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PEER SCAFFOLDING: INTERLANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE

VALÉRIA BENÉVOLO FRANÇA DA SILVA

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Tese apresentada à Universidade Federal Fluminense, como requisito parcial à obtenção do Título de Doutor em Letras (Área: Estudos Lingüísticos)

Orientador: Prof Dr NELSON MITRANO NETO

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Aos meus pais, Coaracy e Lourdes e a meu irmão, Bruno, que sempre me incentivaram, estimularam e apoiaram, acreditando que eu tinha algo a dizer e a escrever.

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“Like the Trojans, we in the twenty-first century have come to realize that the miracles of form harness the unconscious and usually invisible powers of human beings to construct meaning. Form is the armor, but meaning is the Achilles that makes the armor so formidable. Form does not present meaning but instead picks out regularities that run throughout meanings. Form prompts meaning and must be suited to its task, just as the armor of Achilles had to be made to his size and abilities. But having the armor is never having Achilles; having the form – and indeed even the intricate transformations of forms (all those 1s and 0s) – is never having the meaning to which the form had been suited.” (FAUCONNIER & TURNER, 2002, p. 5)

CONTENTS

LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS

AM	Aquisition Metaphor
DA	Dynamic Assessment
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FIF	Form Focused Instruction
FonF	Focus on Form
IL	Interlanguage
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LRE	Language Related Episode
LTM	Long Term Memory
PM	Participation Metaphor
SCT	Sociocultural Theory
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TBL	Task Based Learning
ZAD	Zone of Actual Development
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
WM	Working Memory

RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar se alunos brasileiros de língua inglesa, adolescentes e de nível intermediário, seriam capazes de recorrer a “scaffolding” (colocar andaimes) entre eles enquanto trabalham em grupos e executam tarefas e atividades específicas. A pesquisa também investigou se, através de uma relação interacional e de natureza dialógica, as tarefas executadas em grupos permitiram a criação de novas Zonas de Desenvolvimento Proximal, o que comprovaria que o desenvolvimento da interlíngua destes falantes pode acontecer através do diálago colaborativo. Os dados para a pesquisa foram obtidos por meio de gravações das interações dialógicas dos alunos, seguindo uma abordagem sociocultural. Essas interações foram transcritas e analisadas utilizando o método de pesquisa Microgenético. Isto possibilitou a observação do uso de “scaffolding” pelos alunos e do desenvolvimento da interlíngua.

Palavras Chave: Pesquisa de aquisição de uma segunda língua / Teoria sóciocultural / Desenvolvimento da interlíngua / Diálogo colaborativo

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to investigate whether intermediate-level, teenage Brazilian English language learners are able to engage in peer scaffolding whilst working in groups on collaborative tasks. In addition, evidence was sought of the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development during the task-based learning process as proof that interlanguage development can occur through collobarative dialogue. To this end a Sociocultural theory approach to Second Language Acquisition research and learning was adopted and the data for the research was obtained through transcribed recordings of learners' collaborative dialogue. Through Microgenetic analysis, evidence of peer scaffolding and interlanguage development amongst learners, using the target language itself, could be observed.

Key words: Second Language Acquisition Research / Sociocultural Theory / Interlanguage Development / Collaborative Dialogue

1 INTRODUCTION

> "Learning is not a holus-bolus or piecemeal migration of meanings to the inside of the learner's head, but rather the development of increasingly effective ways of dealing with the world and its meanings. Therefore, to look for learning is to look at the active learner in her environment, not at the contents of her brain." (VAN LIER, 2000, pp. 246-247)

1.1 Objectives

The objective of this research is to investigate the following:

(i) Do intermediate-level, teenage Brazilian English language learners participating in group task-based learning tasks in which they are using the target language itself, engage in collaborative, knowledge-building dialogue, which is an example of peer scaffolding?

(ii) Is there evidence that this peer scaffolding helps to create new Zones of Proximal Development, which subsequently allows for the possibility of interlanguage development?

The proposal for this research arose from a combination of factors. The first came from classroom observation and, most importantly, the observation of what occurred when learners worked in groups, using the target language itself to solve task-based problems. The second came from readings in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research.

