud out to students, wrote them on the blackboard and repeated the reading. Apparently the teacher's behaviour that was involved in the loud reading of the lesson from the textbook when students have got their own textbook to do their own private reading seems to be doing a redundant job. However, two points need to be taken into account before allowing oneself to feel too much of the impression that is feared to be created. On the one hand, the teacher's reading loud out provides the students' with incidental opportunities to develop listening as a skill in its own right. On the other hand, the teacher's reading loud out sustains the teacher's control over classroom discipline. This is because individual reading in the classroom of over 75 students gives rise to unofficial talk among the students. Restoring students' attention after it has got out of hand is not an easy job for teachers who are working in the context of this study.

Available evidence in the analysis of the data has so far revealed that the nature of the discourse style followed in this grammar lesson is (S) I-R-F (see Research question 1). The teacher follows up student answers by repeating the answers after students. The repetition can be part or all of the answer offered by a student. The teacher, by getting the students to repeat answers, makes them aware of the part of the sentence that he

thinks needs further work before it is made to fit into the classroom discourse. It should be pointed out here, however, that the repetition of an answer by the teacher is sometimes indiscriminate. This means that he repeats both correct and incorrect answers partly or fully after the student.

Teacher repetition of answers alone cannot, therefore, be taken as evidence of the teacher's location or detection of errors. In the circumstances in which repetitions fail to draw student's attention to errors, the teacher supplements them by explicit demand for correction of errors. The evidence that has been found in the student diary agrees with the effect that the teacher, when interviewed, said he would like his behaviour to have on student performance. Pieces of evidence discussed so far also show how difficult it is for the teacher to produce good grammatical explanations.

The next chapter (Chapter V) presents teacher soliciting behaviour in a grammar lesson. As will be made clear in the chapter, teacher soliciting behaviour is the most frequently noted verbal behaviour during this grammar lesson. There will be more on this in the chapter. Let us see it.

CHAPTER V

THE RECURRENT VERBAL BEHAVIOUR IN A GRAMMAR LESSON

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the recurrent verbal behavior used during a grammar lesson. As will be made clear in the chapter, teacher soliciting behavior is the recurrent verbal behavior noted in this grammar lesson.

5.1 Teacher soliciting behaviour in a grammar lesson

As might have been made clear from the preceding discussions, questioning is the main instructional tool that has been used in the transcript data under discussion. A closer look at the data shows that there are 138 instances in which teacher utterances served soliciting functions. This section deals with the nature of the utterances that served soliciting functions and the behaviour that was used in the utterances. (To avoid obscuring the presentation of the main text, a separate list of the soliciting utterances used in this grammar lesson transcript data is provided in Appendix 3a. The soliciting utterances are listed under categories. Who the solicits were answered by during the lesson is also indicated under each soliciting utterance in the list in the Appendix. Summary Tables are, however, used in the main text.)

5.1.1 The Categories

As can be recalled, justifications for the type of categories used in this data have been presented at length in the earlier sections (see beginning of Chapter IV). It is, therefore, sufficient to state here that the soliciting utterances in this data have been categorised on the basis of their structural forms and the context of their occurrence in the data. Accordingly, the utterances that served soliciting functions in the data have been classified into 5 categories. These are:

- 1 'What' at the beginning type of solicits
- 2 'What' at the end type of solicits
- 3 Solicits with 'Whs' other than 'What'
- 4 'Yes/no' solicits
- 5 Miscellaneous solicits

Table 2 (below) shows the summary of who the solicits in the above categories were answered by during a grammar lesson. (Note: X shows solicits whose answers are referred to other solicits in other categories. This happens because of teacher repetition/paraphrasing of solicits. 'Not ans.' in the Table refers to 'not answered'.)

Table 2

	T	S	Ss	X	No ans.	Total
'What' beginning	12	18	3	-	1-	34
'What' at the end				1	-	1
Other 'Whs'	13	9	7	7		36
'Yes/no' solicits	1	3	7	8	-	19
Miscellaneous solicits	8	18	4	14	4	48
Total						138

5.1.1.1 'What' at the beginning solicits

There are 34 instances in which teacher soliciting utterances that have 'What' at the beginning were used in this grammar lesson transcript data. The teacher answered 12 of the solicits himself while individual students answered 18 solicits. Three solicits elicited choral answers. The answer to one of the solicits was not sought.

5.1.1.1.1 The verbal behaviour used in 'What' at the beginning solicits

To begin with, let us look at the following fairly long series of semantically related soliciting utterances asked by the teacher only to get a single answer elicited from the class. In fact, as will be commented on later, the teacher is eventually noted to have provided the answer himself as all the solicits in the list 'failed' to elicit the required answer.

- T O.k. Last time we learned how to change direct sentence into indirect statement or reported statements. While changing from direct speech into reported speech we've to keep in our mind certain points which are very important.

- 1T What's the first point that we have to keep in mind?
2 Who can tell me the point we've to remember? The first point we've to remember?
3 How do we change a direct statement into a reported statement?
4 Do you do it by guessing?
5 or do you do it as you like?
6 you've to remember certain point. What's the first point?
7 What's the first point you're expected to remember?
8 Anyone?

In the above episode the teacher, after reminding the students of one language point that they had presumably learned in the previous lesson, led them to a responsible position of answering the solicits. In his first statement he answered one unasked solicit. That unasked solicit is a typical example of a solicit with which many of the teachers I have observed for this study usually began lessons. As discussed earlier, this teacher's lesson opening behaviour is slightly different. Teachers usually ask: 'What did we learn last time?' apparently to elicit an answer such as: 'Last time we learned how to...' or 'We learned about...'. In fact, this is usually done when teachers plan to do some revision of the previous lesson before they start the lesson for the day. Even then, the solicit seems to be more fitting if what was learnt was only a single topic. The topic under discussion was the 2nd topic under the same lesson for the period.

After reminding the students of the topic of the lesson, he re-informed them rather emphatically (e.g., we've to keep in our mind certain points . . .) that there were certain points that they should remember in order to be able to change statements from one form of speech into another. Those certain points are not just points but they are *very* important points. The teacher's choice of options in the language he used in this context, i.e., 'very important', seems to be part of an expression of his faith in the place of grammar rules in learning the target language.

The faith teachers in that context have in grammar is very strong. Two things seem to be influencing their belief about the place of grammar rules. One of the influences emerges from their former learning experience. For example, this teacher completed his higher education when learning English meant learning grammar rules. There is no need to count far back in time to reach the time when learning English meant learning grammar rules. This is because even to-day, apart from the abundant grammar exercises available in the new English textbook, evidence obtained from six English department heads (personal communication) reveals that grammar is still the dominant aspect of the target language taught in the secondary school. It should be noted that secondary school English department heads have access to what teachers do in class not only through checking teachers' lesson plans on a weekly basis but they also visit English lesson classes to evaluate teachers. To a certain degree teachers in the context of this study seem to share the assumption which Cray (1999) has concluded from reading a text on tense teaching in the grammar textbook. She states:

There is inherent in these texts [text which explains the future time with 'if'] the assumption that learning a language is at least in part a matter of learning a system of description and rules which in turn constitute the language (1999: 128)

A secondary reason is related to the wash back effect of the Ethiopian Schools Leaving Certificate Examination (ESLCE for short) that is offered at the end of the students' completion of the secondary school. The English examination in the ESLCE has questions that require the students to know grammar rules and terms. In reference to the

notion of the wash back effect of the ESLCE on classroom teaching Dejene (1990) has documented his observation as follows.

[T]he multiple choice format dominates all classroom teaching, exercises and tests to the extent that the ESLC English language examination and its format gain importance from year to year until, at the final year of secondary education, they almost assume the role of a teaching syllabus (1990:16).

To return to the teacher's verbal behaviour in soliciting utterances, apart from our interest in the 'what' at the beginning type of solicit explained above, a closer investigation of the teacher's use of language as shown below can give use insights into the functions for which language is used by the teacher in the classroom. Let us see the salient points from the excerpts quoted below again.

- 1T What's the first point that we've to keep in our mind?
- 2T Who can tell me the points that we've to remember?
- 3T The first point we've to remember?

The solicit in 1T re-informs students that the points that are worthy of keeping in mind are more than one. This means that the teacher's use of 'the first' implies that more than one points have been studied in some fixed order. The inclusive pronoun 'we' in the teacher's solicits were perhaps needed to make the learners feel that both the learning and the search for the points are a joint venture. In effect, this might create on students the impression that the blame for failure to remember the points, like the share in the search for them, would be shared with the teacher.

This teacher used 'points' in place of 'rules' consistently throughout his teaching of the lesson although what he was teaching is more often than not referred to as 'rules' in

grammar books. Did this happen on purpose? The answer might be positive. From the experience of working with grammar rules both as a former student and now as a teacher, he might have realised the impression both terms may create on students.

If this happens to be the case, he appears to have the opinion that many grammar rules are essential evils perhaps because of the details and complexity of their rules. In fact, grammar rules seem to have two contrasting properties. They are not easily learnable things on the one hand and they are indispensable things on the other hand. So something needs to be done to lessen their evil properties. The replacement of 'rules' by 'points' can, perhaps, be taken as an expression of the teacher's effort at least towards lessening the effect of the notion of ' grammar rules' on students.

To return to the solicits in the excerpt (it is quoted below again), the 'what' in the first solicit with which the solicit began got changed to 'who' in the second solicit causing a change in the focus of attention.

- 1T What's the first point that we've to keep in mind?
2T Who can tell me the point we've to remember? The first point we've to remember?

In the first solicit it is the points that the students have to keep in mind as the focus of the solicit while in the second one it is 'someone' who will tell the teacher that is going to be the focus of the question. The exclusive pronoun 'me' in ' Who can tell me . . .' in the second solicit when contrasted with the inclusive 'we' in 'we've to remember ' in the same solicit might have some implication. This means that 'tell me' confers on the teacher the right to command and obtain while it makes students responsible to offer the

answer. Earlier the teacher got into the business of the learning that happened last time by saying 'Last time we learned . . .' and now he is going out of it by saying 'tell me what you learned last time'. Perhaps he is also making it clear that he does not want to have to answer his own question even though he had to give in later.

This does not finish the interaction between the teacher's going into and out of the learning. There are other instances that indicate that the teacher showed not only his going into the learning of the lesson but he also showed his involvement in the search for the way a direct statement is changed into an indirect one. Like its predecessor, the teacher's second 'going into' did not last long because in turns 5 and 6 below it has been noted that he is going out of it. In turns 5 and 6, he seems to have gone out of the trouble of searching for ever not only because he handed over the responsibility to students with two solicits put in one with the connector 'or' but because he also never re-appeared in the remaining 3 turns of the solicits. We see the teacher re-appearing at the end of the solicits in the excerpt but this time not with a soliciting role perhaps because 'enough' has been asked but with a responding one. Let us look at the relevant turns taken from the excerpt above

- 4T How do we change a direct statement into a reported statement?
- 5T Do you do it by guessing? or
- 6T Do you do it, as you like?
- T All verbs move one step back into the past (the teacher re- appears a few turns later)

Two things can perhaps be speculated about why all the solicits failed to elicit answers. On the one hand, it is possible to think that there could be many students in the class who were capable of answering the solicit. Some very clever students might have even

thought that they would sound foolish if they raised their hands to answer such simple questions. They might think that not being willing to answer is not a necessary signal of their ignorance perhaps so much as the possibility that their volunteering is not a mark of their being intelligent. Whereas others, (this group could be larger in number), might have been waiting for the few but more clever students to take the initiative to answer the question.

The first excerpt below taken from student diary tells us that there are a limited number of students to whom the teacher often gives opportunities to answer questions. This might discourage many others in the class to raise hands to compete for the opportunity of answering. The second extract confirms the unfair share of the opportunities that some students are offered to answer questions.

1. I'd like to note at the end of my diary that instead of asking the same students now and then, teachers should give chances to other students in class. For example, I raise my hand not to always answer questions but to encourage other students but the teacher gives me chances whenever he sees my hand. This is unfair. It discourages others. The same students shouldn't be given chances to answer easy and difficult questions as well. (S)
2. We began our today's lesson with the homework we were given yesterday. The teacher was asking and we were answering. I got chances to answer 6 questions. After the homework was over two students [whom I shall call Denbilu and Turga] began troubling the teacher with questions. They always do like that.

To return to the other assumption that might explain why the solicits did not elicit an answer, it is possible to think that the questions required students to do more than what the students were able to do at the time for various reasons. To start with, there were 76 students in class. Let us assume that about one-fourth of them were not in class the day

the lesson was taught. From among those who were present, some could feel hungry and tired because of the location in time of the period in the series of the periods for the day. There could also be several students in class who just do not like to answer questions because of a multitude of constraints - inhibitions of all sorts including shyness, lack of confidence, cultural background, etc. There could still be other students in class, no matter how few they might be in number, who do not care to answer in public but who rather care about asking for permission to talk in class.

If it is assumed that the questions failed to elicit answers, then, that failure is going to have implications at least for teachers and language classroom research. As regards research, this might point to the need for a closer and deeper study of the nature of the questions being used by language classroom teachers. For language teachers, the suspected failure should prompt them to investigate at their own classroom level the nature of the questions that fail to elicit answers during a lesson. Teachers, according to Allwright (2000 personal communication) can make a closer study of what puzzles them in their own classroom. Student reticence, despite frequent teacher probing and prompting, appears to be one among the classroom puzzles that are worthy of investigation by the teacher himself. If all falls short of the desired effect, language teaching might feel the need to dispense with using questions as an integral tool to be used in the classroom. After all, questioning is simply one among the several instructional devices that are available to be used in the classroom.

To return to the extract, after the teacher had offered the answer himself to the bunch of the solicits he asked to obtain just a single point, students began competing for the

opportunity to answer the rest of the solicits the teacher asked under tense change. In fact, a little time later it was possible to observe the sudden transition that occurred from the students' lack of participation to an excessive willingness for participation. In the previous extract, the teacher was noted to have asked: 'Anyone?' in turn 8 while 7 turns later he is observed saying: 'One by one, One by one'.

A similar set of solicits that begin with 'What' to elicit just one answer is given below.

- 1T What do you start your sentence with?
- 2 What do you start your sentence with?
- 3 What must be the introductory verb?
- 4 What must be the introductory verb?
- 5 How do you start your indirect speech?
- 6 Yes please! 'I'm waiting for my friend,' said Fatuma.
- 7 How do you start your sentence?
- 8 Anyone?
- 9 O.k. Look at this sentence. Look at the verb. Look at the board once again. He said is known (cont.)

All the utterances in the above list were aimed at eliciting one item of information but they, like the set of solicits discussed earlier, resulted in the teacher's provision of answers. The earlier set, like this set, consisted of 4 'what' at the beginning solicits. Both sets also have an equal number of solicits. There is one solicit with 'how' at the beginning in both sets. 'Anyone?' was intended to prompt students to produce answers in both cases. Functionally, however, the prompt rather seemed to be doing closing functions in both instances as it marked the end of the sequences of the solicits. One prompt that seems to be serving an equivalent function with the teacher's utterance in T6 above is the one in the earlier extract (there also 6T) which says: 'you have to remember certain points'. In both cases they did not result in producing answers, anyway.

Both sets of the solicits were followed by the teacher's re-informing the students of grammar information concerning changing direct speech into reported speech. The earlier solicit asked students for the first point (i.e., change in tense of a verb) they need to remember to report a direct statement while the solicit in the second set asked them to identify a reporting verb from the direct statement: 'I am waiting for my friend,' said Fatuma.' This itself is not an easy task when we consider the problems inherent in the underlying rule as Cray (1999) reports it. Cray (1999), having reviewed the ideas of different authors on rules of grammar in general has the following to conclude about the rules of reported speech in particular.

When the suggestions and ideas of all the authors reviewed are taken into account, one conclusion is clear. Pedagogical grammarians have consistently presented a rule for formation of reported speech sentences which is limited in its applicability and its range. First it is an incomplete rule ... Secondly, it does not address the full range of reporting structures available in English nor does it help learners understand when a particular structure is appropriate or even possible. All of this is to suggest that there is a gap of some width between the rules for reported speech available in the pedagogical grammars and grammar textbooks and the ways in which native speakers report earlier speech events (1999: 111)

Inspired by his questioning behaviour, in an interview, I asked this teacher to tell me what it is that he used as a source of ideas for language teaching. He began his replies by saying that he attended a workshop on language teaching only once 8 years earlier since he graduated in 1987. As he continued replying, I began to realise that he was actually answering a more important question that I had in mind during the interview but that I did not dare to ask him. What I wanted to know was his own perceptions of how he does the teaching. He is quoted below in full.

Well as you know language is for communication nowadays especially whatever uh we must be student – centered. We must make them speak more. They must be active participants. When we were students um the teacher used to cover the 90% of the period but now it must be the student who must play the vital role. The teacher must motivate the students to speak, to write, to develop the 4 skills of the language. So it should be student-centered. The student must be given the chance to express himself. This is the best way of learning a language. The more they participate the more they learn.

Question: Do we do this in practice?

You are right. Theoretically it sounds good um but when it comes to practice, well, we don't make use of it despite our frequent attempts. We have difficulties due to large number of students. We're not able to give individual attention to students. As long as we don't give attention to them we don't expect them to benefit from teachers...

As might be recalled, interview replies that were discussed in the previous sections informed us that the solution to get improved learning lies in the teachers' hands. Here again we understand from this teacher's replies that he is well aware of what needs to be done if improved learning is wished to be achieved. He also admits that, this time not because of a lack of creativity so much as it is because of large class size that it has not been possible for him and perhaps for many other fellow teachers who share the same view with him in general, to make the desired thing happen in the classroom.

At first glance, the teacher's replies in the excerpt appear to create the impression that he has dismissed the issue of teacher creativity as a solution but a closer look at the last line of the replies in the excerpt makes it clear that his replies this time suggest a solution rather than dismiss the problem altogether to what might initiate the potential creativity of teachers. His description of what needs to be done is a proof of the existence of the potential that is waiting to be explored.

5.1.2 The verbal behaviour used in 'What' at the end type solicits

There is only 1 instance in which the teacher's utterance with 'what' at the end served a soliciting function in this transcript data. Let us have a look at it.

- 1T Fatuma said that she ____-?
(no raised hands)
2T Past continues (gives a clue)
3S was
4T was what? What is the next word?
5S waiting
6T was waiting for whose friend?
7S for her friend
8T Correct. Fatuma was waiting for her friend.

As seen above, in 1T the teacher provided the framework for a 'fill in the blank' type of solicit and induced the students to provide an answer. When he noticed that the solicit was not going to do its job alone he provided the students with a clue. The clue seems to have carried the students half way. This means that it showed them the right direction although what the student offered as an answer following the clue was not the complete answer that was being sought.

In 4T we observe the teacher accepting the answer and at the same time asking for more to fill the blank slot in the framework of the solicit. To do that, he used two solicits in the 'What' category, namely, 'What' at the end and 'What' at the beginning. The solicits managed to elicit an answer. The teacher developed the answer into a new solicit in order to get another answer elicited. This was how soliciting utterances were used by the teacher to move this grammar lesson forward.

5.1.3 The verbal behaviour used in other 'Whs' type of solicits

There are 36 instances in which teacher utterances that have 'Wh-' other than 'What' served solicensing functions. Not all of the solicits in this category elicited answers because of teacher paraphrasing of the solicits. In this transcript data, teacher paraphrasing of solicits usually led to a change in the form of the original solicit, and this, in turn, led to a change in the category to which the 'new' solicit belongs. Wherever this happened, proper cross-referencing has been made in the Tables used in the text. The phrase **Cross-referenced** that is used in the Summary Tables in the text show the number of the solicits whose answers have been referred to other categories. Table II shows how the solicits in this category were answered.

Table 3

Who other "Whs" solicits were answered by in a grammar lesson

Teacher	13
Individual students	9
Choral answer	7
*Cross-referenced answers	7
Total	36

* answers referred to other categories of solicits

As revealed in Table 2 above, the teacher offered answers to 13 of the solicits. Answers to 9 of the solicits were provided by individual students. There were 7 choral answers to the solicits in this category. Answers to 7 of the solicits were cross-referenced to 'What' at the beginning type of solicits.

The first solicit in this category (see below) occurred at the beginning of the lesson. It is the first solicit the teacher asked in that period. To state from the answer the solicit elicited, it is possible to say that the teacher wanted to check if the students could connect two sentences using the rule that had just been explained. Completing the task that was set by the solicit might appear to be only a matter of looking at the example that had been written on the blackboard and doing the same thing to this superficially new task. But the student who was nominated to do the task did not find completing the task as simple as it appears to be. It took the class 11 turns to repair the trouble faced by the student in his unsuccessful attempt to answer the solicit. The solicit could be a piece of evidence that shows the deceptive nature of the form of questions. Let us look at the extract. (In this section, I quoted the extract again because of the differences in the perspectives of my comments)

- T Who can join these 2 sentences?
 Anyone?
S We were very tired. So travelled by bus.

As mentioned earlier, the topic with which the teacher began the lesson for the period was using 'so' to connect the main and the result clauses. After he had done 2 examples himself on the blackboard, the teacher asked students to do the first question in the list of 10 questions in the textbook. He did this by writing the question on the blackboard. In fact, the first 2 examples were also written in the textbook. The task the book left for the teacher regarding the examples was not much more than copying them from the textbook onto the blackboard. The answer offered to the first solicit which required the students to join two sentences using 'so' is quoted below.

T We were very tired. We travelled by bus.
(Teacher reads after writing it on the b.b.)
Who can join these 2 sentences?
Anyone?

Answering this solicit involved 2 students. There were 6 instances in which teacher utterances served soliciting functions in the process of answering the solicit. The first instance was a request for repetition of an answer offered by the first student. The apparent reason for the repetition was the error the teacher detected in the answer. This was how the teacher got the student to repeat the answer'

1T Again. Again
2S We are very tired so travelled by bus

More than form, it is its function that has made the teacher's utterance 'again' serve a soliciting function in this context. The rationale for the teacher to request for repetition is apparently to offer the student an opportunity to do self-correction but the rationale for the repetition by the teacher of the request for the repetition remained unclear.

3T We're very tired very tired, say tired
4S Tired
5T Tired
6S Tired
7T Tired

Another instance for the teacher utterance to serve a soliciting function in the search for the answer to the first solicits that was asked by the teacher is shown in 3T above. In turn 5T, the teacher accepts the answer by simple repetition and that simple repetition (accompanied by eye gaze and gesture, perhaps) by the teacher is presumably taken as a request for another repetition by the student.

The 4th instance which says: Would you mind doing it again? 'Do it again' is apparently needed by the teacher to offer the student an opportunity again to correct the 2nd error he committed in the answer he proposed earlier. The solicit is a typical example of the ways the target language is used to ask for permission especially outside of the classroom but this is rarely observed in the classroom. This could be taken as an incidental learning opportunity that the teacher's language offers the class. Even here it appears that the teacher used it primarily to soften the effect of the tone of the command 'Do it again' on the student.

The teacher takes the class back to a solicit of other 'Whs' category with the 5th solicit as shown in 9T below. The solicit in 9T is the 5th solicit asked by the teacher of the same student who got up earlier to connect two sentences using 'so'. The solicit occurred following the answer the student provided to the solicit (8T above) that gave him an opportunity to do self-correction. The teacher seems to have used the solicit (i.e., T9) to express his disappointment, as mentioned earlier, rather than give the student still another chance to do self-correction. Evidence can be supplied to support this. This means that on the one hand, he has already done the correction by providing the missing word himself in the comment that immediately followed the solicit. On the other hand, he gave the next turn to another student to incorporate the word that he has provided into the sentence that was originally forwarded by the earlier student. Now the extract:

9T How about the subject of the 2nd sentence? 'We' 'we' 'we' should not be left out. 'We' should not be left out.

The solicitor the teacher started earlier, i.e., connecting sentences using 'so' is not yet over. It has 3 turns more yet to go. Let us it.

- 10T Where do you put the comma?
- 11T Where do you put the comma?
- 12T Do you put the comma after the word 'so' or before the word 'so'?
- 13S Before the word 'so'

As shown in this last excerpt, the teacher rephrased the solicitor and provided the students with two possible alternatives to choose from. In theory, this requires of students to do relatively easier thinking as the task involves only a matter of deciding on one of the two possible positions of the comma in the joined sentence. In practice, however, if learning is to be determined by the amount of thinking invested in it, the students are going to get a limited benefit from saying 'before' or 'after' the word 'so'. Even that limited benefit can, for some students, be a *zero* benefit as shown in the excerpt quoted next. The incident that follows occurred only a few turns after the above-discussed incident.

- 1T Yes please (nominates to answer No. 2; the above was No. 1)
- 2S I didn't know how to find your house so I asked a policeman
- 3T I didn't know how to find your house so I asked a policeman
- 4T so I asked a policeman
- 5 Now where are you expected to put the comma?

(At this time, the teacher was interrupted by the sight of a student who was sitting in the front row and copying questions from his mathematics textbook. When the teacher asked why he was working on something different in English class, the student replied in the local language as follows.).

- 6S METSIHAF YELEGNIM (trans. = I don't have a book)
- 7T You can't be excused (teacher to the student)
- 8 O.k. Now where do you put the comma?
- 9 Where do you put the comma?

- 10 Where do you put the comma, before or after 'so'?
- 11S After 'so'
- 12T After 'so'?
- 13Ss Before 'so'
- 14T Before 'so', before 'so'

The student who said 'after so', in turn **11S**, in the excerpt, is perhaps one among many others who could not benefit from the choice offered to them to decide between 'before' or 'after'. In **13Ss** other students came to his rescue before he managed to give himself time to repeat the incorrect answer. He might have repeated the incorrect answer if he had felt the teacher's pause to be long enough for him to insert the repetition because the teacher has been indiscriminately repeating answers - both after correct and incorrect student answers.

The differences between the two functions of teacher repetition might be understood from the teacher's tone. Yet it is worth mentioning that building different meanings into the tone of the target language they are teaching is for non-native teachers as difficult as, but sometimes even more so than, the discovering of the meaning is for the students. After all, students have other students' reactions, usually in a low voice, to the status of their answers as a supplementary aid to help them decode meaning from the teacher's tone of repetition.

In the extract, we also note that there was an incidental opportunity (6S in the excerpt) for the teacher to make the student, whose interruptive behaviour has been detected, use the target language to explain what he was doing and why he was doing it during the lesson. In fact, something needs to be done to raise teachers' awareness in general terms to the potential of the classroom as a useful source for teaching the target language. For

naïve teachers, the potential might remain unnoticed simply out of the fear they might have to depart from what is in the textbook. In this particular example, the missed departure, if it had been made use of, might have been a better learning opportunity than the position of a comma that was being discussed at the time.

It is also possible to suspect that teachers themselves might set the scene by using the local language to refer to classroom incidental happenings. In fact, he was talking from the teacher's point of view but Hughes' (1981) comments on the teacher's behaviour in switching from the target to the local language depending on the nature of the point they want to talk may have an implication for the language type the students may tend to use in the classroom. He comments:

It is perhaps an interesting paradox that whereas teachers are quite willing to spend time practising key structures in phrases like '*cows eat grass*' and '*Is John your brother?*' they may well switch to the L1 in order to set the day's homework. The reason very often put forward for this is that the pupils may not understand. Any naive pupil may come to the very understandable conclusion that English is basically a very tedious subject since all the information it conveys is either known or meaningless (1981: 6) (*italics original*)

5.1.4 The verbal behaviour used in 'Yes/no' type solicits

As discussed in Chapter II, Cunningham (1971) and Barnes (1969) among others, have stated that 'Yes/no' questions encourage narrow and predictable answers. Solicits in this category either require only a 'yes' or a 'no' response or a more extended response that begin with 'yes' or 'no'. There are 19 instances of 'Yes/no' type solicits in the transcript data. Individual students gave answers to 3 of the solicits while 7 solicits elicited choral answers. One of the solicits was answered by the teacher. Answers to 8 of the solicits in

this category are cross-referenced to other categories. Table 4 shows who 'Yes/no' solicits in this category were answered by.

Who 'Yes/no' solicits were answered by in a grammar lesson

Table 4

Teacher	1
Student	3
Choral answer	7
Cross-referenced answers	8
Total	19

Now let us look at some examples from this category.

- 1T Do we need the quotation marks?
2Ss No
3T No. The comma must be left out.
The quotation marks must be removed

The example in 1T shows when an individual student answers a 'yes/no' type solicit. As shown in the extract, a simple 'No' satisfies the solicit. The teacher did not pursue the answer beyond the 'no' answer offered in chorus. In fact, the solicit was asked after several examples of that kind have been done in class. Even if the need for going beyond the given answer arose, the students could have perhaps been able to explain the reason for the non-use of the quotation marks. However, the teacher's decision to stop

pursuing further might have arisen from the recognition that it is possible for at least some students in that class to learn when to use/not to use the quotation marks without being able to explain, at least verbally, the underlying rule for use/non-use of the quotation marks in that context.

In another example, we notice the teacher to be using 'yes/no' solicit type to check comprehension.

e.g. 2.

4T Is this clear?
5Ss Yes

The example in this excerpt shows when students give a choral answer to the teacher's solicit that was asked to check understanding. A 'yes' answer in this context might signal different things for different students at the same time. That is to say, some might use it as a sincere expression of their understanding but others might use it as a face-saving expression because they do not want to lose face with their friends and with their teacher by officially admitting difficulty in understanding.

Another possible explanation for the unanimous 'yes' might be to think that the ultimate objective of offering a 'no' answer by students is, apparently, to initiate a re-teaching. However, re-teaching the whole lesson does not seem to make sense to teachers. To make the re-teaching happen, the students' 'no' answer needs to be followed-up by the teacher's solicit. The solicit to be asked here will require students to identify the trouble spot in the lesson. Several students in that class, it seems, cannot afford to take the risk of putting themselves conveniently in an answering position.

If we again look at the list of the solicits discussed earlier in the text, we can observe the interaction between different solicits of different forms from different categories to serve the same purpose. The 'yes/no' type solicits are located in 4T and 5T in the list.

- 1T What's the first point that we have to keep in mind?
- 2 Who can tell me the point we've to remember? The first point we've to remember?
- 3 How do we change a direct statement into a reported statement?
- 4 Do you do it by guessing? or
- 5 or do you do it, as you like?
- 6 You've to remember certain point what's the first point?
- 7 What's the first point you're expected to remember?
- 8 Anyone?

Now let me comment on the solicits in 4T and 5T above.

At first glance, it appears to be possible to argue that 'guessing' as long as it manages to lead the students to the correct answer, might be an expression of an unconscious learning that has to be encouraged to flourish. It could also be a useful learning strategy that is perhaps already being used by many students as they appear to be answering many of the solicits they are asked without being able to explain certain rules or principles that are at work.

A similar but perhaps a less strong argument might also be proposed regarding the solicits in turns 4 and 5 above. That is to say, in everyday life outside the classroom, people seem literally not to do things the way they do not like. A similar principle might be operating in the classroom as well. After all, what if the way the students already like to do it is itself the right way? In this sense, it means they are going to change the way they are doing simply because they are doing it as they like. It should also be pointed out

that the students did not do the task not because they did not know that they had to do it according to the rule but because they did not know the very rule that was required to be known.

The solicits quoted in the long list above were apparently intended by the teacher to draw the students' attention to the importance of 'keeping in mind' certain grammar points (to use the teacher's expression) that he was trying to elicit from them using these very solicits themselves. To offer evidence for my assumption of the teacher's intent, we need to look at what he said about the rules they studied in the previous lesson.

T When we do this we do it step by step.
 We don't do it carelessly.
 We don't do it as we like
 We've to do it according to the rules that we learnt last time.

From this quoted material we note how the teacher puts emphasis on the need for students to commit the rules to memory. This tendency to trust what is committed to memory may be a reflection of the broad educational culture in the society. There is one long standing assumption held by the society in general that learning is a matter of committing the material to be learned to memory. This assumption has its source in church education. A large number of parents, who themselves have church education background, generally tend to put the blame for their students failure in exams partly on their lack of interest in memorising what they learn. Part of the blame for students' failure goes to schools that do not enforce memorising on students. The church and the Mosque are believed to be the origin of modern education in Ethiopia (Pankhurst: 1976)

5.1.5 'Miscellaneous' solicits and their functions

This category consists of utterances that structurally do not belong to any one of the four form – based categories of sollicting utterances. The category consists of various utterances that induce learners to contribute linguistic production, for instance, by way of finishing the teacher's unfinished utterances. The teacher provides the structural framework and 'morally' requires students to fill in words or phrases that fit into the classroom discourse he wants to be developed. This category consists of 48 sollicts. Individual students answered 18 of the sollicts in the category. There are 14 cross-referenced answers in this category. The teacher provided answers to 8 of the sollicts from this category. The number of the sollicts that elicited a choral answer is 4 while answers to 4 of the sollicts were not sought. Table 5 shows the summary of how the sollicts were answered

Table 5

Teacher	8
Individual students	18
Choral answers	4
Cross-referenced	14
Unanswered	4
Total	48

The sollicts in this category can be classified into 6 groups according to the functions they served in this transcript data. These are sollicts that were made to

- 1 do pre-closing functions

- 2 prompt students
- 3 get students to repeat answers
- 4 allocate turns to students
5. elicit from students words/phrases to be filled in the framework provided by the teacher
- 6 check comprehension

5.1.5.1 Pre-closing functions

Pre-closing signals in this context refer to the questions arising when the teacher asked students to check if they had any question to ask towards the end of a topic in a lesson or towards the end of a lesson. A typical example is for both teachers to ask: 'Any question please?' It is a purely nominal question because functionally it signals the end of the talk the teachers have been making about a particular point in a lesson. Both the teacher and the students know that there is no time left for students to ask a question. There appears to exist a general consensus in the class regarding the functions of questions in this context. In the following extract taken from the transcript data, the teacher is observed to be using 'Any question please?' as a pre-closing cue to the activity that has been under discussion in the class until that point in time. The moment the teacher asked the question, students began to work on the task that was next in their textbook. Let us look at this example taken from this data

- T Yes. (accepts previous answer)
T Joseph said that he wanted to be a teacher. He wanted to be a teacher (repeats answer)
T Any question please?
Ss (no reaction)
T O.k. Now you do exercise one 3-5 in two steps.

During my class observation for data collection, I have noticed that the moment they heard the pre-closing questions, the students began to prepare either for the topic that would come next to the one they were concluding or to go home if their English period was the last period for them for that day. Student preparation for the topic that was the next topic of the lesson involved their talking about page numbers, questions left undone from their homework, etc. They seemed to be doing this in low voices apparently to avoid the teacher's attention. In this regard, teachers, however, did not seem to react so seriously even when the students noises threatened class discipline.

If they heard the pre-closing questions towards the end of the period students would begin collecting their things into their bags as part of their preparation to go home if the period was the last period for them that day. The students' collecting things into and out of their bags also happened if they had another lesson to learn after their English lesson. In this case, they would put their English notebooks and textbooks back in their bags and take their notebooks and textbooks for the next lesson out of their bag.

In fact, teachers themselves would not allow students to keep learning materials on the desks other than the materials from which they were working in that period. This is because there are students who, when the teacher looks in their direction, appear to be listening but when he turns his face away start doing some other lesson. I have noticed instances in which one student was caught red-handed while he was doing his mathematics homework during English period.

Discipline can easily get out of hand and attention can be divided in large classes such as the class being discussed here. To stop this from happening, teachers do not usually allow students to leave other materials on their desk during English lesson. I was told that teachers of other subjects also do the same thing. Evidence obtained from student dairies puts the blame for students to work on other subjects during their English or other periods on teachers themselves. One student from this class has following comments in her diary.

Our teacher gave us homework in the first period and told us to finish it for the 3rd period. I don't support this idea because we're going to use periods of other subjects to make the homework ready for the 3rd period (S) (5: 393)

To return to the issue of pre – closing raised earlier, there is another instance of the teacher's urging of students to ask questions in this data but here the purpose was not to mark a transition between topics or end of a lesson but to mark a transition from illustrating explanation of some grammar rules to doing questions given in the textbook using the rules. Here we observe that the teacher is asking the students to raise anything they were not so sure about regarding some grammar rules that they had been working on. The questions were asked after the teacher had done some revision work using an example from this lesson. When the teacher was asking the questions, some students had already begun writing the questions that came following the explanation.

T If you have any doubt to be cleared?
 If you have any doubt to be cleared?

Any question?

(No comment from students. They are already copying the questions onto their exercise book)

- T When we do this we do it step by step
 We don't do it carelessly
 We don't do it as we like
 We've to do it according to the rules that we learnt last time
 Let's take the second one.

There is one point that is worth mentioning here, not in connection with the issue of pre-closing, but with the issue of the emphasis intended by the teacher to be placed on the rules explained earlier. That is, it is just not so clear whether students' ability to talk about rules in the classroom really indicates their ability to change direct statements into reported statements in their everyday use of the language. Even if the skill to talk about the rules is assumed to be essential, it is not easy to tell how much of that rule could be obtained from the kind of potentially confusing explanations given in the classroom.

There are instances in which the teacher utterance 'Anyone?' was used to prompt students to answer a solicit that was asked in the turn(s) prior to the turn in which the prompt was used. The first instance of the occurrence of 'Anyone?' appeared at the beginning of the lesson when the teacher wanted to prompt students to answer the 1st question of the exercise in the textbook. It followed, as revealed below, one solicit of the other 'Wh-' type solicit.

- T Who can join these two sentences?
Ss (raise hands)
T Anyone?

The success of this prompt in encouraging students to answer the solicit is not noticeable in this context as several hands were already up when the prompt was used by the teacher. Instead of prompting students to answer, ‘Anyone?’ in this context appears to suggest the need for answering one at a time although there was no obvious breach of the rule of answering in turns. The very fact that several hands are simultaneously up following the solicit may signal to the teacher that answering in turn is in imminent danger.

Unlike the first occurrence, the second occurrence (see below) of the prompt happened after the teacher has used 8 other solicits to elicit just one answer. Here ‘anyone?’ seemed to have been intended for prompting students to answer because the other solicits have not done their eliciting job successfully. The prompt did not bring a change, however. The teacher, eventually, answered the solicit himself. As shown below, the prompt at the 9th turn was produced after the teacher has tried to prompt students with 2 other prompts in the previous turns (i.e., turns 2 and 6). Now the extract.

- 1 What’s the first point that we’ve to keep in our mind
- 2 Who can tell me the point we’ve to remember? The first point we’ve to remember
- 3 How do we change a direct statement into a reported statement?
- 4 Do you do it by guessing? or
- 5 do you do it as you like?
- 6 You have to remember certain rules
- 7 What’s the first point?
- 8 What is the first point you’re expected to remember?
- 9 Anyone?

In yet another instance, the teacher used this prompt in a context that is in some respects similar to the one just mentioned above. That is to say, he used the prompt after 3

solicits have been asked. In both cases, the prompt was followed by the answer offered by the teacher.

The third instance in which 'anyone' occurred was a bit different from the other 3 occurrences of the prompt. There it did not immediately occur following the occurrence of another solicit. It followed the error one student made in his attempt to answer a question. The teacher without explaining to the class why the suggested answer was incorrect, rejected the answer in turns 2 & 3 T. This might have left the student(s) in a potentially confusing situation. The solicit with 'anyone...?' in the extract below was also directed not to the whole class like the prompts in the 3 other cases. It was directed to a specified row of students as shown below.

- 1S My brother is getting married so going to Awassa tomorrow
2T It's not the correct way of doing it
3T It's not the correct way of doing it
4 Anyone from this row? (pointing to one row from the front central row of seats)

5.1.5.2 Requests for repetition

One instance in which teacher utterance was used as a request for repetition occurred in the context in which a student proposed a wrong position for a comma in a sentence. The teacher's tone in that context was inclined more to expressing his disbelief than just requesting for repetition as the student got the answer wrong immediately after the teacher's explanation of the place of a comma in a sentence with a similar structure. Now the extract:

- 1T Now where are you expected to put the comma? Where do you put?
- 2S After 'so'
- 3T After 'so'?
- 4Ss Before 'so'
- 5T Before 'so', before 'so'

An uninvited choral response which has been taken as evidence of interruption to spoil interaction in the preceding section of the lesson, now seems to have been taken as a gesture of intervention to repair interaction because what happened in 5T appears as if nothing has gone wrong in the prior two turns.

Another instance (in fact, this was commented on earlier) in which teacher utterance asked for repetition is quoted below. In turn 2T the request for repetition is initiated by student errors. As indicated in the brackets the student answer which initiated teacher request for repetition has two errors. As commented on earlier, there is a potential difference in the error type, however. Which of the two errors initiated the request is not clear. In 4T the student was requested to do the repetition after the teacher while in turn 2T the student was requested to repeat his own answer. The student's answer in turn 6S makes turn 5T a request for repetition. Another solicitation for repetition followed the student's answer in turn 6S. Now that the issue of the first error has apparently been settled, the request in turn 7T seems to have been needed to draw the student's attention to the other error in the answer. Let us see the examples.

- 1S We were very tired so travelled by bus ('tired' was read as 'tried' and the subject of the second verb 'we', was dropped)
- 2T Again, again
- 3S We were very tired so travelled by bus
- 4T We're very tired very tired. Say 'tired'
- 5T Tired
- 6S Tired
- 7T Tired. Would you mind doing it again? Do it again
- 8T We were very tired so travelled by bus.

- 9T How about the subject of the second sentence?
10 'We', 'we', 'we' shouldn't be left out.

Yet, another instance in which the teacher utterance is used for requesting repetition is quoted below. In the extract we notice when the teacher repeats the word that was misread by the student and then asks where the word the student read was in the sentence. Following his own solicits, instead of giving the student the opportunity to provide the needed word, the teacher himself provides the correct word and induces repetition of the answer after him.

- S The bell hasn't rung yet so we shouldn't travel
T Travel?
Where is travel?
Leave the classroom
S Leave the classroom

Before we move on to Chapter VI in which **Students' verbal behaviour** will be discussed, let us briefly summarise the main points discussed so far in the preceding two chapters.

5.2 Summary of the chapters

Consistent with Bellack et al.'s (1966) 'structuring' move and Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) notions of 'focusing' move, the present teacher began the lesson, first, by informing the class the topic of the lesson they were going to learn. He then reinforced the announcement of the topic by reading from the textbook examples of the grammar points they were going to learn. Then he wrote the examples on the blackboard and gave them a brief explanation of the procedures to be followed to do the exercise in the textbook. Teacher explanation at that stage involves mainly mentioning the procedure to

be followed to join the sentences. Two examples from the textbook were done on the blackboard as models to guide their later work.

The end of the teacher's explanations of the procedure marks the beginning of the question – answer exchanges. The question – answer exchange has been found to be a lesson - long phenomenon with only brief intervals during which other moves appear and disappear to facilitate the occurrences of the teaching exchanges.

What followed the teacher's brief explanations of the procedure to do the questions in the exercise given in the textbook was the teacher's solicits which asked for students who would be willing to connect two sentences using the model previously introduced.

Teacher utterances that served soliciting functions in this transcript data have been classified into 5 categories. Primarily, the grammatical forms of the soliciting utterances have been used to classify the solicits into categories. The contexts of the occurrences of utterances have also been used to determine the category of the solicits. Altogether, there are 140 instances in which the teacher's utterances have served soliciting functions. Repetitions and paraphrasing characterise this teacher's soliciting utterances. The paraphrased solicits consist of solicits that are semantically related. Some utterances that have no obvious question- marking word have been categorised under 'miscellaneous' mainly due to their potential to create an eliciting effect on students.

In the next few paragraphs I will quote again one extract that has been discussed in the previous sections and illustrate repetitions/paraphrases. The extract also consists of

solicit types that have been classified into the categories of 'what at the beginning', other 'whs' and 'miscellaneous' categories. Let me begin by quoting an extract from the transcript data.

- 1T What do you start your sentence with?
2 What do you start your sentence with?
3 What must be the introductory verb?
4 What must be the introductory verb?
5 How do you start your indirect speech?
6 Yes please! "I'm waiting for my friend," said Fatuma.
7 How do you start your sentence?
8 Anyone?
9 O.k. Look at this sentence. Look at the verb. Look at the board once again. He said is known (cont.)

As shown in the above extract, there are 7 soliciting utterances in the list that were produced by the teacher to elicit one item of information from students. Six of the solicits are repetitions and paraphrases of each other while 1 soliciting utterance seems to be playing a prompting role. If we look again at the extract, we note that the 2nd solicit is the repetition of the 1st, and the 3rd is a paraphrased form of the 1st pair. The 4th solicit is the repetition of the 3rd one. The solicit in turn 5 is the paraphrased form of the preceding two pairs of solicits while the 7th solicit is the repetition of the 5th solicit. Such repetitions and paraphrases increase the quantity of teacher talk perhaps by risking its quality.

The utterance in turn 6 has a cue (yes, please!) apparently to encourage participation by students. Not only that the turn also has a repetition of the utterance to be worked on perhaps to re-new the focus of the students' attention. In turn 8 the teacher uses 'Anyone?' perhaps to reinforce the prompt which was forwarded only a moment earlier. 'Anyone?' might have also been used to mark that the teacher's patience to stay

prompting and waiting any longer for anyone student who would offer to suggest an answer was nearing an end. It is to be recalled that in the previous sections of the chapter 'Anyone?' has been noted to be serving a pre-closing function. What happened in the turn next to the turn in which 'Anyone?' occurred in this extract confirms our previously established thinking about the function which 'Anyone?' has been made to serve in this data. After all the attempts failed to prove to be useful in that context, we observe the teacher in turn 9 to be providing the answer that he has been holding back throughout the series of his soliciting utterances.

To tell from the structure of the solicits, it is only the solicit in turn 5 (and its repeated form in turn 7) that seems to be demanding extended utterances from students as the other two pairs seem to be requiring for a single word answer. Even between the two pairs, there is a difference in the extent of the thinking the pairs demand from students. For example, the second pair of the solicits (turns 3 and 4) narrows still further the area of the search for the answer. This could be taken as evidence of the teacher's use of a display and recall questions. Repetitions with slight change in the words used in the original question and paraphrases seem to facilitate the teacher's use of display questions.

The next chapter (Chapter VI) presents **The Nature of student verbal behaviour and Learning opportunities (Research questions 1 & 3)**. Student verbal behaviour is an integral component of classroom verbal behaviour. As can be recalled, investigating classroom verbal behaviour (i.e., teacher and student verbal behaviours) is one of the points that this study has concerned itself with. The nature of potential learning

opportunities that arise during a lesson is also another issue of investigation in this study. Chapter VI presents these issues.

CHAPTER VI

THE NATURE OF STUDENTS' VERBAL BEHAVIOUR AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN A GRAMMAR LESSON

6.0 Introduction

As can be recalled, in the preceding two chapters the attempts made to describe the nature of the verbal behavior used in a grammar lesson have also provided us with insight into the nature of the students' verbal behavior and the patterns of classroom interaction during the grammar lesson. References have also been made in the chapters to the potential learning opportunities that could arise during the classroom interaction. The main task of Chapter VI is, therefore, consolidating and stating more clearly students' verbal behavior and learning opportunities related issues that have been explained in the different sections of the two chapters.

This chapter has two sections. The first section deals with the nature of students' verbal behaviour during this grammar lesson. Student verbal behaviour is an integral component of classroom verbal behaviour. As can be recalled, exploring the nature of the verbal behaviour used in lessons is one among the questions with which this study concerned itself. The second section presents potential learning opportunities during this grammar lesson. The data that will be discussed in the second section of the chapter is, therefore, hoped to extend our insight into the nature of the learning opportunities that arise during the grammar lesson.

6.1 The Nature of students' verbal behaviour

The students' verbal behaviour in this grammar lesson is different from the teacher's verbal behaviour. As explained in the preceding two chapters, the three classroom discourse moves, namely, *structuring*, *soliciting*, and *reacting* moves are restricted to the teacher while the students' verbal behaviour is confined only to the *responding* move. This means that the instructional format used in the lesson is: teacher initiates - student responds - teacher gives feedback (I-R-F). This instructional format has limited the students' verbal contributions to answering teacher solicits. There are no instances in the data in which students initiated turns themselves. In none of the turns taken by students can we find a student's turn following another student's turn without at least some acknowledgement from the teacher.

As has been discussed in Chapter V and as will also be reinforced later in this section, the nature of the teacher's solicit has been found to determine the length and complexity of the student utterances. This means that the nature of the interactive work the students were required to perform does not appear to have led them to the need for extended and a relatively complex linguistic production.

The opportunity for students to talk was entirely under the teacher's control. To talk, they had to be afforded permission. Students' errors usually led to their repetition of the answers in the data. One student, for instance, was given 4 turns to speak because of the errors he was making in answering one solicit. There are instances in which students were required to repeat answers even when there appeared to be no obvious errors in their answers.

Except for the solicits that were asked to encourage student participation by asking for students who would answer the questions in the textbook, all other questions that were asked were intended to elicit information related to the questions in the exercises they were doing at the time. Let us look at the following fairly long list of solicitings and answering exchanges as a basis for the discussion that will follow the exchange. This long exchange is deliberately chosen to give us a picture of how the teacher breaks down solicits into various bits perhaps to get many students to participate in the answering act by providing short and predictable utterances. The exchange is based on the second question in the list of 10 questions given in the students' textbook. Now the extract:

- 1T Let's take the second one. (teacher gives instruction)
'I want to be a teacher,' said Yoseph. o.k. (repeats)
Now which one is the introductory verb?
- 2S Joseph said
- 3T Joseph said
Joseph said that
What 's the next word?
- 4Ss that that
- 5T that, just a minute
What does 'I' refer to? (repeats)
- 6S Joseph
- 7T 'I' refers to Joseph
What's the right pronoun for Joseph?
- 8S He
- 9T So Joseph said that he-----
Now the verb 'want' is given in the sentence (repeats)
In what tense is the verb?
Is it present, past resent, present continuous or future ?
- 10S Present
- 11T (Inaudible)
So present becomes past, so if you take the past the past tense of 'want'.
What's the past tense of want? (repeats 1 more time)
- 12S1 Went
- 13T Went? No
Past tense of want?
How about you? Past tense of 'want'? Past tense 'want'?
- 14S2 Went

- 15T Went? go---went 'went' is the past tense of 'go'
 What is the past of 'want'?
- 15S3 Wanted
- 16T Joseph said that he wanted-----
 What 's the next word? (repeats)
- 17S be
- 18T Yes. Joseph that said he wanted to be a teacher (repeats)
 Any question please?
 O.k. Now you do exercise one questions 3 - 5 in two ways
- 19S Three is not there
- 20T Yes?
- 21Ss Three is not there
- 22T (Inaudible)

In the above long exchange individual students took 8 turns in which they uttered only 12 words altogether. In 7 turns they answered solicits that were asked by the teacher. The utterance in turn 19S is not actually an answer but is a comment given by a student on the task they were required to do. This is the only instance in the data in which student turn is used for something different from answering teacher solicit. This instance might suggest the possibility of drawing students into participation by deliberately making some of the things they are required to do vague in the class. This is one way of creating the need for asking for help in students.

The first solicit in the preceding extract required the student to identify the introductory verb from a sentence that has a pattern that is very much like the pattern of the sentence that they had just discussed. Answering that solicit required the student only 2 words. The student was nominated to answer the solicit. The answer led to a 'new' solicit which elicited an answer as seen in turn 4Ss. In turn 5T, the teacher accepted the answer and then repeated it and said: 'just a minute'. At first glance it creates the impression that something which should have happened prior to the choral answer has not happened. However, what he asked instead was not what had to come earlier but what should follow the choral answer. This in turn creates the impression that the teacher

said: 'just a minute' perhaps to disapprove of choral answering and perhaps still to discourage, though weakly, any behaviour of that sort in the future. In fact, there appeared no other choral answer in that sequence again.

Alternatively, it could be taken as a means to keep the students in suspense waiting for what to follow. What followed the direct was, indeed, what deserves attention, as it requires some thinking that goes beyond the lesson in hand. The teacher rejected two of the answers provided by two students (turns 13T & 15T). In fact, in turn 14Ss, the student repeated the answer that had earlier been publicly rejected. (It is to be recalled that this behaviour has been commented on in a previous section)

The length of the students' answer is determined by the type of the solicit the student was asked. This holds true for both textbook questions and teacher-made solicits. For example, in all the solicensing turns in the extract above, the solicits required one or two - word answers.

Answering the solicit in turn 12 in the extract by saying: "'He' is the pronoun for Joseph' or 'The pronoun for Joseph is 'he'" might be extended alternatives to the single word answer 'he' but this does not seem to be working in class. Teachers seem to prefer shorter answers perhaps because of the pace of the lesson in the classroom. By asking for short answers they also seem to be minimising the errors students make in their attempt to provide long answers. This, in turn, saves the teachers the trouble of going into repairing the errors. When constraints such as exams, school schedules, the syllabus, the quantity of the language points in the textbook, etc., are considered, it

Below are quoted 4 extracts from different student diaries. In the first extract, we notice that the student is making the teacher more responsible for his own understanding when he writes: 'if teachers want us to understand....' Students seem to develop the tendency to rely more on their teacher for their own learning perhaps when they find their teachers to be doing much of the work that students are otherwise expected to do. Although it may not be easy to know what makes a lesson 'good' or not 'good', we understand from the excerpt that a 'good' lesson can be learned with no questioning and answering in it but the presence of questioning and answering, as indicated by the student in the diary, seems to cause better learning.

The student in the second excerpt tells us that the teacher should initiate student questions. This is another expression of the tendency to depend on teachers on the part of the students while on the other hand it shows how classroom communication is determined by the teacher. The excerpt from the third student diary shows us the differences in students' perceptions and expectations regarding classwork and homework. When questions are written on the blackboard, many students seem to take the task as oral work only to be done in the classroom as they see no reason for copying questions from the blackboard when the same questions are also in their textbook.

In the fourth diary the student described his observation in which he compared how they do their lesson one day with how they do lessons in other periods. He described the lesson to be interesting. If his 'interesting' is an expression of his getting an opportunity

to learn, then, working on the blackboard might make the classroom situation at least for spectators, since we do not know yet the effect it may have on the students who actually did the task, less formal and more conducive for learning. Alternatively, it might also be possible to think that what made the lesson interesting for him, although he did not claim to have taken part in the writing on the blackboard, is the fact that students were given the opportunity to play the role of the teacher to provide input to each other. The student also hints at his perceived effect of the observer on the classroom process during the lesson.

1. We learned a good lesson today but we had no time for questions. Five to ten minutes should be left for questions if teachers want us to understand the lesson. (W)
2. We didn't have time for question and answer in our today's lesson. The teacher also did not ask us if we had any question. (W)
3. After explaining the lesson, the teacher wrote questions for homework on the blackboard. I raised my hand to answer the question and when I turned my face to the other side all students were copying the questions onto their exercise book. I also started to copy the questions (S)
4. We had an interesting lesson today. I saw many new things that the teacher did in class. For example, except today, he has never asked students to go to the blackboard in groups to write answers on the blackboard. Maybe this happened today because there was a guest in our class. (S)

6. 2. Learning opportunities

Let me start this section with what Allwright (1984b) states about learning opportunities in a lesson. In reference to learning opportunities, Allwright has the following to say:

[L]anguage lessons are sets of learning opportunities, some deliberate but many incidental, all created through the necessary processes of classroom interaction...what the learners do learn is limited by the

learning opportunities that are made available to them. But the provision of learning opportunities is not determined by the teaching. The teaching is just one factor (though sometimes a powerful one) in the overall process by which lessons happen and learning opportunities are created (1984b: 5)

It is understandable from Allwright's argument that lessons offer different learning opportunities. This means that, in the case of deliberate learning opportunities, for instance, teachers apparently need to have to state in advance (explicitly in my context in their daily plan) what they want their students to learn from the lesson in any one period. The nature of the classroom process of presenting the planned lesson and the ways students are made to develop the lesson by contributing their own share constitutes incidental learning opportunities. In this data, as discussed earlier, the teacher presented the language points through questions and students were made to do their share of the contribution through answering teacher questions.

This section will briefly discuss the potential learning opportunities, both the deliberate and the incidental ones, that could arise during this grammar lesson. The 'potential' in the 'potential learning opportunities' is a deliberate use on my part to indicate that this study has not concerned itself with investigating the type of the learning opportunities during the lesson that were made useful or made use of by students through investing particular effort in them with the view to making them enhance learning.

Before discussing the potential learning opportunities in the present transcript data, let us look at what previous studies that were prompted by Allwright's (1984b) argument regarding the relationship between learning opportunities and learning outcomes have noted.

Previous language teaching classroom studies that were made in the virtually EFL context to explore the relationship between learning opportunities and learners' uptake (see, for example, Slimani 1987 and Seime 1998) tried to trace the learning opportunities around which learners' claimed uptaken items are located in the classroom data they used in the studies. They used a specially prepared 'Uptake Report Chart' which was originally proposed by Allwright (1984b) and required their subjects to list new language items that they claimed to have learned in a lesson. The purpose of doing this was to investigate the nature of the learning opportunity that is found in the context in which the claimed up-taken item was located in the data.

The results of the studies indicated the idiosyncratic nature of learning behaviour. The idiosyncratic nature of learning reported by these studies seems to imply the idiosyncratic nature of learning opportunities that caused the learning. Variations were also observed among the learners regarding the nature of the opportunities they seem to have benefited from. As stated above, the studies briefly reviewed here concerned themselves with exploring the relationship between learning opportunities and new language items that are claimed to have been learned whereas the purpose of the present study is **to explore the potential learning opportunities that arise during a lesson**. Future study is needed to tell us the relationship between learning opportunities and learner up-take in the secondary EFL classroom in the Ethiopian context.

As stated by Allwright language lessons are sets of learning opportunities. The implication of this for the lesson under discussion in terms of planned learning

opportunities is that the lesson has generally created for students in the class at that time the opportunity to get exposed to the grammar rules that determine the use of the grammar points taught in the lesson. In addition, the lesson has apparently produced opportunities for the students who managed to get the opportunity to speak in public during the lesson to apply theory to practice. This means that they answered teacher questions using the rules they were taught during the lesson. This in turn could be an opportunity for the students who lacked the official opportunity to judge privately the extent to which their own version of answers fits into the answers that were provided by other fellow students. Students who made errors also got the opportunity to initiate feedback and extra linguistic information from the teacher.

The idiosyncratic nature of learning that has been discussed just above, in retrospect, implies the idiosyncratic nature of the very opportunities that create learning. In terms of incidental learning opportunities, this means that what became an opportunity for learning the meaning of an item of vocabulary during this lesson, for instance, might have created an opportunity for learning the pronunciation of that word for another student while this same opportunity might not have been a useful opportunity at all for others. Some students may have learned language skill, say, listening skill, while the teacher was giving an explanation of the planned grammar lesson. Yet others might have learned strategies such as repetition and paraphrasing while the purpose of the teacher's repetition of questions was perhaps only to enhance their comprehension of the questions and elicit, for example, the rules to be followed to report a direct speech during the lesson.

In this section very few instances of incidental learning opportunities will be discussed as examples of the potential opportunities that are available in the lesson. Let me start by quoting the two sentences used by the teacher at the beginning of this lesson.

T In our today's lesson we're going to have a look at the usage of the word 'so'. We are going to learn how to make use of the word 'so' in different kinds of sentences.

The language used by the teacher in these two introductory statements specially the 'going to' form appears to create authentic context for the students to learn or reinforce their previous learning of what tense to use to talk in their own ways about things that have been planned to happen in the immediate future. In addition, the teacher's language: '... the usage of... ...to make use of...' in the two statements might expose the students to options of expressions that are available in the target language they were trying to learn. A similar potentially useful instance of an incidental opportunity for students to get exposed to options in language use is quoted below.

T O.k. Now the word 'so' is preceded by a comma. A comma is used before the word 'so'. Likewise or in the same way you are going to join the following sentences.

As shown in the extract, other language items used by the teacher such as '...is preceded by a comma', when seen against 'a comma is used before...' and 'likewise' when seen as an alternative to 'in the same way' can, by some students, be attended to and eventually taken-up. There is always some hope to believe that there are some students, no matter how few they might be in number, from among the large number of students in the class (there were 76 students in this class, for example) who have learning strategies that enable them to pick up some language points from whatever the teacher says in the target language and make use of that in their own contexts.

Further investigation of the data shows us that some students will have still something more to learn from the way the teacher used language in the first two sentences. Let us look at the data again.

T In our today's lesson we're going to have a look at the usage of the word 'so'. We are going to learn how to make use of the word 'so' in different kinds of sentences

Expressions such as 'going to have a look at ...so' and 'going to learn how ...so' can, with some caution against taking one in place of the other, be useful items to be added to the students' input. I will try to explain the source of my caution in the above interpretive comment although the distinction I have pointed out might sound a bit far-fetched or even trivial in the context in which the classroom is virtually the only opportunity available to students to encounter the target language.

As shown in the above quoted extract, the two expressions, 'i.e., to have a look at the...so and to learn how to make ...so' appear to serve the same purpose in the context they are used in the lesson. Both mean 'we are going to learn'. However, there seems to exist a slight difference in meaning between the two expressions in the actual day-to-day usage of the target language as well as in the students' and the teacher's local language when 'equivalent' translations of the expressions are considered. That is, people can have a look at something with the purpose of learning perhaps so much as they can learn something without having any conscious look at it.

In the circumstances in which having some conscious look at something which is potentially learnable happens, learning appears to be determined by the information acquired through having a look at that thing. This means that the information people acquire through having a look at something will help them to decide whether or not the material they had a look at is worth learning

In the preceding paragraphs, I have raised some points from the data as evidence of the potential usefulness of the language used by the teacher in creating incidental opportunities for students to enhance their learning of the target language. Let us now look at how useful opportunities can also remain unexploited because they remain unnoticed.

During my classroom observations, I have not come across many instances during which teachers tried to harness opportunities that were incidentally created or that were just part of the classroom to begin a new lesson with or to reinforce a previously taught/learned language point. For example, there were instances in which late comers were allowed to get into the classroom without being asked to explain in the target language why they were late. There was also an instance in which a student who used the L1 to explain why he was not following the lesson was not encouraged to use the target language. In reference to the potential that lies in making use of classroom context during a lesson, Hughes (1981) has this to say.

Much of the language put into the mouths of learners in the name of practice may well have little direct application outside the classroom, but many classroom management phrases can be transferred to 'normal' social situations, e.g., *could you open the window; I'm sorry, I didn't catch that*. By using these phrases the

teacher is demonstrating their contextualized use and indirectly accustoming the pupils to the form – function relationships (and discrepancies) that are part of English (1981: 7) (*italics original*)

Sometimes incidental opportunities that were in some way more relevant to the teaching of the lesson for the period than the example planned by the teacher at home or the one that has been provided in the textbook remain unnoticed. At one point, for instance, the teacher whose lesson is being discussed here was teaching this lesson using the example: **he was hungry. he went to a restaurant for a meal** taken from the textbook. During the lesson, some of the students in the class were themselves appearing to be feeling hungry and sleepy. This seems to be mainly because of the time of the lesson. The lesson was taught at lunchtime (11 . 40 a.m. –12 . 20 p.m.), the last period for students who learn in the morning shift. Several students get hungry and tired during the last period. This is because the last period is the 6th period for them to stay learning in class with only a -15 minute tea-break at 10 a.m.

When the time the lesson was taught/learned (i.e., lunch time) and the students cultural background is considered, students seem to listen more actively and perhaps learn better if the teacher used a more context generated example of the type: “You are hungry. You will go home for lunch after the lesson” in place of the an unidentified ‘he’, and ‘home’ instead of ‘restaurant’; and ‘lunch’ instead of the less frequently used term ‘meal’ in the textbook.

In addition, the term ‘meal’ itself seems to be used less frequently than lunch, breakfast or dinner even in conversations held among teachers themselves let alone students who are just completing their junior secondary school. Moreover, eating at the restaurant has

generally an unfavourable connotation still among many families in our culture. That is, it is culturally believed that grown-up people, male or female, who eat at the restaurant are generally considered to be selfish, and therefore, if they are single they are believed to tend to remain without forming a marriage and a home of their own. If married people (i.e., men, as no one even thinks of a married woman eating out without her husband) are seen/heard eating at the restaurant, of course unless when they are travelling away from home, they will generally be perceived to be on their way to breaking up their marriage. The association appears to be more severe when it comes to children in the classroom.

Before we move on to Chapter VII - the chapter in which the nature of the verbal behaviour used in the vocabulary lesson will be presented - it needs to be pointed out here that the incident discussed above could be taken as a good piece of evidence of how careful textbooks need to be in selecting content. This means that textbook writers need to take into account, among others, cultural background and age of learners in selecting carrier topics in the textbooks.

As explained in the section on **The Preliminary comments on the data analysis** (see the beginning of Chapter IV) in this study the transcript data of two lessons (a grammar lesson and a vocabulary lesson) were used as core data while the data obtained from teacher interview and student diaries were used to supplement the transcript data. As explained earlier also, for convenience of presentation, the data obtained from the two lessons have been analysed and interpreted independently from each other in separate

chapters. This means that the analysis and interpretation of the data on the grammar lesson have been presented in the preceding three chapters (Chapters IV – VI). The next three chapters – Chapters VII, VIII & IX – will present the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the vocabulary lesson. Chapter X is the chapter which reports the findings and the conclusion of the study. The interconnection between the data obtained from the two lessons will be made clear in Chapter X when we review the salient points in all the chapters in terms of the research questions. Now let us turn to Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF TEACHER VERBAL BEHAVIOUR IN A VOCABULARY LESSON?

7.0. Introduction

The topic of the vocabulary lesson is 'antonyms'. The day before this lesson was recorded, the class had apparently read a passage which served as a basis for the recorded vocabulary lesson. A list consisting of ten vocabulary items was provided in the textbook. The students had apparently been told when they read the passage to find words that are synonymous to the ten vocabulary items taken from the passage. During the recorded lesson the class were discussing answers to the vocabulary questions. The textbook they were using was English for Ethiopia, Grade 9; Book 1. The textbook was published in 1996 by EMPDA, Ministry of Education. The lesson was recorded during the 3rd period (2 .55 – 3 . 35 p.m.) in the second shift of the school.

7.1 The nature of the teacher's lesson-opening verbal behaviour

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data on the nature of the verbal behaviour used during a vocabulary lesson (Research question 1).

Unlike the grammar teacher who introduced the topic of the lesson himself rather than getting students to tell him about the lesson they were going to learn, this teacher began the lesson by getting the topic elicited from students. Let us look at how both teachers introduced the topics.

- 1 The grammar teacher : In our today's lesson we're going to have a look at the usage of the word 'so' in different sentences.
- 2 The vocabulary teacher: Anybody who can tell me the today's lesson because I have told you yesterday about the today's topic, isn't it?

The grammar teacher's verbal behaviour that is used to open the lesson serves an informative function while the vocabulary teacher's verbal behaviour is performing a soliciting function. Which of the two approaches creates a more suitable learning context for students is not easy to tell. This is because there could be differences in what students like to happen at the beginning of their lesson. There is no previous work to reflect the students' preferences to inform the decision to be made in this respect. However, it is possible to assume that asking students to tell in class about the lesson that they are going to learn in general might create in them a sense of responsibility for doing some reading on the topic before they come to class. When students read a lesson at home with the purpose of telling the class in public what the lesson is about, they can gain incidental opportunities that will enhance both their reading and speaking skills. This seems to work well particularly with students who are learning from the textbook. These students are learning from the textbook. Each student also has a textbook to read in their own time.

As part of the attempt made to gain insight into what students feel about their English lessons, the students in this class were required to write a diary. One of the 'strong' students (S for short hereafter) reacted to what happened at lesson beginning as follows. The content of the diary throws light on what this particular student's preference is at

the beginning of a lesson. In fact, the student specifically complains about a single instance in which the lesson was left unfinished, and therefore it does not reflect the teacher's daily lesson beginning behaviour. It is reproduced here for its more general interest as a comment on the undesirability of 'unfinished business' in a series of lessons.

I was a bit disappointed this morning. The teacher started 'spelling game' yesterday. We stopped when the bell rang but we did not finish the game. Today we didn't start with that. The teacher said 'we'd do it in book 2.' That might be correct but even then I wish we'd learned it here as well. We need to learn about spelling as the knowledge is important for us to write English. (S)

To return to the beginning of this vocabulary lesson, we understand from the transcript data that the teacher had apparently told the students the previous day something about the vocabulary lesson. The question with which the teacher began the lesson, especially because of the request for confirmation that followed it, seems to be serving a more serious function than reminding the students of the teacher's telling them about the lesson. It tends to show that the teacher is demanding to hear from students the information that he gave them earlier about the lesson. In effect, the question is on the one hand making students responsible, of course for recalling and displaying what they had obtained perhaps not only from what the teacher said but also from what other learners had said about the lesson in the previous period. On the other hand, it appears to be a means for the teacher to check whether or not the students were capable of recalling and displaying some crucial points they had learned during the previous lesson.

As was perhaps hoped for by the teacher, a choral 'yes' confirmed to him that the students had retained the information they had been offered the previous day about the

topic of the lesson. For students, the choral response appears to be simply an expression of the acknowledgement of their hearing of the topic the previous day. It is not immediately followed by another choral answer that would contain the answer to the basic question. Instead, what followed that was raised hands for permission to answer the question. The students' switching to hand raising after having started to answer a question that seeks two answers appears to be evidence of their observing the classroom ground rule. This agrees with what Edwards and Furlong (1987) have noted about classroom participation. They write: "In classroom interaction, any competition for turns must be closely regulated" (1987: 14). Consistent with the available literature, in this study also the person in charge of regulating student participation is the teacher.

To pursue the line that is being developed with the progress of the lesson under discussion, we now need to look at what happened to the raised hands. As shown below the teacher nominated one student from among the raised hands for answering. The student answered the question. The teacher accepted the answer and gave feedback to the student. What happens during the exchange is consistent with the pattern of the classroom discourse (I-R-F) that the previous studies (see, for example, Bellack et al. 1966) made in the content classroom have established. Here is how this happened.

- T Anybody who can tell me the today's lesson because I have told you yesterday about the today's topic isn't it?
Ss (hand raising)
1T Yes (nominates)
2S Opposite
3 Yeah. Opposites yeah (writes on the b.b.)
4T Opposites. O.k. The today's topic is opposites

As seen in the extract, the teacher accepted the answer and repeated it before writing it on the blackboard. Once again he repeated the answer and then declared the topic of the lesson for the day using the answer provided by the student as shown in 4T in the last turn in the extract.

As noted below, the solicit that the teacher asked after the topic of the lesson has been declared, takes the students back to the point they had apparently learnt in one of their previous lessons. The solicit is, first, prefaced with 'You know' but it got the preface dropped in the second and third repetitions. In the local language used by the teacher and students, solicits that are pre-faced with 'You know' tend to create a sense of appearing to know in people. In effect, beginning with 'You know' appears to be one way of building confidence in people to contribute their opinions to the issue in hand. If this practical experience in the local language outside the classroom can be transferred to the target language classroom, then solicits that are pre-faced with 'You know' will draw students into contributing their share without worrying too much about the degree of the correctness of their contributions. Although it is possible to think that this might enable the teacher to draw students to make contributions despite the students' inhibitions, transferring the experience that works in one language to another language might need to be done with caution to safeguard against unwarranted generalisations.

After repeating the solicit 2 times, the teacher nominated a student from the last rows of seats. The way the nomination was made is evidence of the teacher's not knowing the student's name. It is just not easy for many teachers in general to remember names of many students in one section specially when they teach students in different sections. This teacher was teaching 5 sections of students. There were 72 students in the class

when this lesson was recorded, and I was told it had the lowest number among the 5 sections.

During my classroom observation, no instance in which this teacher nominated a student by name to answer a question has been noted. This, it is assumed, has made it difficult for the teacher to make what Allwright (1980) and Hammersly (1990) respectively call specific and direct nomination. All the solicits he asked were general solicits. In Hammersly's opinion, teachers even when they know names seem to use indirect selection more often than direct selection. Hammersly's comments on how the teacher he once observed implemented indirect selection may illustrate the behaviours, except appointing answerers by naming, used by this teacher at different selection points. He writes:

More frequently, teacher enforces indirect selection: the teacher asks a question, calls for 'hands up' or waits for hands to go up automatically, and then appoints an answerer by naming, pointing, nodding, looking or whatever from among those with raised hands (1990: 17).

Making a comparison between the effects of direct and indirect selections on the patterns of participation has not been possible in this data as there were no instances in which the teacher used direct selection to nominate students to answer a question. It is generally agreed that when questions are tagged with students' name, except the students who are appointed to answer, other students in the class tend not to attend both to the question and the answer elicited by the question. It has not been easy again to comment on the role played by indirect selection as a number of students always put up

their hands shortly after solicits have been posed by the teacher. Now let us look at the extract commented on above.

- 1T You know what is the other name for opposites?
- 2T What's the other name for opposites?
- 3T Yes, you guy (nominates)
- 4S Antonyms
- 5T Yes?
- 6Ss Antonyms
- 7T Antonyms (reads after writing it on the blackboard)

One question was asked in an interview to get this teacher's opinion on repeating questions. As shown in the excerpt below, the teacher tells us that he repeats questions to enhance the students' understanding of the question. Now let us see the teacher's replies:

Changing its form might be mistaken but I use this purposely or intentionally. When I ask students in the class if I get a response or if students raise hands after my question I won't repeat the question, you see, but I repeat 2 or 3 times when I don't see any hands to encourage but it may be mistaken for me but I use this intentionally. But changing the form might help the students to understand.

In the same context, he was asked of his opinion on the amount of the talking that does in one period. Here is how replied.

- T The teacher most of the time should not talk in class. The teacher is a guide by himself. A lot of things should be done by students but as I told you, we teachers, I talk not only me but most of the teachers, talk much of the time in class. We do this not because we want to waste our energy or not because of the habit of talking, but simply, you see, we want to help the students by talking more. This is what we do but we might be mistaken. This is what I do when I talk too much or when I say something repeatedly rather I feel that my students learn more.

As shown in the extract taken from lesson transcript data earlier, the teacher is providing for students' participation by asking questions no matter how short the elicited answers might be. So far the demand that the solicits placed on students is not more than providing single word answers. The first one was 'opposites', and the second, 'antonyms'. Like what happened in the previous extract, here again the teacher accepted the answer, wrote it on the blackboard and repeated it for the second time. He, then, made a new solicit using the answer provided by the student. The solicits now seem to be gradually increasing the demands they place on students. For example, the answer this solicit elicited from the student is, as shown below, 7 words long. It is the longest utterance produced by an individual student during that lesson.

S Antonyms are words which have opposite meanings.

T Yes. Antonyms is or I mean antonyms mean words which have similar I mean opposite or nearly opposite meaning, you see. So there are words which are taken from the passage. Taken from the passage. These uh these words are really very important in order to develop our language because unless we know the antonyms and synonyms of words it's difficult to exp to write to speak or to understand the language. So it's important to hum to study these antonyms. So humm what's the first word that that that that we find its opposite from the passage?

The teacher's hesitant statement seems more likely to confuse than the student's simple statement. The connector 'or' used by the teacher has the potential to create on the students the impression of taking 'I mean antonyms mean' as a paraphrased form of 'antonyms is'. Equally confusing expressions are also found in the remaining part of the statement in which we find "...words which have similar I mean opposite or nearly opposite meanings". It is possible for some students to take antonyms as words which have similar meanings. It is possible for others to take antonyms as words with opposite

meanings. Still for others antonyms might be words which have nearly opposite meanings. It remains yet to be known why the teacher introduced confusion. This reminds us once again the issue of quality of teacher talk that Flanders (1970) concerned himself with when he commented: “While it is true that teachers talk more than all the pupils combined, from kindergarten to graduate school, the major problem appears to lie not in quantity, but in quality” (1970: 13)

In the diaries, students seem to be valuing more answers offered by the teacher even when the answers given by other fellow students are taken to be correct. Let us see how this has been presented in the diary written by one student.

I liked today's lesson for two reasons: one, the teacher wrote examples clearly on the blackboard, and two, the students who always disturb the class had forfeited class because it was the 5th period. I was disappointed only once. That was when a student asked a question, the teacher asked another student to answer the question and he didn't add his own answer and comments to the answer given by the student (W).

The teacher's behaviour that was involved in handling the answer offered by the student earlier is similar to the behaviours used by him earlier in handling answers to the previous solicits as far as accepting and repeating of the answers after the students is concerned. In two respects, the present behaviour is different from the previous ones, however. Unlike in the previous turns, here the teacher did not write the answer on the blackboard. In this connection, length of answers seems to matter. This in turn eliminated the second repetition of the answer by the teacher. Another difference relates to what eventually got done with the answer. In the previous turns, answers initiated new solicits. The solicits were made to elaborate the answers in some limited sense. As

shown above, in the present turn, the answer initiated further linguistic information which is relatively more extended than the information the teacher provided in the previous turns.

This fairly extended information on the topic of the lesson, marked the transition of the phase of the lesson from talking about the topic to the learning of the lesson under the topic. Before we move on to the next section to see what the nature of the teacher's behaviour that was used in providing extended linguistic information is like, let us briefly summarise the main points we have noticed so far.

Although much remains to be seen yet to state strongly, the emerging evidence that has been noted from the explored limited episodes so far tends to reflect a trend which shows I-R-F to be the essential pattern of the classroom discourse followed in the present data. In addition, it is possible to state that the emerging trend tends to show that teacher questions are the only official means so far open to students to verbally and officially participate in the lesson. It is also understandable from the data presented so far that the teacher's attempt to give explanations has the potential to confuse learners. Future study is perhaps needed in order to alert teachers to monitor the effect of their own verbal behaviour that is used in giving explanations.

7.2 The nature of the teacher's informing behaviour

Like the grammar teacher's verbal behaviour discussed in Chapter IV, the nature of the teacher's verbal behaviour that was used during this vocabulary lesson was I-R-F. The verbal role played by students was responding (Research question 1) while the teacher

had to initiate and give feedback to students. Except for the example discussed below, there are no other instances during which the teacher provided extended linguistic information during this vocabulary lesson. In fact, there are many instances in the data during which extra linguistic information was offered by the teacher but all of them lack length or depth to deserve attention on their own. The attempt to put different short instances together for discussion also created the problem of lack of coherence. I therefore chose to focus on one relatively longer piece of evidence of this teacher's informing behaviour. Other but shorter instances are scattered here and there in the transcript data and wherever necessary I have drawn attention to them.

Let me begin the section by quoting again the extract quoted earlier to illustrate how the teacher developed the student's answer into the classroom discourse that he apparently wanted the students to learn. This episode shows how the teacher offered students information about the topic. A look at the episode will give us some insight into this teacher's informing behaviour.

- T Yes. Antonyms is or I mean antonyms mean words which have similar I mean opposite or nearly opposite meaning, you see. So there are words which are taken from the passage. Taken from the passage. These uh these words are really very important in order to develop our language because unless we know the antonyms and synonyms of words it's difficult to exp to write to speak or to understand the language. So it's important to hum to study these antonyms. So humm what's the first word that that that that we find its opposite from the passage?

As can be seen in the excerpt cited above, the teacher in his effort to shape the student's answer to make it sound more like the discourse of the planned lesson, used a hesitant statement which is potentially more confusing than the simple statement offered by the

student. Here the teacher's attempt agrees with what Edwards and Westgate (1994) once commented on teacher behaviour that is used in handling student answers. They write:

As a guardian of the sole criteria of 'truth', a teacher will then discard, close down or reinterpret a pupil's contribution to discussion unless or until it can be confirmed as lying within that teacher's frame of reference (1994: 110).

In fact, it should be pointed that there is no potential damage in the teacher's apparent intention to make the meaning of 'antonym' clear by saying they are words with 'nearly' opposite meaning as opposed to 'perfectly' opposite. However, things seem to have got more complicated the moment he failed to properly communicate the intended meaning to students as his hesitant explanations tend to suggest the following possible interpretations:

- Antonyms mean
- a) truly opposites only
 - b) truly opposites and nearly opposites
 - c) nearly opposite only

Another piece of information that the teacher added to the answer that was given by the student is the point that the antonyms are taken from the passage. This information is apparently not new to students as they seem to have seen the vocabulary items when they read the passage. When they did the questions at home they must have also read the passage again because finding antonyms involves searching for a word that is nearly opposite in meaning from the passage.

They do the search through reading. The evidence that has been noted here shows that the teacher is re-informing the students as if there was evidence to show that the information they had obtained earlier has entirely been forgotten. In fact, this might not be surprising as repeating the obvious is how the classroom functions, perhaps. Without concerning oneself further with what caused the re-inform, it might be possible to state that the purpose of the re –informing was to draw the students’ attention to the potential uses of context for the activity they were going to do in the lesson. This preliminary evidence in the data shows repetitions and re-informing to be part of the strategies used by this teacher to develop this lesson.

The Inform contains information related to the importance of the lesson that they were going to learn. He informed them that antonyms are important in developing their English language. He also informed them that learning English involves the learning of how to write and speak in the language. After all, students are believed to go to English lesson classes to learn the skills mentioned by the teacher.

The teacher’s informing behaviour seems to be motivated by the need to enhance the students’ interest in learning the lesson for the day. Here to ‘enhance’ interest when seen against to ‘create’ interest implies that we already know that the students have some interest in learning the lesson. In fact, there is some reason for us to believe that students have interest to learn the lesson. The very fact of being in the class during that period could be evidence for many students to have interest to learn the lesson. For others, no matter how few they might be in number, not only being in class at that time is an institutional demand placed on them but learning English lesson itself might be the

requirement of the educational system. It could then perhaps be stated that classroom verbal behaviour can go beyond the limit of the classroom lesson to motivate students to learn the target language.

While he was emphasising the importance of antonyms in developing the students' skills in English, the teacher also mentioned 'synonyms' to students. In fact, he did not say anything else about 'synonym' other than mentioning it as something important for students to know. It is possible to think that some students might take 'synonym' as another name of antonym because they had already learnt that antonym is the other name of opposite. This assumption makes more sense when seen in terms of the background context: i. e., some of the points raised earlier in the lesson were on finding another name for certain concepts. As stated earlier, as part of his informing behaviour, there are several instances, but too brief to deserve separate attention here, in the data in which the teacher offered linguistic information on various aspects of the target language during this vocabulary lesson. Part of this teacher's informing behaviour seen during the lesson will be made clear as we read the next section which presents the teacher's behaviour that was used in handling student answers.

7.3. The nature of the teacher's feedback behaviour

Different teacher verbal behaviour follows student answers. Let me demonstrate some of these behaviours by quoting an extract from the data.

- 1T They're not different words but they're used in different what?
- 2Ss Passage
- 3T Context. Number 7?
- 4Ss Modest
- 5T Very good modest. You know what 'modest' is?

In turn 3 (above), for example, we notice when the teacher offers his own answer without commenting on the status of the students' answer. Did this happen because their answer was rejected or because it was judged to be incorrect? Or was it implicitly accepted and the teacher offered an alternative to extend the students' repertoire under the context of synonymous he raised earlier? This seems to have the potential to leave students in a confusing state of mind. However, the teacher might have had the belief that students could and should make their way out of the apparently confusing state of mind.

In turn 4, the teacher rather generously (generous when seen in terms of the simplicity of reading a word from a list in the textbook) evaluates the answer, repeats it and develops a question out of the answer in turn 5. The answer that was intended to be elicited by the new question (i.e., the meaning of 'modest') can be taken as an example of incidental learning opportunity.

The following extract shows behaviour that is different from the answer handling behaviour discussed above. Let us see it.

6T If you lose your brother or when you lose your brother, you feel what?
7Ss Sad
8T Yeah. Sad. So what is the next word?

In turn 8 (above), we notice when the teacher accepts the answer with no evaluative remark unlike what was seen in turn 5, although this answer might have required slightly more thinking than the answer in turn 4. The issue of 'sad' (in turn 6) was raised

in the context in which 'sad' and 'happy' were the focus of the lesson. So the decision to be made between 'sad' and 'happy' appears to need more thinking than simply reading a word from the list in the textbook as was done in turn 4 previously. As seen in turn 8, accepting is followed by a simple repetition unlike the behaviour in turn 5. Both 'sad' and 'modest' were followed by new questions, however. The difference between the questions seem to be found in the difference between the occurrences of the words in the stage of the lesson. This means that 'modest' was just appearing as a new item for discussion and therefore it was essential to start with the meaning whereas 'sad' was just disappearing after having for sometime been the focus of discussion in the classroom.

The next extract shows yet another type of behaviour following the students' answers.

Let us see the extract first.

- 9T Next?
- 10S Slowest
- 11T Slowest. What is the root word? (repeats and paraphrases)
- 12S Slow
- 13T Slow. 'Slow' is the root word, isn't it?

Turn 11 (above), introduces another incidental opportunity for students to get extra linguistic information. In turn 13, the teacher accepts the answer by simple repetition and then builds the answer into a sentence perhaps to give it a more classroom discourse form. The tag question which followed the teacher's own sentence did not initiate acknowledgement or confirmation from students.

Now that 'slow' has been treated as a root word in isolation from the morpheme '- est', the teacher in turn 14 (see below) takes the class back to the search for the grammatical name of the form of the word in which it was initially introduced to the class.

- 14T 'Slowest' is what?
15Ss (Indiscriminate noises)
16T Superlative. Raise your hands.
'Slowest' is the superlative degree of 'slow'

Root word and superlative seem to be easier to be learned and later remembered when they are presented together but in this transcript data as shown in the extract the students did well with root word and did not do well with 'superlative' as shown in turn 15 above. The problem seems to lie in the problem between identifying and recalling. This means that 'What is the root word?' asked them only to identify by presenting limited options (the root plus the morpheme) whereas turn 14 (Slowest is what?) asked them to recall, if previous learning is assumed to be taken for granted. This leads us to believe that the same thing could have perhaps happened if the question was 'What is 'slow'?' as this would require the students to recall 'root word'.

In turn 16 (see below) the teacher himself offers the answer although no further attempt has been made to assist students to recall the needed answer. In the same turn, the teacher built the answer he provided into a sentence and presented it in the form in which a classroom lesson is usually presented to students in the classroom culture in that context. The question in turn 11 re - appears in turn 17 but this time apparently to elicit a confirmation of comprehension. Turn 19 (below) has the potential to leave the

class in confusion because it creates the impression that all adjective root words have single syllable.

16T Superlative. 'Slowest' is the superlative degree of 'slow'

17 What is the comparative form?

18Ss slow,

19T 'slow', yeah, because it's one syllable adjective

Another instance of teacher feedback behaviour relates to pronunciation of words. Let us see what that led to in the transcript data.

T The next one?

Ss Often. Often. Often (some of them pronounced the /t/ sound)

T This is often. /t/ is silent, yes? We don't pronounce it.

This is 'often'. As I told him when he said 'would' (pronouncing the /l/ sound in the word)

that pronunciation is wrong. So 'we' don't say would ('l' pronounced)

Yes?

Ss Yes.

T So we don't say 'would' (pronouncing the /l/); we say what?

Ss would (with the silent /l/)

T We don't say 'could' (the /l/ pronounced); We say what?

Ss Could (with the /l/ silent)

T Could or c...o...u...l...d (spells the word)

and we don't say 'should' (with the /l/ pronounced); and we say what?

Ss should (with the /l/ silent)

T So 'often'. Yeah.

What's the opposite?

What's the antonym of 'often'?

She often comes to our school (repeats)

You see, she often comes to our---?

Ss School

We note from the above extract that took a long series of turns at least two things about this teacher's feedback behaviour.

- a) That his feedback behaviour is prescriptive in nature. This means that he tells students what ought to be said rather than describing how the language operates (even doing that

might not be necessary when seen in light of how difficult it is for the teacher to get the intended meaning across).

- b) Even if the prescriptive nature of the feedback behaviour is agreed to be tolerated, incorrect information has been prescribed. This means that it is perhaps not easy for students and even for the non-native English teachers to be aware of the silent sounds in many of the words in the language. In the above extract, the cause of the teacher's extended information is the student's pronouncing of the /t/ sound in 'often'. In fact, the sound /t/ in 'often' can either be pronounced or it can remain silent. This might need to be pointed out to students if the issue of telling what to say and what not to say is felt to be an unavoidable thing before the students are themselves capable of finding it out.

This teacher's behaviour is similar, though weakly, to the behaviour of the teacher reported by Fanselow (1977). This means that the present teacher, like the teacher Fanselow studied in his own context, rejected the student's incorrect form after repeating it following the student. Then, he provided correction himself. The correction is followed by short choral repetition cycles. Fanselow describes a similar incident in his case as follows:

The teacher frequently asked each student in turn to say the word that had been mispronounced by one student; choral repetition of the mispronounced word often took place during these pronunciation interludes (1976: 586)

It was not found to be possible to note the effect the way the teacher corrected the errors had on changing this particular student's and/or other students' performance behaviour

in the rest of my visits to this classroom. What was clear from the extract was, as explained earlier, the prescriptive nature of the teacher's behaviour that was used in this treatment of error. Further supporting pieces of evidence for the prescriptive nature of the teacher's behavior could be obtained from the extract if we look again at this teacher's frequent use of 'we don't say this but we say that' especially after having said 'that pronunciation is wrong' in the extract quoted above. The cause for the frequent use of 'we' in this treatment of error appears to find explanation in the teacher and students' culture of the local language. In their local language, the use of the inclusive 'we' tends to moderate the effect of a word of disapproval that is directed towards inappropriate behaviour. This could be true in the target language as well but the more familiar culture seems to influence more both the teacher's and the students' verbal behaviour.

In an interview, this teacher was asked of his opinion on the effect the attempt to teach many aspects of the target language in one period may have on learning. This question was prompted by my frequent observation of errors students were making on the incidental teaching points that emerged during the vocabulary lesson (for example, errors on pronunciation, verb inflection, comparison). From the teacher's replies in the excerpt, we notice the deceptive nature of the planned lesson. This means that the teacher only refers to what he actually wrote on the daily or weekly lesson plan form as the lesson planned to be taught. This might not be surprising but it is important to note that teachers do not seem to realise the different aspects of the language that emerge during a lesson. As seen earlier, for example in the 'root word' and 'superlative' cases, apart from the antonym – synonym issue, inflexions, degrees of comparisons, word meanings, pronunciations were some of the aspects of the target language that arose

during the lesson. In the excerpt, we again notice the teacher referring to the importance of learning vocabulary. It is to be recalled that earlier he began this lesson with 'explaining' the importance of learning vocabulary – antonyms and synonyms. Seen in light of learning opportunities that a lesson offers, this instance could be mentioned as unforeseen but helpful happening from which at least some students might be able to learn something other than the lesson that was officially planned by the teacher.

Now the replies to the interview question:

It might be worrying or it might be bad for students to do that [to be taught many things] but whenever I hear mispronunciation I always try to correct by writing on the blackboard and say to the students. This is what I do but I don't face many such problems within a period. I don't do many things in a class, the pronunciation, the vocabulary, and the grammar part. I do the passage with its comprehension if I get time but I always do one thing at a period. I do have my own weekly lesson. According to that plan I have to plan it for how much time do I talk and how much time do the students talk and because of that if I have time after discussion of the main point of the passage I'll proceed to this comprehension, not the vocabulary. The vocabularies are the very important part of the language. I believe this because unless we know the vocabularies we don't do much so the vocabulary should be done alone. The period given for the vocabulary is for the vocabulary not for the grammar part. The grammar part is boring. It should be divided into periods so part of the grammar should be done within a period. I don't give or I don't bore the students to do this but as you saw or as I've seen whenever I hear a wrong word I always write that word on the blackboard and make the students read correctly.

Another question was asked to draw information from the teacher on his behaviour that is involved in handling student answers that he finds to be incorrect. In the replies he tells us that by writing student answer on the blackboard, he asks the rest of the class to decide whether the answer is correct or incorrect. It should not remain unnoticed, therefore, that the teacher and the students use different criteria of correctness. It is only when the criteria of correctness – incorrectness that are used by students and the teacher

coincide that the class can manage to perform the task of locating/identifying errors from other students' written or oral work. In fact, he does not tell us what happens regarding correcting the errors if the students manage to identify/locate an error. If students fail, it is clear from the excerpt that the teacher does everything – locating, identifying error type and correcting. Telling students not to make errors (the behaviour this teacher has mentioned in an interview) is an expression of the prescriptive nature of his feedback behaviour. Now the replies:

It happens always. Many students give answers and their answers are not complete. When mostly they give these answers I always tell that there is the idea, you have the idea but the construction is wrong. I always write what they say on the blackboard and I want the other students to identify where the mistake or the incorrect form of the language is. If I get o.k. If I don't get I'll tell something about that. If the verb is missing most of the time students do sentences without verbs. This is what happens usually so a sentence without a verb is not a sentence even though there is idea there. So what I always do is write the sentence the wrong sentence on the black. I correct and tell the students not to do such mistake in the future as much as possible because that part of the sentence is very important. If that part is missing that idea is not complete so the student doesn't feel shame but if the student gives a wrong answer and I say this is wrong and simply pass this might I mean discourage him to ask in the future but I don't do this.

Before we move on to the section that summarises the chapter, let us look at one student diary that is relevant to the point under discussion. The student diary tells us how one student (and perhaps many others in the same class) feels about the way the teacher and the class reacted to his work in the classroom.

We did questions in class today. I was one of the 4 students who got the chance to go to the blackboard to write answers to some of the questions. I was very much afraid of being wrong but mine was found to be the best of all. The class showed their approval by clapping their hands. I was delighted, really. (W)

7.4 Summary of the chapter

Before we move on to Chapter VIII - the chapter which presents the analysis and interpretation of the recurrent verbal behaviour in a vocabulary lesson - let us have a quick look at the summary of the salient points discussed in Chapter VII.

Evidence obtained from the beginning stage of the lesson has indicated that this teacher started the lesson first by asking students to tell him the topic of the lesson. As is understandable from the activity they did during the lesson, the teacher had not only told them the previous day about the topic of the lesson for the following day but he also had asked them to look for antonyms of a list of words taken from a reading passage.

The lesson, therefore, began with a solicit the answer of which had already been offered the previous day. In principle, all of the students who had been present in the class in the previous period were expected to be able to recall the relevant information they had been given the previous day. The solicit which with the teacher began the lesson gives us an insight, though a preliminary one, into two things. One, the nature of the solicits we would expect to meet in the lesson, and two, the quality of the language of the solicit to be used by the teacher. Let me explain this using the extract again.

T Anybody who can tell me the today's lesson because I've told you yesterday
 about the today's lesson, isn't it?

Regarding the nature of the solicit we understand that it is a solicit type whose answer had already been made known. Answering the solicit, therefore, involves only retrieving and

displaying the information that had been provided by the teacher in the previous period. Regarding the language of the solicitation, some of the language points used in the question such as the use of the definite article, the use of the present perfect tense and the type of the tag question used seem to require further work if teacher language is believed to work as input and if accurate language is wished to serve as a model for students to learn from. After all, students are learning the target language to be able to use it like their teacher. This makes more sense when we consider what Larsen – Freeman (1981) once commented on the nature of the input that second language learners are exposed to.

She states:

[I]n order to account for what the learner is producing in the second language, we need to examine other things as well: what is the nature of the input to which the learner is exposed? (1981: 109)

The issue of the quality of the teacher's own language might be partly explained in terms of the opportunity that is available to the teacher himself to use English outside the classroom. When asked in an interview about the opportunities he had to use English outside the classroom, he replied

Well I don't have. I don't have. Simply I listen to the BBC. This really affects me. In fact outside the school I don't have any opportunity to apply my English language and to use my English language.

As seen earlier, the teacher set the scene with a solicitation that elicited an answer from a nominated student. He then accepted the answer, repeated it twice and established the topic of the lesson for the day using the answer he obtained from the student. He established the topic by, first, writing it on the blackboard and then, reading it by saying:

O.k. The today's topic is 'opposites'.

The topic initiated another question which elicited an alternative term to the one used as a topic. 'Antonym' was the term that emerged to be used as an alternative to 'opposite' which first appeared as the topic of the lesson. Having established the topic of the lesson first with 'opposite' and then with 'antonym', the teacher now asked the class for the meaning of 'antonym'. Antonym was earlier introduced as 'another name for opposite'. What is now required is the meaning perhaps with the intention of making the connection between the two terms more clear. The student who was nominated to answer the question suggested an answer which the teacher tried hard to improve (apparently with no much success) in order to make it fit the classroom discourse that he might have planned for students to learn during the lesson. With no particular attention to the difference between the two, both terms have interchangeably been used throughout the lesson. In short, pieces of evidence that have emerged in the chapter show that some of the attempts made by the teacher to make the language points clear seem to have the potential to make the intended meaning more complicated.

Consistent with related literature, this teacher accepted and repeated correct answers after students. He then either developed them a little further and then made new solicits about them such as what happened when a student offered a definition of antonym or he directly asked new questions using the answers offered by students such as the example of 'modest' discussed earlier. There are also an instances in which the teacher without commenting on the status of students' answers, offered his own answers and continued the lesson as if nothing unusual has happened. Under the circumstances in which student work was judged to be incorrect, he straightforward told them what to say and

what not to say. This explains the prescriptive nature of the teacher's feedback behaviour.

Chapter VIII presents the analysis and interpretation of the nature of the recurrent verbal behaviour in a vocabulary lesson (Research question 1). Let us see it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NATURE OF THE RECURRENT VERBAL BEHAVIOUR IN A VOCABULARY LESSON

8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the nature of the recurrent verbal behavior used in a grammar lesson

8.1 Teacher soliciting behavior

The limited evidence that has emerged from the data so far reveals that soliciting is the only methodological device used by the teacher to make students participate verbally and publicly in the lesson. In addition, a closer look at the transcript data shows that the lesson is made to move forward by a series of linked solicits. In fact, it should be pointed out here that the data were obtained from teacher- led classroom talk. In the tradition of teacher – led classroom talk, solicits and the answers they elicit seem to officially constitute the lesson while learning appears to lie in the students' capability to process the solicits and the answers elicited by them (Hammersly 1990).

As was made clear at the outset of the analysis of the data, the purpose of this work is to study the classroom processes of language teaching and learning through studying the classroom verbal behaviours. The abundance of soliciting utterances in the transcript data reveals that questioning is the most frequently used verbal behaviour by the teacher during the recorded lessons. As shown in the lessons transcripts, every turn taken by the teacher either begins or ends with soliciting utterances. Teacher utterances that do not

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As was made clear at the outset of the analysis of the data, the purpose of this work is to study the classroom processes of language teaching and learning through studying the classroom verbal behaviours. The abundance of soliciting utterances in the transcript data reveals that questioning is the most frequently used verbal behaviour by the teacher during the recorded lessons. As shown in the lessons transcripts, every turn taken by the teacher either begins or ends with soliciting utterances. Teacher utterances that do not

solicit, elaborate student answers elicited by the earlier soliciting utterances. Elaborated student answers in turn lead to new solicits. In short, the present data shows teacher – question; student answer and teacher feedback to be a lesson – long phenomena.

The prominence that teacher question has in the classroom verbal behaviour makes it worthy of studying in depth if better understanding of the classroom processes of teaching and learning is wished to be gained. The crucial concern in this study is not so much with the sheer quantity of the questions asked as it is with the quality of the interactive work they create. My position in this respect seems to agree with Cunningham's (1971) who states

‘‘Teachers often ask too many questions. The real concern, however, ... is not the amount of question-asking but the method of asking and using questions’’(1971: 85).

8.1.1 The categories

The soliciting utterances used in this vocabulary lesson are categorized into 5 categories.

These are:

- 1 ‘What’ at the beginning
- 2 ‘What’ at the end
- 3 Other ‘Whs’ solicits
- 4 Yes/no solicit
- 5 Miscellaneous solicits

Table 5 shows the summary of the solicits and who the solicits were answered by during a vocabulary lesson.

Table 6

	T	S	Ss	X	No ans.	Total
'What' at the beginning	3	22	12	-	3	40
'What' at the end	7	-	10	-3	-	20
Other 'whs'	-	10	4	1		15
'Yes/no' solicits	-	6	2	6	2	16
Miscellaneous solicits 1	-	24	5	2		32
Total						120

8.1.1.1 'What' at the beginning type of solicits

As revealed in the summary Table above, there are 40 instances in this vocabulary lesson transcript data in which teacher utterances that began with 'What' served soliciting functions. Individual students answered 22 of the solicits. There are 12 choral answers. The teacher offered answers to 3 of the solicits. Answers to 3 of the solicits were not sought.

8.1.1.1.1 Functions for which 'what' at the beginning solicits were used

The teacher used solicits of 'What' at the beginning type to get the students to tell him:

- 1 Other names of words
- 2 Meanings of words
- 3 Working Procedure – i.e., the questions they were going to do next
- 4 Opposite/antonym of words
- 5 What was said earlier in the lesson

8.1.1.1.1.2 Other names of words

Ex.

- T You know what is the other name for opposites?
What is the other the other name for opposites?

As shown above, there is an instance in the data in which the teacher asked one solicit 2 times to elicit from students what the other name of 'opposite' is at the beginning of the lesson. This question is an example of memory question that was identified on the basis of Bloom et al.'s (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives. Lower cognitive questions are recall questions which do not require much linguistic work from students. In reference to recall questions Barnes writes: "Recall questions are concerned with summoning up required knowledge from memory"(1986: 15)

8.1.1.1.13 Meanings of words

Let us first look at the extracts taken from different stages of the transcript data and then move on to some interpretative comments.

- 1 What do you mean by antonyms? (repeated 2 more times)
- 2 You know what buy is?
- 3 You know what the meaning of buy is?
- 4 You know what wealthy is?
- 5 You know what modest is?
- 6 What do you mean by proud?
- 7 You know what the meaning of rarely means?
8. You know what destroy is?

The extracts cited above show the solicits the teacher asked to get meaning of words elicited. As shown in the list, the teacher produced soliciting utterances 10 times to elicit the meaning of 7 words from students. The first solicit (What do you mean by ...) in the list was repeated 3 times. The 6th solicit has the same format as the first one. The 2nd solicit was asked in 2 different ways. That is to say, in turn 2 the solicit is indirect while in turn 3 'What' is pre-faced by the 'you know' format. Six solicits (no. 2 included) have the same format. All are prefaced by the 'You know' format. As discussed earlier, pre-facing questions with 'You know ...' could be evidence of cross cultural influence. In the local language, such pre-faces are generally agreed to encourage people to build confidence to say in public whatever little they know.

The vocabulary items in the above rather long citation, were taken from a reading passage in the students' textbook. In fact, the issue of defining words emerged incidentally as the declared initial purpose of the task for the period was finding 'antonyms' of 10 vocabulary items. Whatever definition or meaning any one student manages to learn could, therefore, be taken as an example of incidental learning opportunity that arose in the lesson. (It needs to be recalled that it was commented on in the teacher's interview replies in which he said he does not mix different aspects of the language when he teaches).

The solicits which begin with 'What' potentially seem to give learners the opportunity to do a lot of mental work in order to produce relatively long and syntactically complex utterances. For example, as explained in the previous section (and quoted below again), 'What' at the beginning solicit which the teacher asked to get the definition of antonym represents the longest utterance produced by an individual student in this transcript data.

T What do you mean by antonyms? (repeated and paraphrased)
S Antonyms are words which have opposite meanings.

However, there are also instances in which the potential of the 'What' question type were not made use of. In the example quoted below again, the teacher is observed to have reduced the question into a framework which can be filled in with a single word. Either only a 'Yes' answer or an extended answer which begins with 'Yes' can be a satisfactory answer to the forms of the solicit in turns 1 and 3. The solicit in turn 2 needs an extended definition. Answering this solicit might also create an extended opportunity

for students to use English to talk about their out of the class experience. The 'What' at the end type solicit shown in turn 3 requires students to think only about a single word that can replace the final 'what'.

- 1T You know what buy is?
2 You know what the meaning of buy is?
3 To take something by giving what?
4Ss money
T money or thing

Searching for the meaning of 'proud' (see below) was taken over from the students by the teacher after the solicit has been posed and repeated. The answer that was offered by the student was inaudible from the tape but the teacher's reaction in turn 4 implies that the answer was incomplete. As shown in turn 4T, the teacher first began with responding to the correctness of the content of the student's answer by acknowledging that the student had the required idea but rather than encouraging the same student to make the answer more correct, he took over the responsibility of defining the word himself.

- 1T Yes. Proud. What do you mean by 'proud'?
2 What kind of person is a proud person? (repeats the solicit)
3S (inaudible)
4T Yeah, you have the idea. A proud person is a person who (con.)

There is also another instance in which the potential of the solicit remained unexploited. In the following example, the teacher, after putting a general solicit to the class to seek the meaning of a word, is noted to be changing the purpose of the question. What prompted the change as shown in turn 2 seems to be his own perception of the difficulty of the word to some students. As teachers, it might not be safe to trust our perceptions of what is difficult or not difficult for students unless we are certain of what criteria

students use to determine the level of difficulty of tasks. A study conducted by Tajino (1993) in language teaching classroom has already indicated a difference between learners' and teachers' perceptions of difficulty. Let us look at how this happened in the transcript data.

- 1T Wealthy. You know what 'wealthy' is?
2T Yes? May be this word umm may be new for some students
3T What is the word that gives this meaning?
4Ss Yes. Yes.(students calling out to be nominated)
5T What is the synonym? Yes?
6Ss Rich

The function of the solicit in turn 3 (see above) is not so clear. Is what is being required the meaning of the word in question as asked in turn 1? Or is it the antonym of the word because seeking antonyms was the task in progress in the classroom in that period? Or is what is asked a synonym of the word as is asked in 5T? In fact, the function of the solicit becomes more vague when it is seen against the solicit in turn 5 which was intended to be a paraphrased form of none of the solicits in the list.

The context of the task makes us expect the antonym of the word being asked but the elicited answer in turn 6S shows us that it was the synonym of the word that was being sought. 'Synonym' now re-appears for the first time since the time it appeared in the earlier text with a potentially confusing capacity to be taken for antonyms. Here again it re-appears with a similar confusing potential. In turn 6 we observe that the students managed to give the answer the teacher was vaguely looking for. From this extract, it is possible to note that students can manage to work their own way out and make even ambiguous learning situations useful.

Three apparently different soliciting patterns can be identified from the list of soliciting utterances quoted above. The ‘You know what ..’ pattern has been commented on from the possible cross cultural point of view.

- 1 What do you mean by ...?
- 2 What is the meaning of....
- 3 You know what (the meaning)

From the transcript data, it is not easy to tell what determined the teacher’s choice of the type of the solicit he used to elicit from students the meaning of the words in the lesson. In fact, repetition, paraphrasing or prompts have often been used but whether they enhanced the eliciting power of the solicits or they simply filled some gap that could have otherwise been created is not known.

8 . 1 . 1 . 1 . 1 . 4 Procedural questions

Procedural questions ask for which question in the list they would do next. There are instances in this transcript data in which the teacher used ‘What’ at the beginning solicits to get the students to tell him which word they were going to do next. In fact, telling the teacher which word to do next was only a matter of reading the word from the textbook. Even that brief opportunity seems helpful when the rare opportunity that each student may get to practise speaking in English is considered.

As shown below, the solicit that the teacher asked to get the students to tell him the first word to work on was asked after the teacher has summarised the information he offered

the students on the importance of the lesson they were beginning to learn in that period. He began the solicitation with 'so' - the same word with which he finished the last utterance in the summary of the importance of learning the lesson for the period.

The word 'so' when used to finish a discussion such as the one referred to above, serves the function of summarising the main points raised earlier but when it begins a new point, although it does not seem to be functioning as marking a 'boundary' (to use Sinclair and Coulthard's term 1975), it appears to be conceptually linking the discussion that was being concluded to the now emerging discussion. Let us see it.

- 1T So it is important to us to study these antonyms (teacher's concluding statement of the information)
- 2T So uh what is the first word that that that we find its opposite from the passage?
- 3S Cheap
- 4T O.k. Number 1 is 'cheap'. You know what is the antonym?
- 5T What's the opposite for 'cheap'?

The solicitation in turn 2T was made to elicit an answer after it had been posed once. The teacher did not need to reinforce it with another solicitation nor did he reformulate it as he usually did. In comparison with the reformulated solicitations discussed earlier, (i.e., What do you mean by antonyms (repeated 3 times), this solicitation about 'Which word to do first' seems to require less language work as answering it is only a matter of reading from the list given in the textbook. In this specific context, this teacher seems to have considered the accessibility of the answer to students as a factor when he decided to reformulate a question.

In turn 4 (above), the teacher accepted the answer elicited by the solicitation, repeated it once and made a new solicitation using the answer. As discussed earlier, student answers lead to

other new solicits. This shows the prominent role questioning plays as a tool to move the lesson forward. This is another piece of evidence that shows us that the teacher gets the points that he wants the students to learn to be elicited from class. So far there is no or little evidence in the transcript data that shows when the teacher offers linguistic information without first attempting to get it elicited from students. The evidence presented so far also shows no instance in which students asked for any linguistic information related to the lesson in progress. As shown in the extract below, the solicit that was made to elicit the second question in the list of the questions they were discussing followed his utterance that marked the conclusion of the points that have been raised through the first solicit. The discussion that ended prior to their beginning of the first question as shown above, was concluded with 'so' while as shown

below 'well' concluded the point that has been under discussion just before they began the second question. The transition marker (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) 'well', takes the students back to the basic purpose of the solicit – identifying the antonym of cheap. The concluding statement now tells them that all that has been happening since the time of their obtaining the antonym of cheap is secondary to their understanding of the basic purpose of the solicit. The teacher's behaviour in this regard agrees with how Edwards and Westgate (1994) describe what teachers and learners do during a lesson.

They write:

Their [learners'] task is to respond, rarely to initiate, and it is for the teacher to say what has 'really' been learned from the words which have been exchanged (1994: 40).

Except in function, the solicit for the second word in the list is different both in form and length from the first solicit discussed earlier. In both cases, however, the teacher

accepted the answers, repeated them after the students and made new solicits about them. The solicits that were formed from the answers the students offered in both cases were repeated before they elicited answers.

- T Well this is the first word and the antonym of cheap is expensive
The 2nd word?
Ss Good
T O.k. Good
What's the opposite for 'good'? What's the antonym for 'good'?

What happened in the search for the 3rd word was similar to the happenings in the 2nd solicit discussed above. That is to say, in both cases the antonyms/opposite words discussed were made to re-appear. Let us this.

- 1T Well, it's possible to say again in bad condition in bad condition.
But specifically 'good' is the antonym of 'poor' for condition but when you use 'good' for person uh when you are asked to give antonym of 'good' that is 'bad' not 'poor' not 'poor'.
2T O.k. What's the 3rd one?
3S Easy
4T Easy

As revealed in turn 1T above, the last utterance made by the teacher began with 'but' - a word that seems to be serving two functions in that context. First, it reflects that their preceding discussion has involved 'good, bad' and 'poor'. Secondly, it shows that they have identified the contexts in which 'good' and 'bad', and 'good' and 'poor' can be antonyms. The part of the teacher's concluding sentence which says: 'When you are asked to give antonym of good...' might be a reflection of the existing practice – what teachers ask in exams or in classroom drills.

The transition that was made from the 3rd to the 4th question in their textbook was made as follows.

1T So the opposite of easy is_____?
2Ss difficult difficult
3T and the opposite of 'difficult' is_____
4Ss easy easy
5T Easy o.k.
6T Number 4?
7Ss Buy

In the previous transitions it was noted that the teacher was himself making conclusions that in some respect were hoped to take the students back to the antonym/opposite that opened their discussions. What marked the end of the discussion for the 3rd word is a bit different in the sense that the teacher provided the framework of the answer and required the students to fill in the blank spaces. The solicit in 3T (above) seems to be serving a reciprocating function when seen against the solicit in 1T.

The choral answers in 2Ss and 4Ss in the above extract seem to have been tolerated or even encouraged as the teacher at that time apparently wanted to get confirmed that as many students as there were in that class could remember the antonyms/opposites they had just studied.

One question was asked during the interview as part of the attempt made towards obtaining this teacher's opinion on the way students offer answers. In his replies (see below) to the question, he tells us that he tolerates (although he does not seem to be encouraging it because he demands hands to be raised) choral answering on the ground that it shows the students' desire to participate in classroom interaction. This implies the teacher's recognition of the limited opportunities that are made available to students to take part in the lesson. What still needs to be worked on is finding supplementary ways that could enable the teacher to draw more students to classroom participation. Until then or even then attempts need to be made to improve the question-asking skills of this

teacher as well as other teachers in the context of this study. Now let us look at the replies obtained from the teacher.:

You see, if students give answer in groups this indicates to me that they are eager or they want to answer the question because they know. So it does not irritate me by the way. Rather I'm happy when they do this but I tell them I tell them to raise hands and give answers you see but I don't insult or do anything but I hope you remember when I asked questions students in the class said: 'teacher, teacher, teacher'. This does not irritate me because these are children and they want to express what they feel.

Excerpts taken from student diaries tell us the students' reactions to choral answering. It is understandable from the diary excerpts that choral answering is a source of noises that perhaps makes listening difficult for some students.

1 This morning when the teacher asked questions, students were answering in chorus. This gave a good chance to disturbing students to shout out answers. (S)

2. Today the teacher's handwriting was good but the usual problem was there: students were disturbing as they always do. In addition, when the teacher asked questions there were choral answers. When some group said one thing another group said another thing. No agreement, no disagreement. (S)

To return to the transitions between questions, the transition from question 4 to question 5 in the list of the questions the students were working on was made as follows.(See turn 4T below.)

1T So now the opposite or the antonym of 'buy' is what?
2Ss Sell
3T Sell. Yeah.
4T What is the next word?
5Ss Sad
6T I hope you know the meaning of 'sad' yes?
(nominates with a pointed hand)
7S Happy
8T No. You guy

9S2 Happy
10T Happy. Good. Yeah, yes.

What we notice from 1T in the above extract is an alternative to the fill-in-the-blank type of solicit that was used by the teacher in the previous extract. That means, in both cases the concluding sentences contain the framework of the answers. In place of the imagined blank space used earlier, 'what' is used in this extract to be replaced later by the word that the teacher wanted the students to remember. In both extracts, choral answers have been accepted in confirmation of the students' remembering of the antonyms/opposites they have studied.

The implied warning which was usually given by the teacher against choral answering in other instances in the transcript data, can loosely be compared to the teacher's nominating behaviour seen in 8T in this extract although 7S is not a choral answer. In 7S, the student offered the answer that the teacher wanted to be elicited by the solicit. Whether the apparent confusion in the turn was intentional or accidental on the part of the student is not easy to know. However, the teacher rejected in 8T not the answer but the student who gave the answer. Here the answer is believed not to be rejected because the same answer was accepted later from different student.

In such contexts, two things seem to be confusing both to an observer and to other students in the classroom. That is to say, the pointed-hand might miss the accurate direction of the student that the teacher had initially in mind. Alternatively, the students who sit behind or in front of the targeted (to use Kyriacou's 1986 term) student can easily mistake the direction of the pointed-hand. In turn 7S, for instance, it is not clear

whether the student mistook the teacher's mode of nominating or whether the teacher's mode of nomination missed the target direction. This behaviour makes the teacher only the person who knows whether or not the students who answered the solicits during that period were the right students he had in mind when he did the nominations.

As shown below, in turn 12S3, the same student whose answer has been accepted managed to insert the paragraph number in the very brief pause the teacher took after repeating the answer.

- 12S3 Paragraph 3.
- 13T Paragraph?
- 14S Three
- 15T O.k. before we go to the paragraph when do (cont.)

In 12S3, the student whose previous answer got accepted suggested the paragraph number in which the answer he offered is located. This is an instance of what Allwright (1980) calls turn making. It might be a revolt against the need for turn allocating simply to say the obvious answer aloud. Alternatively, it could be an expression of his discontent with putting up hands and waiting to be selected. Whatever the intention of the student might happen to be, the instance has apparently made two points clear. Firstly, it shows us that this student and perhaps other students in the same class know classroom routines related to the patterns of teacher question. Secondly, as shown in Turn 15T, it shows us how the teacher tentatively and diplomatically suspended attending to the student's contribution. As part of the teacher's expression of disapproval of the self-made turn, what initially seemed in 15T temporary suspension of

attention eventually turned out to be a complete rejection as the teacher did not raise the issue in the remaining part of the lesson.

8.1.1.1.1.5 Solicits for opposites

In other instances the teacher sought the antonym/opposite of words in the lesson using solicits from the category of 'What' at the beginning type of solicits. Let us look at a few examples quoted from the transcript data.

- 1T What is the opposite for good?
- 2 What is the opposite for 'cheap'?
- 3 So 'poor' is a persons and now the opposite or antonym of 'poor' is what?
- 4 Expensive is the opposite of _____?
- 5 The opposite of difficult is _____?

No difference appears to be there between the tasks the solicits in 1T and 3T above set students. In both cases single word answers will satisfy the solicits. However, solicits which begin with 'What' (like the examples in 1T and 2T above) open the discussion of the vocabulary item at hand while the solicits that have 'What' at the end (as in 3T above) close the discussions and signal the beginning of the task they have next in the list. Opening refers to their beginning of the discussion of whatever is there to be said about the question that was the focus of their lesson at any one time whereas closing refers to their finishing of the points to be discussed. When the teacher asks a 'what' at the end solicit, apparently it means he wants to get the main point in the lesson re-stated by students. This could be taken as an expression of the teacher's attempt made to check comprehension. The solicits used in turns 4 and 5 are similar in function to the solicit indicated in turn 3 in the list. All serve (mainly, of course) closing functions.

8.1.1.1.1.6 Solicits for repetition

Let us look at one example from the instances in the transcript data in which the teacher (using 'What' at the beginning solicit) asked one student to repeat an inaudible answer.

- 1S Expensive (was said to be inaudible)
2T Yes? what did you say?
3T I didn't hear. Would you please loud?
4T What did you say? Yes? Would you please loud?
5T Did you hear what she said? (to another student)
6S2 Expensive
7T Expensive. Good. Expensive
8T O. k. Now 'cheap' is the opposite of ____?

As shown above, a long list of solicits was used by the teacher to get an answer repeated by a student. This happened when the teacher asked the student to tell him the antonym of the first word they had in the list of 10 words. Other students in the class began raising their hands the moment they heard the teacher's request for repetition. Getting the student repeated the answer became the main task of the moment. In fact, the student whose answer was said to be inaudible has been standing up throughout the series of the requests for repetition perhaps waiting for a brief pause in which she could insert the repetition. In the context of this study, students should get up from their seat when they answer questions.

In turn T5, he asked another student if she had heard what the previous student said. The request in turn T5 looks like a request that the teacher made to get confirmed that the answer that was given by the previous student was inaudible. However, the student with no need to confirm the teacher's expectation repeated the same answer that was suggested previously. In turn 7T, the teacher, with no need to confirm with the previous

student whether she suggested the same or a different answer, accepted the answer from the ‘new’ student and, as he usually did, this time also he developed a new a question from the answer. A still closer look at what happened in turn 7T in which the teacher said: ‘expensive good expensive’ seems to indicate that he had heard what the first student had said earlier because he seems to be confirming to 6S2 by saying ‘that was exactly what was said; you’ve heard it right’.

The chain of teacher question – student answer – teacher feedback goes on like that in this lesson with no serious interruptions other than brief stops during which the teacher comments on answers or requests for repetitions of inaudible answers. Learning opportunities apparently lie in the students’ abilities in discerning what is relevant to their own agenda from the lesson-long question and answer exchanges.

8.1.2 ‘What’ at the end solicits and their functions

There are 20 instances in which teacher utterances that have ‘what’ at the end served soliciting functions. Ten of the solicits elicited choral answers while answers to 7 of them were offered by the teacher. Answers to 3 of the solicits were cross-referenced to other categories. Table 7 summarises this.

Table 7

Who ‘What’ at the end solicits were answered by	
Teacher	7
Cross-referenced	3
Choral answer	10
Total	20

Let us look at the following extract that consists of a series of semantically related solicits. In fact, there are only 2 examples of the question type being discussed here but the need for the long quotation arose from my desire to comment on the incident that I thought might have left confusions in the students' minds. First let us have a quick look at the textual context

It has been mentioned earlier that this lesson was based on a reading passage given in the students' course book. The first paragraph of the reading passage in the textbook has the sentence 'The house was old and in a poor condition, so Nassredin decided to build a new, bigger house.' The activity being discussed here is found two pages after the end of the reading passage. The topic of the activity is 'opposite'. The second word in the list of the vocabulary items in the activity was 'good', and the sixth was 'poor'. The students were provided with paragraph numbers of the reading passage in which they were to look for the antonyms of the two adjectives – 'good' and 'poor'.

Here is the extract from the data.

- 1T The second word?
2Ss Good
3T What is the opposite for good? (repeats)
4S Bad (unnominated but not reprimanded answerer)
5T Bad ok. (writes on the b.b) bad. Yeah, 'bad' is the opposite of 'good' but can you find this word in the passage?
6Ss No
7T But you are you are asked you are asked to find to give the opposite of words by finding in the passage. Yeah. But 'bad' is not found in the passage. So 'good' uh 'bad' is the opposite of 'good' but you are asked to give the opposite of words by finding the words in the passage. But 'poor' is found in the passage. yes?
8T So in which paragraph can you find this word?
9Ss Paragraph one
10T Paragraph?
11Ss Paragraph one
12T Can you read the sentence in paragraph one?
13S (reads)
14T in a poor ----?

- 15Ss condition
- 16T Look in a poor condition the house uh the house uhm
the house was old and . . . ?
- 17Ss in a poor condition
- 18T in a poor condition. So you see this word (pointing to 'good') is the opposite or the
antonym of 'poor' for condition, you see, isn't it?
- 19Ss Yes
- 20T If a person uh if we use this 'good' for a person is it the antonym of uhm is 'good' the
antonym of 'poor' for a person?
- 21Ss No
- 22T No. You see, 'good' is the antonym of what?
- 23Ss Bad
- 24T Bad for a person isn't it?
- 25T but for condition uh for condition the antonym of 'good' is what?
- 26Ss Poor
- 27T This building is new and it is in a good condition. Yes or no?
- 28Ss Yes
- 29T but Nesredin's house is uh old and in a poor ?
- 30Ss Condition
- 31T Well, it is possible again to say in bad condition in bad condition. But specifically
'good' is the antonym of 'poor' condition but when you use 'good' for a 'person'
when you are asked to give antonym of good that is 'bad' not 'poor', not 'poor', o.k.
What is the third one?

As 1T shows the solicit in the above series begins with a 'non-wh' question type. It is an example of the soliciting utterances that have been classified in the 'miscellaneous' category. There are 2 other examples of such soliciting utterances in the series (see 14T and 16T). Structurally, such utterances do not have a question form. It is the teacher's tone and the context of their occurrence that determine their function. During my classroom observation, I noticed that students in this class, perhaps due to their experience of working with the teacher's soliciting behaviour could, with little difficulty, understand that such utterances demand a short but simultaneous response from them. This questioning behaviour is one of the main ways used by this teacher to draw, simultaneously, several students into the classroom participation.

If we look at turn 5T, we observe that the teacher is accepting, though tentatively, an unnominated answer (see turn 4S) from one of the students in the class. The ground rule which has been operating in the question-answer exchanges appears to be often answering by nomination but rarely offering simultaneous responses. Any sign that has been noted by the teacher as a threat to this ground rule is normally suppressed by 'one at a time' from the teacher. Students who dare to break the rule suffer at least sanctions and their answer even if it is correct, will be rejected. But in this particular context, the teacher accepted the answer without at least reproving the student for breaking the rule. Indeed, the teacher may have a purpose for tolerating some students' behaviour and criticising others'. However, it should not remain unnoticed that unless the purpose underlying the teacher's decision is made clear to the class in public, it is possible to think that such differential treatment might create an undesirable effect on learners.

As stated in the opening sentence of the above paragraph, the teacher in turn 5T tentatively accepted the answer suggested by an unnominated answerer. What made the teacher's accepting of the answer 'tentative' appears to be not the student's rule-breaking behaviour but the incorrectness of the suggested answer. The answer that was tentatively accepted in turn 5T was eventually dismissed in turn 7T. The fact that the suggested answer is dismissed in turn 7T implies that the solicitor in turn 1T still desires an answer. This also means that a more appropriate answer is expected from the class, not from the teacher unless there is a sufficient proof to show that the class is incapable of providing the desired answer. However, the teacher, in turn 7T, provided the sentence 'but poor is found in the passage'. It is not known how many students could really take 'poor' in place of 'bad' in that context. The extent to which students could, again in that

context, understand the role of the reading passage (context) in determining meaning also remains questionable.

As shown in subsequent turns in the series, the question-answer exchanges smoothly continued as if nothing wrong has happened in the previous turns. This is how classroom works as a learning environment. This is also how teacher verbal behaviour determines patterns of classroom interaction and perhaps learning.

It is in turn 18T that the teacher explicitly told the class that 'poor' is the antonym of 'good'. The condition referred to there is the condition of the house in the passage. But 'condition' is far removed from the house in the discussion and this might create on students a sense of generalising that 'condition' collocates only with 'poor' regardless of the context of use. During the lesson: 'The house is in a bad condition' seems to have been treated as if it were an unacceptable sentence by native English speakers but I am not sure if native speakers would judge the sentence incorrect.

The soliciting utterance in turn 20T consists of various false starts and hesitations which might make comprehension of meaning by students difficult. In turn 21Ss, however, students found it possible to make sense of the apparently vague solicit and offered an answer. It is just not easy to imagine what works well and what does not work so well for students as they sometimes fail to suggest a correct answer to solicits that appear to

be clear to us. As noted in Tajino's (1993) study of perceptions of difficulty - a study that was conducted in language teaching classroom in Japan - students seem to be using their own criteria to say a question is vague or clear and difficult or easy.

In turns 22T – 24T, the teacher takes the students back to the situation that is similar to the one in which he dropped the issue of 'good' and 'bad' as antonyms to each other and declared that they are antonyms 'for' a person. Turns 27—30 establish that 'good' is the antonym of 'poor' for condition. In turn T33, as quoted below again, the distinction that has been keeping apart 'bad' and 'good' throughout the previous turns seems to have been abandoned altogether when the teacher said

T It's possible again to say in bad condition in bad condition but specifically 'good' is the antonym of 'poor' condition. But when you use 'good' for person when you are asked to give antonym of 'good' that is 'bad' not 'poor', not 'poor', o.k. What is the third one?

What was precisely learned by students from this was not measured as doing that was not the job of this study. Two things seem to be clear, however. One, when the teacher said: 'When you are asked to give the antonym of 'good' that is 'bad', not 'poor' he seems to be referring indirectly to what he asks in examinations and the answer he expects students to write. Two, it is possible to state that the teacher left the students in a potentially confusing state of mind regarding the meaning that was intended to be learned. Possible confusions that the teacher's explanation suggests include the following.

1. Good is the antonym of bad.
2. Good is not the antonym of bad.
3. Good is the antonym of poor.
4. Good is not the antonym of poor.

This is how the lesson on vocabulary was going on. As can be understood from the extract above, the way the lesson was made to progress seems liable to create confusion in the minds of the students. This means that the attempts made by the teacher to make some points in the lesson more clear by providing explanations turned out to make the points more complicated. Pieces of evidence that have been discussed so far indicate that any attempt made to give a 'good' explanation is hopeless, not just difficult.

Future research is needed to seek ways of stopping teachers from wasting their time to give 'good' explanations. However, until then, there is some hope to believe that the classroom situation is not as confusing as it appears to be. This is because, if giving a correct answer is agreed to be a yardstick for measuring understanding, in nearly all of the question-answer instances at least some students were capable of providing answers that were judged to be correct by the teacher.

Learning experience in a virtually ambiguous and sometimes confusing situation has apparently taught students to develop their own strategies of discerning what is relevant from what is irrelevant in the context of a given lesson. This observation might create the impression that one perhaps wrongly wishes to see classroom happenings to be more clear for students to understand them. Perhaps they are already sufficiently clear enough for those who work in them as learners.

When we return to the issue of 'What' at the end solicits in this transcript data, we notice an instance in which another set of 'What' at the end type of solicit was used by

the teacher to explore the students' experience. At first sight, the solicits (see below) might create some doubt regarding the extent to which students feel comfortable to remember and discuss painful situations. This happens to be so when we think that people generally tend to suppress painful memories. In fact, it is also culturally inappropriate to discuss the death of a family member in public such as in the classroom.

The situation appears to be more embarrassing when the participants have limited life experience mainly due to age such as the students in the class being discussed here. However, in the context cited below since students had to give a-one-word long answer simultaneously, the effect might not be as serious as when individual students are required to provide a complete answer.

In addition, although this incident might alert the teacher and textbook writers to select appropriate examples to be discussed with students in class, it also needs to be pointed out that classroom in general and language teaching classroom in particular, needs to create opportunities for students to talk in the target language about the various aspects of life including happiness and sadness. After all, later in life, students perhaps need the target language to express painful feelings or to console the bereaved. The classroom is virtually the only place they can learn the language. Let us see it.

- T If you lose your brother (repeats it 2 more times)
 When you lose your brother you feel what?
Ss Sad
T If you fail to pass the exam you feel what?
Ss Sad happy sad happy
T Yeah. You feel happy

The fact that the teacher ignored 'happy' in the choral answer might be taken as evidence of missed teaching/learning opportunity as the students who proposed it as a candidate answer might have taken it as synonymous with 'sad'.

8.3 Other 'Whs' and their functions

There are 15 instances in which teacher utterances that have 'Whs' other than 'What' served soliciting functions. Answers to 10 of them were offered by individual students while there were 4 choral answers. One instance in which two of the solicits from this category asked students to make a sentence with the word they were learning is quoted and discussed below.

- 1T Cheap. Anybody who can make a sentence with 'cheap'?
- 2T Anybody?
- 3T Any student who can make a sentence with the word 'cheap'?
- 4T Would you please make a sentence using the word 'cheap'?
- 5S This pen is cheap
- 6T This pen is cheap. Yeah.
- 7T This pen is cheap (reads as he writes on the b.b.)
- 8T You know 'cheap' means something that has a lower price, isn't it?
- 9T O. k. Who can make a sentence with 'expensive'?
- 10S This car is expensive
- 11T Yes. This car is expensive (reads as he writes on the b.b.)
- 12T Now when you compare the prices of the pen and the car which one is expensive?
- 13Ss The car is expensive and the pen is cheap
- 14T Well, this is the first word and the antonym of 'cheap' is 'expensive'

The first 3 solicits were made before the teacher nominated a student. The rationale for the teacher's repeating of the solicits can be assumed to have emerged from the need to engage many students into thinking about what they could say. If this assumption proved to be correct, then this could be taken as an effort the teacher has made towards creating opportunities for students at least to think how they could put their thought into

the target language. Offering students opportunities to think either individually or in groups and then asking some of them to report products to the whole class might extend their opportunity to practise speaking/writing using the words they are trying to learn in the class.

Here, however, only one student was offered the opportunity although many might have thought about what sentence to make using 'cheap' – the word with which the teacher required them to make a sentence. In none of the soliciting instances and turns did this teacher ask more than one student to suggest alternative answers to the soliciting utterances. Re-directing soliciting utterances to other students even when an adequate answer is obtained from the first answerer extends the opportunities of students' participation in the classroom interaction. It also extends the opportunity of students' exposure to various language inputs from their fellow learners. This is because, previous study, for instance, a study made by Slimani (1987) on student 'uptake' has traced the sources of more up-taken items in the topics initiated by fellow learners than those by the teacher.

The data obtained from the teachers during the interview sessions reveal that teachers have their own worries about covering the material in the textbook. This might partly explain why they cannot afford time to re – direct (if time is assumed to be a problem, of course) questions to other students so that many can benefit from that. Below are quoted two interview excerpts to show the relevance of the implication of the replies to the issue being discussed.

In the excerpts taken from interview replies obtained from the teachers, the teachers have different rationales for the urge to finish the material in the textbook but the implication of both seem to affect how they do things in the classroom including their questioning behaviour. The interview question ‘what will happen if you don’t cover some of the points from the textbook in class?’ arose when the teachers raised lack of time as a problem that stops them from doing many things in class. Excerpt 1 is taken from the interview made with the vocabulary teacher, and excerpt 2 from the grammar teacher discussed in the previous chapter.

1.

Yeah. Yeah. There are many things [many things that will happen] if we don’t cover the textbook, the school officials might ask you, why and if you explain or if you tell them that we passed this by doing this and that they don’t understand...

2. In a way uh if we don’t cover the portion? We’re supposed to cover the portion. The portion must be finished within a given period of time because if we don’t cover this portion next year when they go to the next class they’re going to be baseless...The next portion depends on that .

Let us return to the extract taken from the data earlier in which the prices of a pen and a car were compared to decide which is more/less expensive. It is not just easy to understand from the examples given by students and repeated by the teacher how much is worth the ‘cheap pen’ and the ‘expensive car’. ‘Cheap’ and ‘expensive’ seem to be relative notions. There are both cheap and expensive pens perhaps as much as there are cheap and expensive cars. After all, cars and pens are too different things to compare their prices.

Yet, there is something potentially useful in what has happened. That is to say, the students have apparently obtained some vague understanding and even that vague understanding is hoped to stimulate further learning. Another instance (see below) in which other 'Whs' were used in this lesson created an opportunity for students to explore their own experience.

- 1T When do you feel sad? (repeated 4 more times)
2S When we are unhappy
3T When we are unhappy uh that means we are sad

In connection with the repetition in 1T above, as noted earlier, if the need for the repetitions arose from the need to draw many students into exploring their experience in the target language, it is going to be an example of the behaviour that is worth encouraging. However, it appears hopeless to think that way as the opportunity to make a sentence was offered only to one student. What makes it look more vague is the information that was suggested by the student and repeated and got approved of by the teacher. This means that the example that says: 'We feel sad when we are unhappy' is the same as saying 'When we are unhappy we are sad'. The same thing can make us feel sad or unhappy. The same information circulates in both cases. This can be taken as an example of the instances in which meaning is taught in a narrow and repetitive way. Yet there is some hope to think that students can get this cleared up gradually, perhaps.

If, however, the behaviour was to be taken as part of the effort made by the teacher to ensure that everybody has heard the solicited, it is going to be taken as part of the behaviour that needs to be replaced by a more pedagogically helpful behaviour as the teacher's habit of repeating solicited may discourage initial listening. There is, however, a

piece of evidence in the student diary that tells us that teacher repetition of student question is helpful. The excerpt also contains the student's perception of the teacher's perception regarding the purpose of the teacher's repetition of questions.

There are some students in the class who ask questions and the teacher repeats their questions. This is good for us to learn. Our teacher thinks we don't understand the lesson and the questions he asks. That's why he asks us the same question again and again, I think (W)

8.4 Yes/no type solicit and the functions they served

There are 16 instances in which teacher utterances that could elicit 'yes/no' answers served soliciting functions in the data. The teacher used the solicits in this category to ask students to

- repeat answers
- locate words and read the paragraphs in which the words are located
- display their understanding of the lesson
- tell him which word in the list to do next

8.4.1 Asking a student to repeat an answer

In one instance, as was commented on earlier, the teacher used the solicits from this category to get one answer repeated by one student. Let us see again how this happened.

- 1T You know what is the antonym?
- 2T What is the opposite for cheap?
- 3S Expensive (was said to be inaudible)
- 4T What did you say? Yes?
- 5T I didn't hear. Would you please loud? (repeats)
(many other hands for the opportunity to repeat)
- 6T What did you say?
- 7T Do you hear what she says? (to another student)
- 8S2 Expensive

9T Expensive. Yes, expensive

In 1T the teacher asked a solicitation that is pre-faced by 'you know' to see if students knew the antonym/opposite of cheap. The answer the student offered in 3S happened to be inaudible to the teacher. He, therefore, needed to get it repeated in 4T.

In turn 5T, the teacher reinforced the previous solicitation by directing another solicitation to the student herself. His request for repetition is prefaced by the rationale for the need for repetition. The solicitation in 7T was directed to one particular student (different from the first student), although there were raised hands in class to compete for the opportunity to say the answer apparently in a more audible voice.

In many of the classes I observed during data collection, I have noticed students' hands going up to compete for the opportunity to say the answers that have already been offered by other students even when the students who gave the answers were asked to repeat the answers. In this particular example, however, the teacher directed the question to another student before the first student managed to repeat the answer. In fact, it remained not clear why the teacher denied the first answerer the opportunity to repeat her own answer

As regards students who compete for the opportunity to repeat other students' answers even when the original answerers are capable of doing it, it is possible to assume that perhaps being able to win the competition for nomination matters to some students more than what they could say if they are nominated. Future research might be needed to give us insight into students' perceptions of this issue. Until then, it might be possible again

to assume that students who compete for the opportunity to repeat answers offered by other students while the original answerers are capable of doing it are either trying to

- a) show off ,
- b) evade the trouble of thinking answers of their own,
- c) initiate feedback from the teacher or they are trying to
- d) use the opportunity to practice using the target language.

8 . 4 . 2 Locating words in the text.

1T	O.k. bad yeah, bad is the opposite of good, but can you find this word in the passage?
Ss	No.
3T	but you are asked to or the book asked you to give the opposite of the words finding in the passage

In 1T, we observe that the teacher is tentatively accepting 'bad' as the opposite of 'good'. In the same turn, he wanted to get confirmed if students could/could not find the word in the passage. The use of the 'but' at the beginning of the solicit appears to serve as a clue to his intention to drop the tentatively accepted answer. The students also seem to be co-operating in turn 2Ss. This is because it just does not seem to be easy for them to remember whether or not the reading passage they did in the previous lesson had the adjective 'bad' in it.

Below are quoted some instances from the transcript data in which the teacher asked students to identify the paragraphs in which the words they were discussing were located. As shown below choral answers identified the paragraph numbers and individual students read the paragraphs. Identifying paragraphs in this sense involves

only reading the paragraph number loud out, as the numbers have been indicated against each word in the textbook. Let us look at how this happened.

- 1T So in which paragraph can you find this word?
- 2Ss Paragraph one
- 3T Paragraph?
- 4Ss Paragraph one
- 5T Can you read the sentence in paragraph one?
- 6S (reads the paragraph)

In 1T, the choral task involves only reading loud out the paragraph number from the textbook and the students did that in turn Ss 2. In this case, nomination for answering did not seem to be necessary perhaps because the answer is obvious from the textbook. There are instances, however, in which nominations were made for the opportunity to say loud out the obvious answers. The very fact that students say obvious answers in public in class is itself an opportunity for them to practice pronunciation and get approval as answering teacher question is virtually the only option accessible to them to do that. In 3T, the purpose of the request for repetition of the answer is not clear. One reason for teachers' request for repetition of answers, as noted elsewhere in this study, is to show their detection of error of some sort. This particular instance is not about errors, however.

Teacher request for repetition might also mean his request for increased attention. After the students' repetition of the answer in the quoted material, for instance, the teacher made a general solicit for the opportunity to read the paragraph that has been identified earlier. The request he made for repetition earlier might have been intended to keep the students alert to this new solicit.

8.4.3 When the students' comprehension is the focus

From the example quoted below (this example was commented on earlier in this chapter) we can notice the teacher's attempt to use the solicit from the 'yes/no' type to check the students' understanding of the contexts in which 'poor' and 'bad' can serve as antonyms of 'good'. In fact, the context has not been clearly stated to enhance understanding.

- T If a person, if we use this 'poor' for a person, is it the antonym of uh is 'poor' the antonym of 'good' for a person?
Ss No
T No. You see, 'good' is the antonym of what?
S bad
T 'bad' for a person, isn't it? but for condition the antonym of 'good' is what?
Ss Poor

In other instances (see blow), we observe when the teacher used solicits from this category to check if students knew the meanings of the words they had studied. The teacher used these solicits at the end of their discussion of the first topic they had for the period. As noted elsewhere in this study, the solicits seem to be doing pre-closing functions because the moment they were posed the students began talking about the second topic they had for the day. In fact, the solicits marked not only the end of the first topic but they also showed the end of their lesson period.

- T Any question?
(noises)
Any problem concerning this antonym?
O. k. Is there any word that you don't know the meaning?
Do you know the meaning of all words here?
So let's proceed to the next topic

Excerpts taken from student diaries show their lack of opportunities to ask questions during the lessons. In the first extract, we notice the student's reaction to lack of time to

ask questions and her disappointment with the teacher's postponement of answering the only question asked towards the end of the period. From the second excerpt, we understand how students bother about not interrupting with the lesson during teacher explanation. The student also seems to be unhappy about the explanation which lasts up to the end of the period. Let us see both excerpts.

1. When the teacher said 'ask me anything you do not understand' many students raised their hands. At the end of the period, only one student asked a question and the teacher postponed answering even that question. (W)
2. It is wrong to stop the teacher for a question while he is explaining the lesson. I always delay my questions until the end of his explanation. He finishes explaining at the end of the period and I can't get time to ask a question. Even when he finishes explaining a few minutes before the end of the period, I can't ask all the questions. Students also shout towards the end of the period. (W)

8.5 Miscellaneous solicits

Some of the solicits in this category have a 'fill in the blank' type of characteristic. This refers to the instances in which teacher utterances served to elicit answers to be filled in the blank spaces that the teacher created with a pause and a questioning tone. Other solicits in the category request students to repeat what has been said earlier. Still others are solicits that seem to play a pre-closing role before transitions between questions or phases in a lesson. Altogether there are 32 instances in which teacher utterances of this category served solicensing functions in the data. Twenty-four of the solicits in this category elicited choral answers. This indicates two things. On the one hand, solicits in this category require short answers, one or two words. On the other hand, the answers they require are readily accessible to several students at the same time.

8.5.1 Functions they served

Solicits in this category served one or the other of the following functions in this data.

Details of the functions they served in the data have been discussed earlier as the solicits in this category have no separate functions of their own.

- 1 Checking students' comprehension
- 2 Asking for repetition
- 3 Identifying which word in the list to do next
- 4 Searching for word meanings

This teacher was asked in an interview what his opinion is on the number of questions he asked during the lesson. Here is a full text of his reply

It doesn't happen (asking many questions). I mostly not usually I mean not always but I mostly use such methods because you know I feel that or I think that when I do this (when I ask many questions) most students will understand what I'm saying or what I'm teaching. Because of this I hope if I'm not mistaken language needs a lot of exercise and when you do exercise you have to repeat them so many times. Even the textbooks repeat a word or words in different ways. This is because to understand easily. You see that is why I I always ask many questions and I want to get answers from students.

From the teacher's replies we understand the teacher's own belief of how language is learned: through doing a lot of exercise. Learning through doing exercise might enhance understanding provided that the exercises are not geared entirely towards drills with the form of the target language. This vocabulary lesson is not based on practising forms of the target language. Apparently the main purpose of the lesson is to enable students to identify from a reading passage words that are synonymous to a group of words

provided in the textbook. Finding the meanings of some words, making sentences using other words, learning pronunciations are all incidental learning opportunities that emerged during the vocabulary lesson.

The teacher tends to be sharing ground with proponents of 'Audiolingualism' which argues in favour of habit formation through frequent practice when he says: 'When you do exercise you have to repeat them so many times'. Excessive repetition by the teacher adds more to the quantity rather than the quality of teacher talk. This damages the quality of teacher talk. The teacher also has indicated that he followed the textbook as a model when he replies: 'even the textbooks repeat....' This might indicate the extent to which the textbook dictates what things teachers should do and how they should do whatever they are recommended to do during a lesson.

Before we move on to Chapter IX, the chapter which discusses **Students' verbal behaviour** and **learning opportunities** in a vocabulary lesson, let us summarise the main points discussed in this chapter.

8.6 Summary of the chapter

Soliciting utterances in this data have been classified into 5 categories. The bases of categorising the solicits were the grammatical forms of the utterances and their context of occurrence in the data. Except for a limited instances such as the one in which the students were required to make sentences of their own using 'cheap' and 'expensive', nearly all of the solicits of all the categories did not require extended linguistic production and complex interactive work. Even in the instances in which the students

were asked to make sentences, the task tested the students' comprehension of simple definitions of the words. This happened to be so partly because of the nature of the solicits that were asked during the lesson but mainly it happened to be so because of the functions the solicits were made to serve. Let us look at some examples in which the way the teacher used the solicits disarms the solicits of their potential to lead to an extended linguistic production.

- 1Ss Wealthy (answer to the previous question)
2T Wealthy. Now you know what 'wealthy' is?
3T May be this word uhm may be new for some students
4T What's the word that gives this meaning?

The question in turn 2 (above) demands serious thinking in which students have to search for relevant thought and suitable terms with which to express the thought. Not only that it also requires them to search for acceptable ways of collocating the terms so that the final linguistic product will, when officially presented to the class, give the intended meaning. As seen in turn 3T, the teacher with no proof from the class of the unfamiliarity of the word to some students, dropped the initial purpose the question was intended to serve and made it serve a new but easier purpose to serve – looking for a synonym. Even if there was evidence in class to show that 'wealthy' was not familiar to some students, the class had many 'some' students and the word was feared to be unfamiliar only to one 'some' from among the many 'somes' in the class of over students. Another instance is quoted below

- 5T You know what 'buy' is?
6Ss Yes
7T What is the meaning of 'buy'? (repeats)
8T To take something by giving-----?
9Ss Money
10T Money

In turn 5T (above) again, the teacher asked the students if they knew what 'buy' is. In turn 6Ss he obtained a positive answer and pursued the question further as shown in turn 7T. Despite the students' answer in 6Ss, what suddenly prompted the teacher to reduce the question to a blank filling type question in turn 8T remained unknown. In fact, it is possible to speculate that the teacher changed the purpose of the question perhaps because he did not have trust in the students' linguistic capacity to tell him the meaning he wished to get elicited by 'buy'. If this speculation happens to be true, then, this teacher and other teachers with a similar thought need to learn to have confidence in their students' communicative skills. Learning to trust students' communicative skill, it seems, might have an implication for the craving teachers have for accuracy of language to be used by students.

Having seen this much in the preceding chapter (Chapter VIII) on the Analysis and Interpretation of the recurrent verbal behaviour in a vocabulary lesson, we can now go to Chapter IX to see students' verbal behavior and the potential learning opportunities that could arise during the vocabulary period but let me add just 2 points and sum up this section.

1. The soliciting utterances in this data, regardless of their categories, were made to elicit short and predictable answers. This means the way the solicit is asked seems to determine the nature of the interactive work the solicit demanded of students so much as the nature of the solicit asked. Paraphrasing has been noted to have reduced the initial task the solicits set students.

2. Through paraphrasing, the teacher usually got very close to providing answers himself. In fact, this is mentioned only to draw attention to the damage caused to some solicits by paraphrasing. It needs to be pointed out here that getting close to providing answers might not be surprising when seen in light of the instances in the transcript data in which the teacher went beyond getting closer to answering his own solicit and himself provided complete answers.

As can be recalled, the 3rd chapter of the analysis and interpretation of the grammar lesson transcript data (Chapter VI in the Thesis) presented the analysis and interpretation of the **Nature of student verbal behaviour and Learning opportunities** in the grammar lesson. Similarly, the 3rd chapter of this vocabulary lesson transcript data (Chapter IX in the Thesis) will present the analysis and interpretation of the **Nature of student verbal behaviour and Learning opportunities used in this vocabulary lesson. (Research questions 1 & 3)**

CHAPTER IX

THE NATURE OF STUDENTS' VERBAL BEHAVIOUR AND LEARNING

OPPORTUNITIES IN A VOCABULARY LESSON

9.0 Introduction

This chapter has two sections. The first section is on students' verbal behaviour during a vocabulary lesson while the second section is on the potential learning opportunities that could arise during the lesson.

9.1 The Nature of students' verbal behaviour used in a vocabulary lesson

As noted elsewhere in this study, teacher initiates—students respond—teacher gives feedback (I-R-F) is the instructional format practised in this lesson. Throughout the lesson, the teacher did the initiating and the students, the responding. This agrees with Allwright and Bailey's (1990) observation of distribution of classroom talk. In reference to this Allwright and Bailey state that

Observations of many different classes, both in content area subjects and in language instruction, consistently show that teachers typically do between one half and three quarters of the talking done in class. This finding is partially explained by the observation that of Bellack's four classroom discourse moves ...[T]hree are usually restricted to the teacher: *structuring*, *soliciting*, and *reacting*. Only one, *responding*, is typically the students' prerogative (1990: 139). (italics original).

As revealed in the various episodes discussed in the previous chapters, in this vocabulary lesson, responding was typically the students' prerogative. This means that apart from the instances in which some students' deliberately or accidentally created

other speaking turns (or rather repeating turns) for themselves through making errors in answering teacher solicits, there was only a single instance in the data in which a student created a turn himself and suggested a – two - word long utterance. Even that single contribution remained suspended throughout the lesson. This could be taken as evidence of the ‘absolute’ control the teacher had over the students’ verbal behaviour during this lesson. Let us see how this happened.

S	Happy
T	Happy. Yes.
S	Paragraph 3 (unnominated)
T	Paragraph?
S	3
T	O. k. Before you go to the paragraph when do (con.)

As commented on earlier in the last two chapters, ‘What’ beginning questions seem to have lost their potential power to lead students to extended interactive work in many instances in the transcript data. Let us look at the following 2 examples. In the first extract a student was offered the opportunity to answer the solicit with no need on the part of the teacher to reduce the solicit to the extent where a single word could be a satisfactory answer. In fact, the solicit elicited the longest utterance made by a student in this transcript data. It is 7 words long.

In the second example, after the student’s initial attempt, the teacher himself provided the framework of the answer and ‘morally’ required the students to provide a single word to replace the ‘what’ at the end of the framework of the needed answer. Either the same student himself could have improved the answer or other students could have come to his rescue if the question were re-directed to other students in the class. Now the examples:

Ex. 1

- T What do you mean by antonyms?
S Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings (6: 397)

Ex. 2

- T What do you mean by proud? (repeats)
S (inaudible)
T Yeah, you have the idea. (repeats)
A proud person is a person who look down on the other people, isn't it?
Or who can himself above what?
Ss all

The longest choral utterance (see below) is 9 words long. This utterance involved choral reading of two sentences from the blackboard.

- T Now when you compare the prices of the pen and the car which one is expensive?
Ss The car is expensive and the pen is cheap

9.1.1 What constituted students' answers

The investigations that have been made into the functions of teacher solicits in the previous sections have implications for what constituted students answers. This happens to be so because in all the turns the students were offered they answered teacher solicits. As explained above, partly because of the nature of teacher solicit but mainly because of the way the solicits were made use of by the teacher, the students did not get involved in tasks that required extended linguistic production. This means that the teacher through paraphrasing/rephrasing solicits made the students' interactive work unhelpfully simple and predictable.

In general terms, reading and 'speaking' were what the students were required to do in the turns that they were offered. (The term 'speaking' refers to answering when initiated

in this context.) What constituted their reading and speaking were noted in detail for various purposes in the preceding sections in this chapter. What I have listed below is, therefore, a summary of the previous discussions.

9.1.1 Reading

Paragraph numbers

Words from a list

Paragraphs from the textbook/from the blackboard

9.1.1.1 Speaking

Completing teacher sentences

Making sentences of their own (2 instances)

Telling the teacher antonyms/opposites of words

Telling the teacher meanings of words

Repeating what has been said

9.2 Learning opportunities

As explained in Chapter VI, students seem to have idiosyncratic opportunities of learning. The incident that can be a source of learning material for some students might not be so for others. However, what is officially planned by the teacher as a lesson can, apart from being the material to learn, be taken as a potential source of opportunities for students' learning. In the context of this study in particular, the classroom is virtually the only place for students to encounter English, and as a result, it is because of the lesson

that is planned by the teacher that opportunities for the students' learning of different aspects of the target language can be created.

In this data, for instance, what was apparently hoped for by the teacher to be gained by the students from this lesson is the antonyms/opposites of 10 vocabulary items. In the process of making this happen, several other opportunities were created, jointly by the teacher and the students. For example, there were opportunities for students to get exposed to meanings of certain vocabulary items. In the extract quoted below, for instance, it is possible for some students to pick up 'buy' as an act that involves 'taking something by giving money but, as commented on earlier, the opportunity for another perhaps better learning remained unused due to teacher paraphrasing/rephrasing of the solicit. The first solicit, for instance, could have led them to a more extended linguistic production.

T You know what the meaning of buy is?
 To take something by giving what?
Ss Money

In the contexts where the classroom is virtually the only place for students to get exposure to the target language, even with their damaging effects as shown in the above extract, the ways the solicits are asked and paraphrased/repeated could themselves be opportunities for some students either to test their own hypothesis underlying question-asking skills, or they may encourage them to develop one. In short, apart from the content and the skills officially planned by the teacher for student to learn during this vocabulary lesson, the classroom processes of enabling them to learn whatever was

planned, themselves could give rise to plenty of potentially helpful learning opportunities.

The extra linguistic information offered by the teacher in some instances might be opportunities for some students to get additional tips to their repertoire of the target language. In the extracts below, for instance, there were opportunities for students to learn or to learn more about pre-fix, degrees of comparisons and pronunciation. Let us see the examples.

Ex. 1

T Unhappy
 ‘Un-‘ is what?
 It’s uh it’s I mean a ‘prefix’

Ex. 2.

T Slowest. Now what’s the comparative form?
Ss Slow
T ‘Slowest’ is what?
 Superlative. ‘Slowest’ is the superlative degree of ‘slow’

Ex. 3.

T and we don’t say should (the ‘l’ pronounced)
 and we say what?
Ss should (the /l/ is silent)

The above quoted material might also give some curious students opportunities that will raise their awareness to the potential usefulness of the dictionary in this regard. The instances in which students were required to make sentences using the words they were learning also could create learning opportunities. Let us see the solicits.

- T Anybody who can make a sentence with 'cheap'?
(turns omitted)
- T Who can make a sentence with 'expensive'?

The solicits are assumed to create opportunities potentially for all students in the class to produce sentences and rehearse them privately although only two students were eventually given the opportunity to say their sentences in public.

9.3 Closing words

We have now finished the chapters on **Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation** of the data used in the present study. As can be remembered, we started the Analysis and Interpretation of the data in Chapter IV. In that chapter we read the nature of the verbal behavior used in a grammar lesson with the potential effect the behavior has on classroom interaction and learning.

In Chapter V we read the nature of the recurrent verbal behavior during a grammar lesson and of the tasks the recurrent verbal behaviour set the students. This was also seen in terms of the potential learning opportunities that could arise during the classroom interaction that the tasks demand of students.

Chapter VI re-viewed more clearly the nature of the students' verbal behaviour and the potential learning opportunities. Students' verbal behaviour and potential learning opportunities were also crucial components of the issues discussed in the prior 2 chapters.

Chapters VII – IX served the same functions as Chapters IV – VI. The only difference in their purpose was the difference in the type of the lesson that was analysed and interpreted in the chapters. This means that the first 3 chapters were on a grammar lesson while the second 3 chapters were on a vocabulary lesson.

As has been repeatedly stated, the main issue that this study concerned itself with was investigating the nature of the classroom verbal behaviour and the potential learning opportunities that could arise during English lessons. This was needed to be done primarily to account for the rationale for the increasing decline in the students' general performances in English. I should now hope that the preceding 6 chapters have done the intended job through describing and explaining in sufficient detail the transcript data obtained from two audio-taped lessons and the supplementary data obtained from interviews and student diaries. What now remains to be done is to put together the findings that have been noted in all the chapters and state them, this time more clearly, under the basic Research questions and their derivatives. Chapter X will pick up this issue. Let us see it.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS, REASONS FOR THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10 . 0 Introduction to the conclusion

This chapter has 3 main sections. The first section presents conclusion of the Thesis. Section two suggests possible reasons that might explain the present findings. The last section is on recommendations.

10 . 1 Findings and conclusion

The conclusion section has been intended to serve two purposes. Firstly, the section reviews the results that have been reported in all the previous chapters in light of the research questions with which this study has concerned itself. The research questions (with their derivatives) will serve as topics of the findings to be reported. Secondly, reasons that might explain the present finding will also be suggested in this conclusion section.

The findings reported below are based on the data obtained from limited subjects on limited aspects of the target language taught in the secondary school. Generalisability of the findings reported here cannot be claimed but it needs to be stated that similar results might be found from subjects with a background that is similar to the subjects considered in this study. Otherwise, the present findings need to be held true to the present subjects. .

The purpose of this work was to study the processes of English language teaching/learning in the secondary school through studying the verbal behaviours used during English lessons. Two grade 9 English teachers and their students were the subjects used in the study. Transcripts of audio – taped lessons were the core data used in the study while data obtained from student diaries, teacher interviews and field notes taken during classroom observations were used to supplement the core data. The following basic questions were asked to achieve the purpose of the study.

1. What is the nature of the verbal behaviour in the secondary school English classroom?
2. How does the nature of the verbal used in a lesson influence the patterns of classroom interaction?

Research questions 1-2 served to provide relevant data for the 3rd question which was designed to gather relevant data on potential learning opportunities during the lessons used in the study. . Here is the question.

3. How do the patterns of classroom interaction determine learning opportunities?

10 . 1 . 1 Review of the findings

This section consolidates in terms of the Research questions the findings that have been reported earlier in the various chapters of the Thesis.

10 . 1 . 1 . 1 On the nature of the verbal behaviour: the teachers' verbal behaviours

Consistent with the findings of the classic Bellack et al.'s (1966) study on classroom verbal behaviour, the three pieces of language of the classroom, namely, Initiate – Respond – Follow up (I-R-F) are in their places in both lesson types this study has

concerned itself with. The teachers take two turns against every single student turn. In the first turn, they initiate an activity or a task while in the third, they evaluate students' performances of the set task. A soliciting move realises the initiative move in the lessons. The feedback/follow-up move is a brief stop during which student response is accepted, evaluated and commented on by the teacher. The teachers' follow – up move evolves into another 'new' task to be realised through another soliciting move.

The verbal behaviours used in these grammar and vocabulary lessons are, therefore, characterised by teacher-led classroom talk which is directed by a series of questions which engage learners in interactive work that leads to a short and predictable linguistic production. The nature of the teachers verbal behaviour identified here is similar to the finding noted by Hammersly (1990) in the study he conducted to see into the organisation of pupil participation in the secondary urban school. Hammersly notes this as follows.

It is the teacher who makes all these [the] decisions, he continually organises his talk as a lesson-long phenomenon and it is his talk which officially constitutes the lesson. Pupils are officially limited to making or trying to make contributions to *his* talk, their participation is not on their own terms but on his; they are expected to listen to what he says and follow his development of the topic to 'learn' (1990: 25) (*italics original*).

10 . 1 . 1 . 2 The nature of the teacher's informing/explaining behaviour

Not much is there to report on the teachers' informing/explaining behaviour at length as there were only limited instances that led them to give extended linguistic information during the lessons. However, even the limited available instances of the explanations

made by the present subjects consist of sufficient evidence to show that in both the grammar and the vocabulary lessons, the efforts made by the teachers to make some language points more clear through giving further explanation seemed to have ended up in making things more complicated for understanding.

10 . 1 . 1 3 On the recurrent verbal behaviour

Analysis of the data has indicated teacher soliciting behaviour to be the dominating verbal behaviour in the two lessons considered in this study. Below are the details of this behaviour.

10 . 1 . 1 . 3 . 1 On the amount of the soliciting utterances

When the distribution of classroom discourse, i.e., I-R-F, between the teacher and the population of students as a collective communication partner is considered, we observe that the teacher has two moves to go for every single move taken by students, as a group or on an individual basis. When the teachers' exclusive moves are taken into account, the initiative move which is realised through the soliciting move has been found to be taking a prominent place in both the grammar and the vocabulary lessons used in the study.

Analysis of the audio-recorded data has revealed that the lessons are made to move forward by a series of teacher questions asked during the lessons. This tends to reflect what Orlich et al. (1990) have commented on the quantity of questions when they write: "It appears that teachers may have mistakenly equated quantity of questions with quality" (1990: 189). We can also infer from the nature of the students' verbal

behaviour discussed in the earlier chapters that the solicits used by the teachers during the lessons lack the potential to initiate interactive work that requires students to engage in extended linguistic work.

10 . 1 . 1 . 3 . 2 On the solicit types

In reference to the solicit type used in the lessons, on the one hand, investigation of the structural forms of the solicits used by the teachers indicated 4 different solicit types used during the lessons. These are 'What' at the beginning type; 'What' at the end type; other 'Whs' type; and 'Yes/no' type solicits. On the other hand, a wide range of soliciting utterances of miscellaneous in nature have been identified from the data through investigating teacher utterances that have no obvious question - marking structural form but utterances around which a response was obtained or was just desired from the class.

10 . 1 . 1 . 3 . 3 The Teachers' strategies in making use of soliciting utterances

Evidence available in the data has indicated that more than the solicit type, it was the way the teachers made use of the solicits that seemed to have influenced the tasks the students were required to do in the lessons. This means that the teachers apparently out of the need to simplify questions and 'enhance' comprehension, have through paraphrasing and re-phrasing solicits that were potentially promising to lead students to a relatively more complex interactive work and extended linguistic production, eventually reduced them to the question form that could be satisfied by a single word or phrase. In some cases, as if the reduction of the potential power of the solicits were not enough, the teachers provided students with options from which to choose even that

single word or phrase to be filled in the slot in the structural format of the answer that has been evolved from the solicits through repetitions and paraphrases/re-phrases.

As noted above, repetitions and paraphrases have been features that characterise the teachers' soliciting behaviour. These, the teachers said during the interviews, are the strategies they use to enhance the students' comprehension of the questions. However, excessive use of these strategies by the teachers appears to have, as pointed out above, done more damage to the quality of the interactive work during the lessons than good as they oversimplified the task required to be done by students.

10 . 1 . 1 . 3 . 4 Sources of information used in questioning and answering

The dominant role that questioning played in the teachers' verbal behaviour during the lessons is perhaps a reflection of the way the lesson is presented in the textbook. This was because the textbook was the main source of information both for teacher questions and student answers. Even when the particular grammar and vocabulary lessons they were learning at the time were not the source of answers to teacher questions, one or the other of the lessons they had learned from the textbook in the previous periods were observed to have been serving as the source of answers to the questions. The teachers usually referred the students to search for answers in the previous lessons from the previous pages of the textbook whenever they felt the previous lessons to be the right source of information. This might explain the limited nature of the extent to which the target language was used during the lessons for communicative purposes other than the purposes which were determined by the textbook.

Answers to the textbook questions were themselves what constituted the planned lessons. This happens to be so because all the events during the observed lessons were potentially initiated by three instructions given in the textbook. This means, for example, the instruction to the vocabulary lesson was like this: *Find antonyms of these words in the reading passage in section 1.* The grammar lesson had two instructions because there were two exercises. The instruction to the first exercise says: *Join each of the following pairs of sentences using 'so' to express a result;* while the instruction to the second exercise was: *Change the following Direct Speech into Reported Speech.* This aspect of the present textbook resembles what Petrovitz (1997) cited in Cray (1999) and quoted below has said about the textbook.

No materials used in ESL instruction have evidenced as much conservatism as those used in the teaching of grammar. The model of the traditional textbooks, in which every rule is presented by means of a general explanation followed by an exercise consisting of a series of non-contextualised sentences is still found to a greater or lesser degree in most grammar materials (1999: 127).

If the textbook is believed to reflect the underlying teaching method, then, we can say that it is the teaching method that is represented in the textbook that has encouraged more focus to be given to the form of the target language than its communicative use during the observed lessons. The teachers were directly implementing what is in the textbook. This could perhaps be evidence of their lack of flexibility and creativity (as one of the two teachers admitted in the interview) in presenting textbook lessons to the classroom. In reference to the relationship between the content of instruction (such as the grammar exercises the above instructions require students to do) and the teaching

methodology, Long (1983) once stated his experience which is somewhat similar to the situation under discussion here. He states :

Experience suggests that such questions [display, test, or known information questions] are pervasive in ESL instruction, too, where a focus on formal accuracy rather than communicative use of language is actually prescribed by most language teaching methods (1983: 271)

It should be noted that other solicits that emerged during the lessons in some way or another revolved around developing the lesson in the textbook questions. Even when some questions were initiated by something different from the material that was in the textbook (e.g., the sentences the students were required to make using 'cheap' and 'expensive'), they directed their intention to checking the students' comprehension of the textbook material rather than exploring the students' experience.

Questions that ask for obvious and predictable answers require extra questioning skill to make them elicit multiple responses through re-directing them to different students. Both teachers (as they reported in the interviews and as was understandable from the transcript data) ask questions mainly to check students' understanding of the lessons. There are rare instances in the transcript data in which solicits were asked to stimulate thinking and explore students' experience.

Questions that were asked in connection with the opposite/antonym, the question next in the list to be done, or those that were used to allocate turns were all procedural questions that were initiated by the need for the successful development of the lesson - answers to the textbook questions. In fact, what is eventually hoped to have been learned could be

more than the answers to the questions asked or altogether different from the answers to the questions of all sorts. It is relevant to mention here that the study that was conducted by Allwright (1984) and the findings of other studies that were prompted by Allwright's findings (e.g. Slimani and Seime :1987 and 1998 respectively) have noted evidence of students' learning lessons different from what they were planned to be taught.

(I feel the need to reiterate again that the relevance of the description and explanation of these happenings lies not in drawing attention to the 'right' or 'wrong' things that were done during the lessons as this was not the purpose of the study but in revealing what the actual classroom processes were like during the two lessons used in the study and the potential learning opportunities that the classroom processes could create during the lessons.)

10.1.1.3.5 Mode of answering

Both teachers usually demanded nominated answerers to the questions they asked during the lessons. Students showed their willingness to answer questions through hand raising. Both teachers preferred general solicits to the specific ones. In fact, neither of them called students by name during nominations. They used a mix of verbal and non-verbal behaviours during the nominations. For example, such words/phrases as 'you'; 'you guy'; 'yes' in combination with or in isolation from non - verbal behaviours like 'pointed hands', 'gesture', 'nodding' etc. were among their nominating behaviours used during the classroom observations. Although students showed their willingness to answer questions through hand raising, hand raising on its own sometimes did not

ensure nomination as there were instances in which other students, despite raised hands, were nominated to answer questions.

It has been noted earlier that students had limited opportunities to participate in classroom interaction during the observed lessons. Apparently, this happened to be so because questioning was the only official device used by the teachers to draw students to classroom interaction. Incorrect answers gave more opportunities for participation than the correct answers because they were either re-directed to other students or they created additional speaking turns to the same students. Questions that elicited correct answers were not re-directed, although re-directing questions is assumed to be helpful in extending students' participation and exposure opportunities.

To a certain extent, choral answers were also tolerated apparently when questions needed short and obvious answers. Answers to some of the questions were obvious either from the textbook such as when which question to do next or the paragraph number in which the word they were working was located was asked. The blackboard also has contributed to making some answers obvious. This means that certain points which earlier in the same lesson were written on the blackboard served later as answers when questions about them were asked.

10.1.1.4.6 On the teachers' feedback behaviour

The two teachers' behaviours that were used in handling student answers were so complex that the attempts made to identify the underlying principles in order to report only the summary have not worked well. After deciding to list the observed behaviours

in detail, I realised that such a detailed description is more instructive and informative of the teachers' behaviour.

1. Primarily, it is the language of the students' answer that determined the teachers' decisions of correctness or incorrectness; the content of the answer was a secondary matter.

2. There are instances in which the teachers' corrective feedback is prescriptive in nature. They told students explicitly what to say and what not to say.

3. There are instances in which the teachers followed up answers, individual or choral, by simple repetitions of the correct answers after students. If the answer that the teacher followed up by a simple and a single repetition was offered by an individual student and if that student managed to insert his own repetition of the repeated answer in the pause that followed the teacher's repetition, then, that student will also do the repetition. In this case, the status of the student's repetition in the discourse, that means, whether the student did the repetition because he took the teacher's repetition as a cue to do the same thing or he did the repetition although he knew the cue did not suggest that but because he wanted the repetition perhaps as a result of noticing a difference of some sort between how/what he suggested and what was said after him by the teacher, remained unknown throughout the transcript data

4. If teacher repetition of answer is more than once, and if the repeated answer is a correct simultaneous answer offered by students, then, no other repetition would follow the teacher's repetitions.
5. Simple repetition of the correct answer by the teacher could be in part or in full. Length sometime seems to determine the nature of the repetition. This means that longer answers tended to be repeated in part while the shorter ones were always in full. There are also instances in which long answers were repeated in full.
6. There were instances in which answers, individual or otherwise, even when they were correct, were not followed up altogether.
7. What sort of correct answers initiated single teacher repetition and what did initiate more than one repetition is not known. Available evidence indicates that length was not a factor.
8. Some incorrect student answers initiated teacher repetition of answers. However, not all incorrect answers initiated teacher repetition. Some initiated teacher question to draw attention to the trouble area or the defective item itself. Others initiated instantaneous rejection. Still others initiated temporarily suspension. These ones later received unofficial rejection. There were also instances in which the teacher offered the correct forms with no comment either preceding or following the behaviour.
9. The teachers' behaviours are also indiscriminate in the sense that they ask students to repeat both correct and incorrect answers.

To sum up, the observed feedback behaviours do not have specific features that can be related to certain features of incorrectness in the students' answers. Or the incorrect answers do not just have features that uniquely fitted the specific teacher behaviour they initiated.

10.1.1.5 On the nature of students' verbal behaviour.

Teacher solicit has been found to be lesson – long phenomenon in both lessons in this study. Soliciting is the only device used by the teachers during the lessons to draw students to classroom official participation. Responding is, therefore, not the most frequent student verbal behaviour but it is the only verbal behaviour that was used by students in classroom interaction during the lessons. During the lessons, students 'accomplished' their limited share of the interactive work individually or as a class. A closer investigation into students' verbal behaviour during their interactive work in the lessons has revealed that it is not only the lack of options that appears to have limited the students' share of the participation in the classroom interaction during the lessons but it is also the nature of the task the students were set by the available option itself that did not fully engage them in meaningful linguistic production during their participation in the classroom interaction.

This means that as shown in the wide ranging excerpts quoted from the transcripts of the data throughout the related chapters, the linguistic tasks that teacher solicits demanded of students were to produce phrases, words or single and simple sentences. The nature of teacher verbal behaviour, therefore, appears to have determined the nature of the students' verbal behaviour and the patterns of classroom interaction. This in turn seems

to have a damaging effect on the potential learning opportunities that could arise during the lessons. The next section will have more on this. Let us see it.

10 . 1 . 1 . 6 On the patterns of classroom interaction

The nature of the teachers' verbal behaviour in general, and the nature of the recurrent verbal behaviour in particular, explains the patterns of classroom interaction during the lessons considered in this study. This means that the teachers talk in questions to nominated students or to the whole class, and students individually or as a class, talk to the teachers not to each other, in answering the questions. In short, the chain of teacher questions - student(s) answer(s) - teacher questions goes on like that throughout the periods with no serious interruptions other than brief moments during which the teacher stops to comment on answers or to offer linguistic information or to request for repetitions of inaudible/incorrect answers. Learning opportunities seem to lie in the students' capabilities in discerning what is relevant to their own agenda from the lesson-long question – answer exchanges. This has the potential to limit the communicative function the students need to learn from the target language. It also has the potential to limit the interactional skills learners need to develop in the target language.

10 . 1 . 1 . 7 On learning opportunities

This study has described and explained the nature of the verbal behaviour in a grammar and a vocabulary lesson and the patterns of classroom interaction during the lessons. The nature of the teachers' verbal behaviours in the lessons has been noted to have constrained the nature of the students' verbal behaviour during the lessons. The students did not have extended opportunities to take part in classroom interaction other than

answering questions asked by the teachers. The limited nature of the mode of their participation in the interaction has thus limited the extent to which each student could get involved in the interaction. Evidence obtained from previous studies (Allwright: 1984) has indicated that involvement in classroom interaction, even if it does not fully determine learning, has the capacity to influence it. The influence is assumed to be positive or negative. There is no evidence to make us believe that the lack of involvement impedes learning as much as there is evidence to show us that extended involvement enhances it.

Their idiosyncratic nature appears to make potential learning opportunities an integral component of classroom interaction during a lesson. During the grammar lesson that served as data of this study, students had potential opportunities for exposure to certain grammar rules regarding the topics that were the focus of the lesson at the time. The grammar points that were the focus of the lesson at the time were the use of 'so' and the 'Direct – Reported' speech conversion.

Similarly, the students in the vocabulary lesson class had potential opportunities for learning the antonyms/synonyms that were officially planned as a lesson. Apart from that, in both lessons students had again potential opportunities for listening to the target language spoken by the teachers and by other fellow students who managed to get opportunities to speak in public during the lessons. However, the nature of the teachers' verbal behaviour has limited the nature of the students' practice opportunities. This means that on the one hand, not all students had the opportunity to officially take part in the interaction during the lessons. On the other hand, the nature of the teacher's verbal

behaviour has limited the nature of the students' interactive work and the quality and quantity of the linguistic production of even the few students who managed to get practice opportunities.

The findings reported so far are hoped to get us closer to understand the classroom processes of language teaching/learning in the context of the present study and the potential learning opportunities that could arise during lessons. As can be recalled, various points have been suggested (e. g., previous training, cross-cultural factors, assumptions about language learning/teaching, etc.) in the previous chapters to explain why things happen the way they do now in the lessons investigated in this study. The next section will add some more points to these apparently underlying factors.

Section II

10 . 2 What might explain the findings of the study?

In this section I will suggest a few things that I think may have contributed to why the classroom processes of teaching the two lessons are the way they have been described in this study.

1. As stated in Chapter I, English teaching has a nearly half a century old history in Ethiopia. Until very recently, AAU and the former Asmara University had been the only higher education institutions that had been training teachers at the first degree level to teach English in the secondary schools in the country. In fact, there were two colleges that had been training English teachers at diploma level for two years after the students completed their 4 - year secondary school education. Theoretically, teachers used to be

trained at the diploma level to teach English in junior secondary schools. In practice, however, due to shortage of teachers in the secondary school, those teachers who took the training for the junior secondary school were made to teach in the secondary school. The present situation might be an improvement over the past many years although there are still many schools in which diploma holders are teaching in the secondary school.

Teachers who manage to get the opportunity can upgrade their training to a degree level either through attending classes in the evening hours or through summer training programme. The two teachers in the present study are among those teachers who improved their qualification through the evening classes. Both have over 20 years of teaching experience in the junior and senior secondary schools. The vocabulary teacher completed his undergraduate study in 1993 while the grammar teacher's year of completion was in 1987. The introduction of a more communicatively oriented teaching of English to higher institutions that train secondary school English teachers is a recent phenomenon, and therefore, the teachers do not seem to have taken the necessary training to monitor their verbal behaviour during a lesson.

2. The textbook that has been in use for teaching English in the secondary school for nearly two decades is structural in nature. Apparently, it has been promoting the teaching methodology which focused more on the teaching of the formal accuracy than the communicative use of English. The teachers' working experience with this textbook also seems to have its own share in strengthening their lack of appropriate training and orientation towards teaching in a more communicatively oriented methodology.

3. The lessons used in this study were recorded while the teachers were teaching from a new English textbook. The new English textbook was first introduced to grade 9 in September 1997/98 academic year. The data was recorded between May and June 1998/99, not long after the introduction of the textbook. This was also perhaps not long after the teachers' initial introduction to the 'new' thinking about teaching/learning a foreign language. A deep-rooted teaching experience cannot easily be relaxed to accommodate 'new' thinking.

4. My initial concern was not so much with the textbook as it was with the verbal behaviour used during lessons. However, as I noticed how close the classroom verbal behaviour to the textbook was, I began considering what is in the textbook as a crucial source of the verbal behaviour during the lessons. This is not the proper context for me to comment on the content and approach of the textbook but I should point out that as seen in the transcript data (see Appendix 2), the data on the grammar lesson that was used in the study consists of discrete items that promote more focus on the form than the communicative functions of the language points. In the absence of a corresponding attempt to 'up-date' teachers' assumptions about how language is taught/learned better, not much better picture than the one revealed by this study might be expected to be obtained even if the material in the new textbook is assumed to be in agreement with the demands of a more communicatively oriented teaching of English. The teachers discussed here have not had this opportunity.

5. As pointed out by Dejene (1990) earlier and referred to in the preceding chapters (see Chapter I) in the present study, another element which has a potential power to influence

the nature of the classroom lesson and the way to deal with it is the Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination, ESLCE, for short. Every year the questions on the English language in the ESLCE test the students' mastery of a certain number of discrete items and explicit rules in the language. What teachers and students do in the classroom and the way they do it is largely geared towards enabling students to develop their memory skill to pass the examination. At least a pass, although better performance is always chosen, in English is compulsory for anyone student who wishes to go for a higher learning. All wish to go for a higher learning but only a few with better performance can win the competition every year.

Section 3.: Recommendations

10 . 3 . 1 On the existing practice in the secondary school

1. The Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at Addis Ababa University trains English teachers but the existing contact between the department and the secondary schools English departments is literally invisible. Ways of contact with the secondary schools need to be extended by the department with the purpose of assisting each other to improve the classroom processes of teaching/learning the target language. This means that if ways of contact are created small-scale workshops at regular intervals can be organised at school level in many schools at least in Addis Ababa. The programme can be arranged in a way that involves only a few instructors in one school so that many instructors can go to many schools. This does not seem to require much expense. Details can be worked out but the initial purpose of the workshops could be to increase the teachers' understanding of their own and their students' classroom behaviour with the ultimate aim of improving classroom behaviour and learning. For

example, teachers can be encouraged to develop the habit of audio-recording and listening to the cassettes so that they could see the extent to which their verbal behaviour creates/impedes learning opportunities.

2. At the moment class size has been reported by the teachers I met during this study among the factors that have stopped them from doing what they could have otherwise done. Admittedly, the class size constraint is a powerful factor that is worthy of appreciation but given the urgency of the need to do something in order to improve learning in the face of the existing economic constraints, there seems not much that can be done about that in a short period of time. No one knows how 'short' that 'short' period of time is but until then or even then, if improved learning is wished to be our aim, teachers themselves should be taught how to work more effectively in the existing classroom situation. For example, teachers can be made aware of the possibility of making three students sitting at a desk do tasks together.

3. English language instructors at higher learning institutions put the blame for their students' unsatisfactory performance on the students' learning background in the secondary school. During my classroom observation I have noticed that secondary school teachers also put a similar blame on the students' learning experience in the junior secondary school. Just out of curiosity, I have talked to some junior secondary school English teachers and learned that there is a primary level at which they could direct the blame. The primary level may also have parents to blame. To complete the vicious circle, parents in turn may put the blame on schools in general terms perhaps with the most serious tone.

However, the blame seems to lie in any and every classroom. Teachers at every level need to be working hard enough to build on whatever potential their students may come with. In this respect, there is an encouraging trend that has begun to take shape over the last couple of years in the Foreign Languages and Literature Department. As suggested in 1 above, ways should be sought to extend this practice beyond higher learning institution. This means that secondary school teachers need to be made aware of how to build on whatever meager potential the secondary school students may already have. For example, teachers can be made aware of the contributions that asking students to talk about themselves and their schools in the target language may have in enhancing the students' communicative skills. In addition, it also seems helpful if teachers are made aware of the need for adapting some of the tasks in the textbook in order to make them meet the communicative needs of the students.

4. A new course (tentatively) known as **English for Teaching Purposes** has very recently been introduced to be taught to in-service content area subject teachers during summer program. From the experience of teaching the course in the last two summers, I have noticed that teachers in general but English teachers in particular have much to learn at least about 'classroom language' from the course. Ways need to be sought to make it possible for English teachers who follow the summer in-service program to take this course.

10.3.2 On the existing practice regarding initial training

1. As regards the initial training of secondary school English teachers, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature teaches the theory while another department

assesses the application of the theory to the actual classroom. This means that the teaching practice is entirely run by a different department from the department of the Foreign Languages and Literature. The purpose of the practice teaching is apparently more than the need to evaluate the initial trainees' performances in the secondary school classroom. The trainees need to do regular visits to schools for over a relatively longer period of time. For example, if the programme is made to be two semesters long, it might widen the trainees' opportunity of learning much about how secondary classrooms work as a learning environment.

2. Initial trainees get to know about the textbooks in use in the secondary schools only when they go to schools for teaching practice. Even then, they will get to know only about the book used in the grade they are assigned to teach. If English syllabi of the elementary and the secondary schools together with the series of the textbooks used at different levels can be made available in the trainees' classroom, the materials can serve as a source of language learning as well as of ideas for their future teaching.

3. The present subjects are not aware of the nature of their verbal behaviour (e.g., explaining and questioning behaviours) and the effect their behaviours have on learning. Apparently, this has made it difficult for them to monitor their behaviour during lessons. Initial trainees need to learn how to monitor their behaviour during lessons.

4. The prominence of questioning and feedback behaviour in the transcript data used in this study may point to the need for including in the trainees' syllabus the potential effect of the behaviours on language learning.

10 . 3 . 3 Implications for future study

1. The present study concerned itself with studying classroom verbal behaviour in general terms to understand the classroom processes of language teaching and learning. The findings indicated that soliciting is the recurrent teacher verbal behaviour. The study also indicated that in their attempt to simplify the tasks that the solicits set students, the present subjects ended up in disarming the potential power the solicits normally have to lead the students to extended interactive work. If improving teacher questioning skill as an integral part of the instructional device is wished to be achieved, then future research is needed to build on this study and pursue the line of enquiry in depth with the view to understanding more about different teachers' soliciting behaviour. In addition, the study has noted miscellaneous teacher feedback behaviour. A fuller understanding of this requires a more focused study in the future.

2. Learners' perspectives need to be explored more in the future for a fuller understanding of how they view the processes of teaching/learning in the classroom.

3. In the textbook for the secondary school 6 aspects of the target language have been identified (reading/comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, and writing) to be focused on in all the units. Although the different aspects are not mutually exclusive, as seen in the vocabulary lesson, further research is needed to focus on the nature of the verbal behaviour used in the other aspects not covered by the present study.

4. The present study concerned itself with describing verbal behaviour and explaining potential learning opportunities. Future study is needed to investigate learning opportunities in terms of learner up-take in the secondary school English classes.

10.4 Closing words

The cause for the study being concluded here emerged from observing problems of freshman students' communicative skills in their college English class. Previous local studies have, in general terms, noted that secondary school English classes have marked contributions to make to the freshman students' English language 'deficiencies'. This study, therefore, concerned itself with studying the nature of the verbal behaviour used in English classes and the potential learning opportunities that arise during lessons through studying in a sufficient detail the classroom processes of English teaching/learning in the secondary school. The findings of the study indicate that, despite the introduction of a new series of English textbook (apparently as a solution to the students' communicative problem), the existing practice of teaching/learning in the secondary English class still leaves much to be desired if students are wished to complete their secondary education with better communicative skills in the English language.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.....Transcription Conventions

Key to transcriptions

The transcripts of the lessons were written like the script of a play with no special marks used to indicate tone of voice, speech overlap, or other linguistic features. Wherever necessary comments were made in double brackets. For example, 'inaudible' is used in double brackets against the turns in which what was said was not clear from the tape.

There are limited instances in the transcript data in which unnominated answers were offered. I have indicated all unnominated answers by writing 'unnominated' in double brackets against the relevant turns but not all nominated answers are marked 'nominated' in the transcript data. Capital letters are used to transcribe the local language used during the audio-recorded data. The following initials were used to identify the participants:

- T: Teacher speaks
- S: Student speaks
- Ss Students speak
- I interviewer
- E Grammar teacher (initial)
- K vocabulary teacher (initial)

Appendix 2 Grammar lesson transcripts

T In our today's lesson we're going to have a look at the usage of the word 'so', the word 'so'. We're going to learn how to make use of the word 'so' in different kinds of sentences.

If you look at page 19. (reads from the textbook)

In this type, the two ideas are contained in one sentence. The result comes after the word 'so'. A comma is usually placed after the main clause. For example,

He was hungry. He went to a restaurant for a meal. Here are two sentences. The first sentence reads: He was hungry. The second one reads: He went to a restaurant for a meal.

T Now we're going to join these two sentences by using the word 'so'. So we can say: He was hungry, then you find a comma, so he went to a restaurant for a meal. He was hungry, so he went to a restaurant for a meal.

The second example: I don't understand your language. You'll have to speak in English. Now these two sentences can be combined by using the word 'so'. I don't understand your language, so you'll have to speak in English. (finishes reading)

O.k. so now, this time the word 'so' is preceded by a comma. A comma is used before the word 'so'.

Likewise or in the same way, we're going to join the following sentences.

Exercise three

Join each of the following pairs of sentences using 'so' to express a result.

We're very tired We traveled by bus.

Who can join these two sentences? Anyone?

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes, please (nominates)

S We were very tired, so traveled by bus

T Again again

S We were very tired, so traveled by bus

T We're very tired, very tired, say 'tired'.

S Tired

T Tired

S Tired

T Tired. Would you mind doing it again. Do it again.

S We were very tired, so traveled by bus

T How about the subject of the second sentence? 'We' 'we' shouldn't be left out.

'We' shouldn't be left out.

Ss (hand raising)

S2 we were very tired, so we traveled by bus

T we're very tired, so we traveled by bus

We're very tired, so we traveled by bus.

Where do you put the comma?

Where do you put the comma?

Do you put the comma after the word 'so' or before the word 'so'?

Ss (hand raise)

T yes (nominates)

S before the word 'so'.

T before the word 'so'

Now who can do the second one, the second one?

S (hand raising)

T Yes.

S I didn't know how to find your house, so I asked a police man.

T I didn't know how to find your house, so I asked a police man

So I asked a police man.

Now where are you expected to put the comma?

Where do you put the comma?

(Teacher distracted by the sight of a student who was working on his mathematics assignment)

S METSIHAF YELEGM (= I've no book)

T You can't be excused

O.k. Now where do you put the comma? (to the whole class)

Where do you put the comma?

Where do you put the comma, before or after 'so'?

Ss (hand raising)

T (nominates)

S after 'so'.

T after 'so'?

Ss before 'so'

T before 'so' before 'so'.

The third sentence?

T The exam was too difficult. All the students failed.

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes. (nominates)

S The exam was too difficult, so all the students failed.

T Yes, right.

My brother is getting married. I'm going to Awassa tomorrow.

S My brother is getting married tomorrow, so going to Awassa tomorrow.

T It's not the correct way of doing it

It's not the correct way of doing it.

Anyone from this row, please?

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes (nominates)

S My brother is getting married, so I'm going to Awassa tomorrow.

T Correct.

Then 5? Number 5?

Who can do the 5th one?

Ss (hand raising)

T (nominates)

S The rains failed last year, so my people are starving.

T Again, please.

S The rains failed last year, so my people are starving.

My people or many people?

S Many people are starving

T The rains failed last year, so many people are starving.

So many are people starving

Why do many people starve?

Why do many people starve?

Because the rains stayed last year as a result many people are starving.

T Now the sixth one?

Yes (nominates)

S Ato Atnafu has just been promoted

T Promoted promoted (corrects mispronunciation)

S Promoted, so his family are having a party to celebrate.

(The student mispronounced 'having')

T h—a—v—i—n—g. How do you read h..a..v..i..n..g?

Having. Say, 'have'

S Have

T Say 'have'

S Have

T Having

S Having

T Having

S Having

T It's having

S It's having

T They're having

S There are having

T Say 'they're having'

S They are having

T O.k. So you can say Ato Atnafu has just been promoted, so his family are having a party
to celebrate. O.k.

S The bell hasn't rung yet, so we shouldn't travel
T Travel? Where is travel?
We shouldn't leave the classroom
The bell hasn't rung yet, so we shouldn't leave the classroom
The 8th one?
The 8th one?

S He has just had an operation, so he must stay in bed for a few days.
T For a few days
S For a few days
T The 9th one?
S My work was untidy, so the teacher asked me to write it out again
The 10th one? The 10th one?

S The water wasn't clean, so we'd to boil it.
T So we'd to boil it.
The water wasn't clean, so we'd to boil it.
O.k.

You'll study type 4- 'such a ...that' in Unit 2 (reads from the textbook)
O.k. Now turn to page 20
Grammar review: Reported speech. Reported speech.(reads from the
textbook)
Please look at the board

T O.k. last time we learned how to change direct sentence into indirect statement or
reported statements. While changing from direct speech into reported speech we've to
keep in our mind certain points which are very important.
What is the first point that we've to keep in our mind?
Who can tell me the point we've to remember? The first point we've to
remember?
How do we change a direct statement into a reported statement?
Do you do it by guessing?
Or do you do it as you like?
You've to remember certain points.
What is the first point?
What is the first point that you are expected to remember?
Anyone?
The first point is the one that gives this verb
All verbs move one step back into the past.
All verbs move one step back into the past:

- 'present tense' becomes 'past tense'
- 'present continuous tense' becomes 'past continuous tense'
- T present perfect becomes?
- Ss past perfect
- T past perfect tense
- T past tense becomes?
- Ss (raise hands)
- T one by one one by one
past becomes?
past tense or past perfect
O.k. past perfect becomes
- S (inaudible)
- T No. No.
Past perfect remains unchanged.
Past perfect remains unchanged
Past perfect becomes past perfect
O.k. This is the first point, so all verbs move one step back into the past
The 2nd one?
The 2nd one? What's the 2nd one?
- Ss Adverbs change
- T What's the 2nd one?
- Ss Adverbs change
- T Adverbs change
Which adverbs?
Adverbs of time and place
Adverbs change. Adverbs especially adverbs of time and place
- T O.k. this becomes?
- T this becomes?
That
These becomes
Those
Today becomes
- S today
- T No
Today becomes?
That day
Tomorrow becomes
- Ss (hand raise)
- T No, no. One by one

S The next day

T O.k. yesterday becomes, yesterday yesterday becomes
The previous day
The previous day
Now becomes?
The word 'now' becomes?

S Then

T Then
And 'ago' becomes?

T Ago?

S before

T before. O.k. O.k. Um
The 3rd one is the one that gives pronouns. Pronouns are (inaudible)
Who can tell me the 3rd person singular ?
Which pronouns are known as 3rd person singular?

Ss (hand raising)

T One by one
Yes (nominates)

S 'she' 'he' 'it'

T 'She' 'he' 'it'. These are known as 3rd person singular
Which pronoun is known as third person plural?
Which pronoun is known as 3rd person plural

S 'am', 'they', 'are'

T No, no, no.
You see 'he', 'she', and 'it'. These are known as 3rd person singular.
Now which pronoun is known as 3rd person plural?

S Is am are

T Look at the board. 'I' the pronoun 'I' is known as first
person singular
Singular or plural?

Ss singular

T Then 'you' is known as 2nd person singular or plural

T O.k. 'he', 'she', 'it' these are known as 3rd person singular
How about 'we'?
How about 'we'?
How about 'we'?

S first person singular

T No. This is first person singular (underlines 'I' on the blackboard)
'I' is 1st person singular.

- 'We' is first person plural
 'You' can be 2nd person singular or plural
 How about 'they', they?
 How about 'they'?
- 'They' is known as?
 What do you call it?
- S Plural
 T It's plural but is it 1st person, 2nd person or 3rd person?
 S 2nd person
 T No. 2nd person this (underlines 'you' on the blackboard)
 Third person plural. So 'they' is known as 3rd person plural. 'They' is known as third person plural.
 O.k. let's take this example
 She says "I brought my book yesterday."
 O.k. now let's do this. Here is a direct speech, a direct sentence.
- T We're going to change it into indirect sentence.
 Now what's the first step?
 Who can tell me the first step?
- S she said
 T That's is correct. The first step is 'she said'.
 Ss (raise hands)
 T one by one, one by one
 Do we need a comma?
- Ss No.
 T Do we need the quotation marks?
 Ss No.
 T No. The comma must be left out
 The quotation marks must be removed.
 O. k. So what does 'I' refer to?
 What does 'I' refer to?
- S She
 T Very good. 'I' refers to 'she'. So what do you write here?
 T She said that 'she' o.k. now which one is the verb in this sentence?
 Which one is the verb in 'I brought my book yesterday.'
 brought
 In what tense is 'brought'?
- Ss (inaudible)
 T No
 In what tense is 'brought', is it in present, past tense or future?

- S past tense
- T So the rule says that past tense becomes what?
Past tense becomes past tense or
- Ss past perfect tense.
- T past perfect tense
So what do we write here?
She said that she brought or or if you say 'had brought' if you say 'had brought', it also possible. She brought. Whose book had she brought?
- S her
- T good, she brought her book. She said that she brought her books
Now 'yesterday' comes.
What did you use in place of 'yesterday'
- S The previous day
- T The previous day, O. k.
So you can say that she brought her books the previous day
She said that she brought her book the previous day.
The first one is direct speech, this one is indirect speech.
The first one is direct statement and the second one is indirect statement or reported statement.
O.k. likewise you're going to do the following exercise
Have a look at the top of page 20.
(reads from the textbook)
- T Grammar review: reported speech. The following exercises test the work you did on 'reported speech' in book 1. Reported statements. Change the following statements from 'direct speech' into 'reported speech'.
- T 'I am waiting for my friend,' said Fatuma. Now this verb is reported soon after.
(finishes reading)
So what do you start your sentence with?
What do you start your sentence with?
What must be the introductory verb?
What must be the introductory verb?
How do you start your indirect speech?
Yes, please?
'I'm waiting for my friend,' said Fatuma.
What must be the introductory verb?
How do you start your sentence?
Anyone?
O.k. Look at this sentence. Look at the verb. Look at the board once again.

She said is known as 'introductory verb' or or said she. It can be written like this. This is introductory verb whether it comes at the beginning or at the end. It's all the same. When it comes at the beginning of a sentence, it can be subject and verb but when it comes at the end, it can be verb-subject inversion. This is called introductory verb and this is also introductory verb (underlines the verb in the S-V position and V- S position).

So what's the introductory verb in the second in this sentence in the first?

S

Fatuma said.

T

Fatuma said. So you're going to start your sentence with Fatuma said. Fatuma said, (writes on the blackboard) o.k. now do we need a comma after said? Yes or no?

Ss

No

T

Do we need the quotation marks?

Ss

No

The comma and the quotation marks must be left out. They've to be omitted.

O.k. now, 'I'm waiting for my friend.' 'I'm waiting for my friend.' Is this my sentence?

Is this my sentence?

Am I the one who said this sentence?

Who said this sentence?

This is Fatuma's sentence. It was said by her. So I'm waiting for my friend. What does 'I' refer to? 'I' refers to Fatuma. What is the right pronoun for Fatuma?

S

she

T

she. So what do you say now?

Fatuma said that she uh... Now the verb is 'I'm waiting, I'm waiting for my friend. In what tense is the verb? In what tense is the verb?

Is it in present tense, past tense, future or present continuous tense?

S

present

T

yes?

S

present

T

No, not present. I'm waiting I'm waiting,

'I'm waiting, I'm waiting, is it present tense or past tense or present continuous tense?

S

Present continuous

T

Yes. Very good, present continuous tense. So what does the rule say?

Present continuous becomes?

S

Past continuous

T

Past continuous

So Fatuma said that she----?

Ss

(no raised hand)

T

past continuous (gives a clue)

S was

T was what? What is the next verb?

S waiting

T yes?

S waiting

T she was waiting for whose friend?

S for her friend

T correct. Fatuma said that she was waiting for her friend.

O.k. Is this clear please?

Is this clear?

Ss Yes.

T If you have any doubt to be cleared here

If you have any doubt to be cleared here

If you have any question?

When we do this one we do it step by step, we don't do it carelessly. We don't do it as we like. We've to do it according to the rules that we learned last time.

Let's take the second one. "I want to be a teacher" "I want to be a teacher," said Yoseph. O.k. "I want to be a teacher."

Now which one is the introductory verb?

S Yoseph said

T yes?

S Yoseph said

T Yoseph said that; Yoseph said that

What's the next word?

Ss that that

T that. O.k. just wait, just a minute.

What does 'I' refer to?

S he

What does 'I' refer to?

S he

T 'I' refers to Yoseph

What's the right pronoun for Yoseph?

Ss he

T So Yoseph said that he

Now the verb 'want' is given in the sentence; the verb 'want' is given in the sentence. In what tense is the verb? Is it present or past tense, or present continuous or future ?

S present

T (inaudible)

So present tense becomes past tense, so if you take the past tense of 'want' What's the past tense of 'want'?

What's the past tense of 'want'?

S1 went

T Went? No.

Past tense of want?. How about you? Past tense of 'want'?

S2 went

T went? 'go - went', 'went' is the past tense of 'go'.

What's the past tense of 'want'?

S3 wanted

T wanted O.k. Yoseph said that he wanted wanted

What is what's the next word? What's the next word?

S be

T yes Yoseph said that he wanted to be a teacher, he wanted to be a teacher. O.k Any question please? O.k. now you do exercise one

Three – five in two steps

S Three is not there

T Yes?

Ss Three is not there

T Three is not there. (inaudible)

(checks attendance while students were doing the exercise, the bell rings)

Appendix 3: Interview transcripts with the grammar teacher

(Note: I Interviewer
E Initial, the interviewee)

I: Welcome to the interview session Ato E.

How long have you been teaching English?

E I've been teaching for the last 20 years.

I---- How long have taught in this school?

E For 14 years. This is my 14th year.

I And your qualification?

E BA in English

I Year of graduation?

E 1979 Ethiopian Calendar = (1987 G.C.)

I College you graduated from?

E Addis Ababa University

I Since the time you graduated, have had any chance of attending workshops, seminar . or any other thing related to language teaching?

E Well some I think 8 years ago I attended a workshop at AAU.

I Since then?

E Nothing has happened..

I What are you using as sources to get ideas from about the developments in language . eaching?

E The question is not clear.

I-- I mean ideas on developments in the methods of teaching English as a foreign language, for example.

E As you know very well language is for communication. Nowadays especially whatever we teach must be student-centered. We must make the students speak more. They must be active participants in the classroom. When we were students the teacher used to be the one who used to cover most of the periods. I mean the 90% of the period but nowadays it must be the student who must play the vital role, the most important role. That means the teacher must motivate the students to speak and write to develop the four skills of language so it should be student centered. The student must be given the chance to express himself or herself. This is the best way of learning a language. The more they participate the more they learn, the less they participate, the less they learn.

I Do we do this in practice?

E You're right. Theoretically it sounds good but when it comes to practice well we don't usually make use of that although we try our best to make it practical. We have difficulties in seeing the practical side of that. You see due to the largeness of the

class. There are lots of students in the classroom and we are unable to give individual attention to the concerned student. As long as we don't give individual attention to the students we don't expect them to benefit from teachers. We don't expect them to show improvement in their mastering the language that we teach them. So this is the main problem.

I Do you ask students how they would like to learn?

E I never did it. To tell you the truth I never did that. I am supposed to do that but since I am a teacher who was taught by teachers who were not democrats so since I'm the product of that

I What do you do when students give you answers that are not correct or that are in some way incomplete?

E I don't expect all students to answer questions. It depends on their ability. Some may be shy, others may not know the exact answers. Any way, it does not discourage me. I try to know why they fail to give correct answers. After all, they are students and they have come to class to learn and I've to know their weaknesses.

I What do you do with students' correct answers?

E I have never thought about that. You see if students answer successfully I get satisfied, feel happy. It is natural. I write some of the answers which are answered correctly on the blackboard so that those who have not answered correctly will take and learn from this. They can learn from their class mate. It creates a competition among students.

I What is your opinion on repeating answers after students?

E Sometimes it helps. The student feels that he has been given recognition if the teacher appreciates but in high school we don't do that because it's time killing. We need the time to cover the portions in the textbook in a limited period of time. So we don't usually pay attention to students' answers.

I What happens if you don't cover the portions?

E If we don't cover?

I I mean if we tell students to be responsible for doing that?

A In away, if we don't cover the portion uh but we are supposed to cover the portion

I Why are we?

E That portion must be finished within the given period of time because if we don't over this portion next year when they go to the next class they are going to be baseless.

I Are they?

E Yeah. The next portion depends on that

I On the quantity of the language points we give students in one period. We teach pronunciation, spelling, meaning, grammar etc. in one period. Is that not too much?

E The cause for the students' deficiency partly rests on us. Instead of teaching them the

language we teach them about the language. Concerning the grammar a case in point can be the traditional noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb. These things and the rules of using them are not easy things to handle. The problem is that when we teach, these points are put together in the same lesson and as I said earlier it depends on the teacher's understanding of the students' weakness. If we understand our students we can feed them, we can give them what they can swallow. We shouldn't overfeed them.

Appendix 4

Student diaries: (Grammar students)

1. We learned two lessons today: reading and vocabulary. The passage was very interesting but I couldn't enjoy it because other students who were not reading were disturbing. We were angry with the teacher because he did not try to keep them quiet. (S)

2 Today many students went to the blackboard and filled in blank spaces drawn on the blackboard. I had answers to all the questions but I did not raise my hands because I don't like to go to the blackboard. (S)

3 I found my teacher's way today to be better than the previous ways. He was writing examples relatively more clearly on the blackboard. Yet because of his speed his handwriting was not legible enough for us to read. (W)

4 In the middle of his teaching the teacher asked a question. I raised my hand to answer the question. I had the answer written on my palm. The moment I got closer to the blackboard, I failed to remember the answer and read it from my palm. This caused laughter in the class. Shamed-faced, I returned to my seat. (W)

5 Today I was very happy during English period. It was a reading lesson. We were taking turns to read and I got a chance to read. I think I read well because the teacher said, 'very good' when I finished reading. I wished I always had a chance to read or answer questions. After the reading lesson, we did vocabulary questions. There also I got a chance to answer a question. This again made me happy. I said to myself: 'Now that the teacher knows what I can do, I'll always do my homework and raise my hand to answer questions. (W)

6 I'd like to note at the end of my diary that instead of asking the same students now and then, teachers should give chances to other students in class. For example, I raise my hand not always to answer questions but to encourage other students but the teacher gives me chances whenever he sees my hand.

This is unfair. It discourages others. The same students shouldn't be given chances to answer easy and difficult questions. (S)

7 We began our today's lesson with the homework we were given yesterday. The teacher was asking and we were answering. I got chances to answer 6 questions. After the homework was over two students [whom I shall call Denbilu and Turga] began troubling the teacher with questions. They always do like that. (W)

8 Our teacher gave us homework in the first period and told us to finish it for the 3rd period. I don't support this idea because we're going to use periods of other subjects to make the homework ready for the 3rd period. (S)

9. I hate lessons in which there are lots of exercises which we're required to copy onto our notebooks. For example, copying 20 statements from the textbook with one instruction that requires us to fill in 'is' or 'are'.(S)

10 We learned a good lesson today but we'd no time for questions. Five to ten minutes should be left for questions if teachers want us to understand the lesson. (W)

11 We didn't have time for question and answer in our today's lesson. The teacher also did not ask us any question. (W)

12 After explaining the lesson, the teacher wrote questions for homework on the blackboard. I raised my hand to answer the question and when I turned my face to the other side all students were copying the questions onto their exercise book. I also started to copy the questions. (S)

13 We had an interesting lesson today. I saw many new things that the teacher did in class. For example, except today, he has never asked students to go to the blackboard in groups to write answers on the blackboard. May be this happened today because there was a guest in our class (S)

14 The teacher asked me a question today although I did not raise my hand. The student who was sitting next to me was telling me the answer when I got up but I couldn't use even that. (S)

Appendix 5

Vocabulary lesson transcripts

- T Anybody who can tell me the today's topic because I have told you yesterday out the today's topic, isn't it?
- Ss Yes.
- T So, the book, who said that ? if I remember, the today's topic
- Ss (hand raising)
- T Yes. (nominates)
- S Opposites.
- T Opposites. Yeah,
Opposites (reads as he writes on the blackboard)
O.k. The today's topic is 'opposites'.
- T You know, uh uh what what is the other the other name for 'opposites'?
What is the other name for opposites?
- Ss (hand raising)
- T Yes, you guy, (nominates)
- S Antonyms.
- T Yes?
- Ss Antonyms
- T Antonyms. (writes on the board and reads it again.
Antonyms.
O.k. What do you mean by antonyms?
What do you mean by antonyms?
What what what does antonym mean?
- Ss (hand raising)
- T Yes, (nominates)
- S Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings.
Yes, Antonyms mean I mean means words which have similar, I mean, opposite nearly opposite meanings. You see.
So there are words which are uh uh taken from the passage, taken from the ssage. These uh uh these these words are really very important in order to develop your language. Because unless we know the antonyms and synonyms of words, it is difficult to exp to to to write or to speak or to understand the language. So it is important to um to study these antonyms.

So uh ... what is the first word that that that we find its opposite from the passage?

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes. (nominates)

S cheap.

T O.k. Number 1 is cheap. You know what is the antonym?
What s the opposite for cheap?

Ss Teacher, teacher sir sir ...(students calling out for the opportunity to answer)

T Yes. (nominates)

S Expensive. (this was said to be inaudible by the teacher)

T Yes? What did you say?
I didn't hear. Would you please loud?
What did you say? Yes? Would you please loud?
Do you hear what she says? (to another student)

S Expensive.

T Expensive. (writes on the blackboard)
Good. Expensive.
O.k. Now, 'cheap' is the opposite of ...?

Ss expensive.

T And 'expensive' is the opposite of ...?

Ss cheap.

T So, anybody who can make a sentence with cheap?
Anybody?
Any any student who can make a sentence with

T the word cheap? (pointing to 'cheap' on the blackboard)

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes. (nominating)

T Would you please make a sentence using the word 'cheap'?

S This pen is cheap.

T This pen is cheap.
Yeah. This pen is cheap.(reads as he writes on the blackboard)
You know 'cheap' means something that has the uh lower price, isn't it?

Ss Yes

T O.k. Now, who can make a sentence with 'expensive'?

SS (hand raising)

T Yes. (nominating)

S This car is expensive.

T Yes. This car is expensive. (reads as he writes on the blackboard)

Good.

Now when you compare the price of the pen and the car, which one is expensive?

Ss The car is expensive and the pen is cheap.

T Well. this is the 1st word and the antonym of cheap is expensive.
The 2nd word?

Ss Good.

T O.k. Good. (writes it on the blackboard)

What is the opposite for 'good'?

What is the antonym for 'good'?

S bad.

T bad. O.k.(writes on the blackboard)

Yeah, 'bad' is the opposite of 'good' but can you find this word in the passage?

Ss No

T but you are asked or the book asked you to give the opposite of the words uh by finding in the passage. Yeah. But 'bad' is not found in the passage so 'good' 'bad' is the opposite of 'good' but you you are asked to give the opposite of words by finding the words in the passage but 'poor' is found in the passage. so in which paragraph can you find this word?

Ss Paragraph one.

T Paragraph ...?

Ss Paragraph one.

T Can you read the sentence in paragraph one?

Ss (hand raise)

T Yes. (nominates)

S (reads the paragraph)

T In a poor....? (repeats reading but leaves it unfinished)

Ss Condition.

T Look. In a poor condition.
The house the house was old and ... ?

Ss in a poor condition.

T in a poor condition. you see, so this good (pointing to 'good' on the

- blackboard) is the opposite of or antonym of poor for condition.
- You see, isn't it?
- Ss Yes.
- T If a person if we use this 'good' for a person, is it the antonym of .uh is 'poor' the antonym of 'good' for a person?
- Ss No.
- T No. You see. 'Good' is the antonym of what...?
- Ss bad.
- T bad for a person, isn't it?
- Ss Yes
- T But for condition for condition the antonym of 'good' is what?
- Ss Poor.
- T This building is new and it is in a good condition. Yes or no?
- Ss Yes.
- T But Nessredin's house is uh old and in a poor----
- Ss condition
- T Well, it is possible to say again in bad condition in bad condition but specifically 'good' is the antonym of 'poor' for condition yes? but when when when you use 'good' for person and when when you are asked to give the antonym of 'good' that is 'bad' not not not 'poor' O.k? O.k What is the third one?
- Ss Easy easy
- T Easy (writes it on the blackboard)
O.k. uh?
- Ss Teacher, teacher (students call out)
- T Yes (nominates)
- S Difficult
- T In which paragraph can you find?
- Ss Paragraph one.
- T Paragraph?
- Ss One.
- T The same paragraph.
Would you please read?
- Ss (hand raising)
- T Yeah. (nominates)

S (The nominated student reads)

T So, the opposite of 'easy' is?

Ss difficult difficult difficult.

T and the opposite of 'difficult' is?

Ss easy easy.

T Yeah. O.k. Number 4?

Ss buy buy buy

T you know what buy is? Yes?

Ss Yes.

T Yes?

Ss Yes

T You know what the meaning of buy is?

To take something by giving what?

Ss Money.

T Money or thing

O.k. so 'buy' what is the opposite of 'buy'?

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes, the girl. (nominates)

S Sell.

T Yeah. Sell.

T In which paragraph can you find this 'sell'?

Ss Paragraph 2. Paragraph 2.

T Raise your hands, please.

Yes. paragraph two.

Would please read?

S (The student reads the paragraph. He read 'would' with the sound /l/ pronounced)

T He would, not /wuld/ not /wuld/. He would.
(teacher interrupts to correct mispronunciation.)

S would sell the upper floor (The student continues reading)

T sell the upper ...? (begins to repeat the last few words but leaves it for Ss to finish)

Ss floor.

T Yes. Sell. So he would sell the upper floor after he has finished building the house. See, because he wants to build uh a house or a building with two storeys, isn't it?

Ss Yes
 So he would sell the upper storey to another person in order to get money.
 So now the opposite or the antonym of 'buy' is what?

Ss sell.

T Sell. Yeah. What is the next word?

Ss Sad. Sad

T (writes on the blackboard)
 I hope you know the meaning of 'sad'. Yes?

Ss (hand raising)

T Yes.(nominating)

S happy

T No. You guy.

S2 happy

T Happy. Good, Yeah. Yes?

S Paragraph 3.

T Paragraph?

Ss 3

T O.k. Before you go to that paragraph you know when do you ...
 when do you feel when do you feel sad?
 When do you feel sad?
 When do you feel sad?
 When do you feel happy?
 Anybody who can tell me, when do you feel sad?

Ss (hand raising)

T O.k. Yes. (nominates)

S When we are unhappy.

T When we are unhappy uh That means we are sad.
 Yes. So unhappy. Unhappy. 'Un-' is what?
 It is 'un-' uh it is 'un-' I mean a prefix that makes negative for happy, isn't it?

Ss Yes

T Not opposite. But the opposite of 'sad' is happy. O.k.
 Let me give you some I mean I mean example or sentence.
 If you win the national lottery, what do you feel?

Ss Happy.

T You feel happy, isn't it? You feel happy.

Um if you fail to pass the exam, what do you feel?

Ss Happy, happy Sad . You feel sad. Sad.

T Yeah. You feel sad. If you fail in the exam you feel what?

Ss Sad.

T Yeah, you feel sad.

If you lose your brother ... if you lose your brother ...

if you lose your brother or when you lose your relative, you feel what?

Ss Sad.

T Yeah. Sad.

So what is the next word?

Ss Poor poor poor.

T Poor.

Number 6 is poor

Look. Now, 'poor' comes again here. Before we studied that 'good' is the opposite of what?

T Poor. Now what is the opposite of 'poor' now?

Ss

Teacher teacher YIHEW (trans.= here teacher: students call out; some in the local language)

T Look, because because we have to give the antonyms according to what? the contexts in the passage ... isn't it?

Ss Yes

T According to how I mean according to how they are used in that passage. Yeah. (nominates)

S Wealthy.

T Yes? Yes?

Ss Wealthy.

T Wealthy. Now you know what 'wealthy' is.

Yes?: May be this word ... may be new for some students.

What is the other word that gives this meaning?

What's the synonym? Synonym?

Ss Yes, yes yes (students calling out to be nominated)

.T What is the antonym, yes?

Ss Rich

T Yeah. So 'poor' is a person and the opposite of poor is what?

Wealthy. This poor equals to what?

A person, isn't it?

Ss Yes.

T Yes. A person who has a lot of money, and a very good or a nice building and leads a luxurious life is?

Ss Wealthy.

T A wealthy person or a rich person. But a person who doesn't have to eat and who doesn't have to wear or who doesn't have a ... a ... shelter is what?

Ss Poor.

T Poor.

O.k. So now this 'poor' and this 'poor' (pointing to 'poor' on the blackboard) are now the same now, isn't it? They are two not different words but they are used in different what?

Ss Passage.

Number 7?

Ss Modest modest modest.

T Modest.(writes on the blackboard)

Very good. Modest. You know what modest is? The meaning of modest?

Ss (hand raising)

S (inaudible)

T O.k. Yeah ... yeah ... yeah ... in Amharic yeah

A person who respects others. Yes.

A person who respects others and who greets others whenever he meets is uh modest.

T a modest person but when is uh ...

what is the antonym for 'modest'?

Ss Proud ... proud.

T Yes. Proud. What do you mean by 'proud'?

What kind of person is a proud person?

What kind of person is a proud person?

S (inaudible)

T Yeah, yeah, yeah. You have the idea. You have the idea.

A proud person is a person who look down on the other people, isn't it?

Or who can see himself above what?

Ss all.

T above?

Ss all.

T That kind of person is a proud person.
Yes? the next one?

Ss Often . often ... often.(Some students pronounced the /t/ in 'often')

T This is 'often'. /t/ is silent. Yes? We don't pronounce /t/.
This is 'often'. As I told him when he said /wuld/ uh that pronunciation is wrong.
Yes?

Ss Yes

T So we don't say /wuld/; we say what?

Ss /wud/

T We don't say /kuld/; we say what?

Ss /kud/

T /kud/ or c..o..u..l..d (spells the word) Yes?

Ss yes

T And we don't say /çuld/ ; and we say what?

Ss /çud/

T So 'often'. Yeah.
What is the opposite?
What is the antonym for 'often'?
She often comes to our school.
She often comes to our school.
You see. Often comes to our?

Ss School.

T Often. You know the meaning of 'often'?

Ss Yes (raised hands)

T O.k. Yeah. Yes. (nominating)

S Rarely.

T Rarely. yeah. rarely. (write on the blackboard).
Yeah, rarely.

T You know what the meaning of rarely means?

Ss Sometimes.

T Yes. yeah.
That means sometimes.

Ss Not often

T not often. Not often means 'rarely'.
Yeah. Rarely but the opposite of 'often' means what?
Rarely but 'rarely' means after sometime but repeatedly.
You see after sometime but repeatedly.
O.k. Now the next one is?

Ss destroy destroy

T destroy (writes on the blackboard).

S build.

T build. (Wrote the word on the blackboard)

T Well this is according to the passage. Yes. This is according to-----?

Ss the passage.

T Uhm destroy build. Well um... if you remember in the passage we have we have read what Nessiredin did. Isn't it?

Ss yes

T Nessiredin brought some workmen. Yes? to do what?

Ss house upper floor lower floor ground floor

T Yeah. to destroy the ground floor

but he built the two storeys house before.. yes?

Ss Yes

T So destroy uh what is the other word that that that gives the opposite of 'destroy' in another context?

Ss build.

T Well, build is according to the passage. Yes?

But what is ... you know what destroy is, isn't it?

S Construct.

T Construct is another another I mean antonym

but we can't find this word in the passage.

We find the word 'build' in the passage. And the antonym of destroy is build.

T Next.

Ss Slowest.

T Slowest (writes on the black board.)

Slowest. Now what is what is the root word?

What is the root word?

Who can tell me?

What is the root word?

Ss Teaher Teacher Teacher YIHEW Teacher
(students call out, some in the local language. Trans. = here teacher)

T (nominates)

S slow.

T Slow. 'Slow' is the root word, isn't it?

Ss yes

O.k. 'Slow' is the root word.
So 'slowest' is what?

Ss (indiscriminate noises)

T Raise your hand 'Slowest' is the superlative degree of 'slow'.
What is the comparative form?

Ss slow.

T 'Slow'. Yeah, because it is one syllable adjective. Yes?

Ss Yes.

T So what is the word that gives the opposite meaning
with this word 'slow'? (underlines)
What is the antonyms of 'slowest'?
You know you can't simply get what the opposite of 'slow', isn't it?

S quickest.

T quickest, yeah. So 'quickest' is the antonym of 'slowest'.
What is the opposite of again 'quick' is the root word
and 'quickest' is the same degree with 'slowest'.
That means, the superlative. Yes?

Ss Yes.

T O.k? This is (inaudible)
Any question?
Any problem concerning this antonym?
O.k. If if there is a word that you don't know the meaning, ask me.
O.k.? Do you know the meaning of all words here?

Ss (silence)

T So let's proceed to the next topic.
Yesterday again we tried to do another ... another lesson or another topic.
O.k. What is that?

Ss (indiscriminate voices from class)

T Yes?

Ss Spelling game.

T Spelling game. Spelling game.
We started uh spelling game at the end of the at the end of the yesterday's class.
So we ... we... we grouped the students into two and among the two groups 3
students were remain, isn't it?

Ss Yes.

T so would you please come out?
(Three students went to the front of the class)
A group, B group and C group (names the groups the students represent)
O.k. what's your number?

S 59

T 59. Yes.
(The bell rings)
My God!

Ss (inaudible noises from the whole class)

T (inaudible)
Uh so we do not have time to do this. So we proceed (inaudible) tomorrow's
lesson

Appendix 6

Interview Transcripts with the vocabulary teacher

(Note: I Interview

K Interviewee's initial)

I welcome to this interview session, Ato K.

I'd like to start the interview with some questions related to your personal information. How long have you been teaching English?

K-- I have been teaching English since 1978 Ethiopian Calendar in high school. Especially in 12th grade I have taught well uh I have been teaching about 7 years

I---7 years?

K---yes, 7 years.

I----in this school?

K---yeah.

I---What was your first qualification?

K--Well I graduated from Debre-Brehan TTI in 1972. Then I went to Assab as an elementary school teacher. I taught there for 2 years and got transferred to Addis Ababa in 1975 E.C. I started my study in Kotebe Teachers' College in 1976. I graduated with a diploma in English teaching in 1978. I passed 2 years in between and started learning at an advanced standing level in AAU in 1980. I graduated in 1985 E.C. (=1993 G.C)

I---so your qualification is in TEFL?

K___ yes yeah.

I---since your graduation, have had any chance for workshops, seminars or anything of that sort related to teaching English?.

K-----not at all

I-----not at all. So what is your source of information or ideas for teaching English?

K---- well since starting this teaching English or as I told you earlier I have never been exposed to seminars or any re-training. I simply use like other teachers. This is a common problem among teachers in the country. I only use textbooks and other related books in the library especially the previous Contact books, grammar books written by different people. Sometimes I use this ESLCE - many years of the ESLC

English examination papers to discuss in the class with students. These are my sources of information

I---what opportunities do you have to use English outside the classroom and the school compound yourself?

K---- Well, I don't have. I don't have. Simply I listen to the BBC. This really affects me. In fact, outside the school I don't have any opportunity to apply my English language and to use my English language.

I-- Antonyms and synonyms, I don't know whether it was because of the nature of the topic itself or something else but there were too many questions that you were asking and too many answers that the students were giving. Does this usually happen?

K—it does not happen but I mostly use such methods because you know I feel that or I think that when I do this most students will understand what I am saying or what I am teaching. Because of this I hope if I am not mistaken language needs a lot of exercise and when you do exercise you have to repeat them so many times. Even the textbooks repeat a word or words in different ways. This is because to understand easily. You see, that is why I always ask many questions and I want to get answers from the students.

I In the lesson on 'antonyms', for instance, you were repeating some questions sometimes with changes in their words and other times with no change in their forms. Questions like:

1. You know what is the name for 'opposites'?
2. What is the other name for opposites?
3. What is the other name for opposites?

Similar repetitions of questions also happen elsewhere in the transcript data. Was this intentional? What purpose does that serve?

K Changing its form might be mistaken but I use this purposely or intentionally. When I ask students in the class if I get a response or if students raise hands after my first question I won't repeat the question, you see. But I repeat my questions 2 or 3 times when I don't see any hands in the air to encourage. It might be mistaken as I told you not to change the form of the question but I use this intentionally. Changing the form might help the students to understand what the question is but I don't do this most of the time.

I---How about repeating answers after students? Have you ever noticed you are doing that ?

K_Yeah. Yeah. I do but not always, you see. Whenever a student gives the answer I always ask others if that question is correct or wrong. If I get supporters for a student who answered that question and I ask them why and if the majority is silent or the majority doesn't give any response I will explain the question and the answer, you see. This is what I do always.

I--- Concerning what is to be said 'right' or 'wrong', what is it that you are saying 'right' or 'wrong' in students' answers? Is it the content or form or both?

K--- It happens always. Many students give answers and their answers are not complete mostly. When they give these answers I always tell them that there is the idea, you have got the idea but the construction is wrong. I always write what they say on the blackboard and I want other students to identify where the mistake or the incorrect form of the language is and if I get it is o.k. If I don't get I'll tell or I'll say something about that. Most of the time students do sentences without verbs. This is what happens usually so a sentence without a verb is not a sentence even though there is idea there. So I always write the wrong sentence on the blackboard and correct that. I tell him or her not to do such mistake in the future, you see. Because that part of the sentence is very important if that part of the sentence is missing the idea is not complete so the student does not feel any shame but if the student gives a wrong answer and if I said this wrong and simply pass this might I mean discourage him not to ask in the future but I don't do this.

T I don't know if it sounds foolish to ask this but I want your opinion on what you think might happen if we talk less and listen more to students during a lesson?

K The teacher most of the time should not talk too much in the class. The teacher is a guide by himself. You see, a lot of things should be done by students but as I told you, we teachers I take not only me but most of the teachers, talk much of the time in the class. We do this not because we want to waste our energy or not because of the habit of talking but simply, you see, we want to help the students by talking more. This is what we do but we might be mistaken rather this is what I do when I talk too much or when I say something repeatedly. I feel that my students learn more. This is also why I talk.

I In some lessons there may be reasons for teachers to discuss many language points in a lesson. I remember cases in the vocabulary lesson in which you were talking about 'would, should, often, could' because students mispronounced them. In the same lesson there were also instances in which you were talking about degrees of comparisons and prefixes. Is that not giving them too much input?

K It might be worrying or it might be bad for students if we do that but whenever I hear mispronunciation I always try to correct by writing on the black and saying the words to the students. This is what I do but I don't face many such problems within a period.

I don't do many things in a class like pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. I do the passage with its comprehension if I get time but I always do one thing at a period. I do have my own weekly lesson plan. According to that plan I have to plan for how much time do I talk and how much time do the student talk. Because of that if I have time after discussion of the main point of the passage, I will proceed to this comprehension not the vocabulary. The vocabularies are

the very important part of the language. I believe this because unless we know the vocabularies we don't do much so the vocabulary should be done alone. The period given for the vocabulary is for the vocabulary not for the grammar part. The grammar part is boring. It's wide. It should be divided into periods so some part of the grammar part should be done within a period. I don't give or I don't bore students to do this but as you saw whenever I hear a wrong word I always write that word on the blackboard and make the students read correctly

Appendix 7

Vocabulary lesson student diaries

1 I was a bit disappointed this morning. The teacher started 'spelling game' yesterday. We stopped when the bell rang but we didn't finish the game. Today we didn't start with that. The teacher said 'we'd do it in book 2. That might be correct but even then I wish we'd learned it here as well. We need to learn about spelling as the knowledge is important for us to write English (S)

2 I liked today's lesson for two reasons. One, the teacher wrote examples clearly on the blackboard, and two, the students who always disturb the class had forfeited class because it was the 5th period. I was disappointed only once. That was when a student asked a question, the teacher asked another student to answer the question and he didn't add his own answer and comments to the answer given by the student. (W)

3 We did questions in class today. I was one of the four students who got the chance to go to the blackboard to write answers to some of the questions. I was very much afraid of being wrong but mine was found to be the best of all. The class showed their approval by clapping their hands. I was delighted, really. (W)

4 This morning when the teacher asked questions, students were answering in chorus. This gave a good chance to disturbing students to shout out answers. (S)

5 Today the teacher's handwriting was good but the usual problem was there: students were disturbing as they always do. In addition, when the teacher asked questions, there were choral answers. When some group said one thing another group said another thing. No agreement, no disagreement. (S)

6 There are some students in the class who ask questions and the teacher repeats their questions. This is good for us to learn. Our teacher thinks we don't understand the lesson and the questions he asks. That's why he asks the same question again again, I think. (W)

7 When the teacher said 'ask me anything you don't understand' many students raised their hands. At the end of the period, only one student asked a question and the teacher postponed answering even that question. (W)

8 It is wrong to stop the teacher for a question while he is explaining the lesson. I always delay my questions until the end of his explanation. He finishes explaining at the end of the period and I can't get time to ask a question. Even when he finishes explaining a few minutes before the end of the period, I can't ask all the questions. Students also shout towards the end of the period. (W)

9 Some days we do homework in class and take home another homework for the next day. We learn no new lessons. (S)

10 We did nothing today. Teacher marked students' work. Other students were disturbing. Because of the students' noises the teacher told us to read our book at home.(W)