1.2 Classroom observation and the motivation for research

The motivation for this research arose indirectly out of another research question which was of personal interest at the time. As the original research developed, data was collected on the oral interlanguage production of intermediate-level, teenage, Brazilian

English language learners, who were engaged in task-based learning tasks as a means of providing opportunities for interlanguage acquisition and growth through 'pushed output' (Swain's 1985 Comprehensible Output Theory).

The original research was concerned with the oral interlanguage production of these learners who were able to attain fairly good communicative abilities, with reasonable fluency, yet had a very erratic level of accuracy, although their written production often displayed a better level of accuracy and linguistic complexity, similar to the findings reported by Spada and Lightbown (1999, p.15). In addition, both the teachers and the learners themselves often complained of a feeling of stagnation. Thus, a small-scale classroom study[1] was conducted with eighteen teachers who taught at this level, in order to obtain a clearer picture of what these teachers understood of their learners' oral interlanguage production.

Although this study was small, it nevertheless raised some very important issues at the time regarding teaching practice, classroom procedures and syllabus constraints. Based on the questions put to the teachers and their answers, it became apparent that learners' difficulties with grammatical or lexical items were thought to arise from a lack of understanding of the meaning of these items and not the form. Yet, when asked how teachers dealt with these difficulties, the solution was to focus on a recycling of form, through new explanations and more practice exercises. Invariably, the solutions provided tended to favour a teacher-centred approach with the whole class in order to attempt to overcome these difficulties. It also became clear that teachers expected learners to produce target items within the same lesson in which it was presented (especially during controlled-practice activities).

Thus, the researcher decided to focus on an alternative teaching paradigm, a task-based learning approach (TBL), as a means of finding out whether this approach could help

[1] Refer to Appendix I for the results of the classroom-based research project.

both teachers and learners overcome some of the learning difficulties and dissatisfaction which had been reported.

The readings into TBL and SLA demonstrated that activities which encouraged learners to pay attention to their own oral production and to notice the possible gaps in their interlanguage might provide them with insights into their current knowledge of the target language. According to Swain's Comprehensible Output Theory (1985), by engaging in task-based activities and listening to their own output, learners could be pushed forward in their interlanguage and this was something which the researcher was interested in investigating in order to find out if this really was a possible alternative teaching paradigm and if this could lead to interlanguage development or growth.

Thus, the researcher decided to conduct an initial pilot study of the whole process of implementing TBL tasks and to go through all the transcription procedures involved. Once the pilot study was concluded and the data from the transcribed interaction of the learners engaged in the TBL tasks began to be analysed, a number of other research questions emerged and these were all based on the transcribed evidence of a high degree of collaborative dialogue and meaning negotiation which took place in the planning stage of the task itself.

This data came as a surprise to the researcher, who had expected a good level of meaning negotiation amongst learners, but not to the extent to which it was happening. It appeared as if, in some cases, the learners were collaborating and co-constructing knowledge of the language using the target language itself.

In addition, it was possible to notice from the transcripts that, although the task was the same for all participants, the manner in which it was dealt with by the different levels and groups led to different types of negotiation and learners noticed different gaps in their own production. Although the task variables had been very carefully elaborated, following Skehan's TBL model and suggestion that the information-processing load present in the task

might affect the learners' performance and ability to deal with the task itself (1998), (see Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of this model), it became clear that learners brought to the task their own personal interests in terms of language use and hypothesis formation about the target language and, in some cases, were able to focus on other elements which the researcher herself had not anticipated.

Thus, the pilot study began pointing towards an alternative direction for the research and perhaps one in which greater insights might be obtained concerning learners' learning processes. This alternative research possibility became even stronger once the data from this initial pilot study was presented by the researcher herself at the IATEFL Liverpool 2004 conference (BENÉVOLO FRANÇA, 2004, pp. 59-60). Members of the audience remarked how the transcripts showed that learners, who were working in small groups of four or three, seemed to be 'scaffolding' the development of the learning process for each other.

Having undertaken this initial stage of the research and obtained unexpected, but challenging data, the researcher's main interest changed and now lay in understanding how learners were able to work in groups and through this group work to collaborate dialogically and scaffold their own learning process.

1.3 The influence of SLA research

Amongst one of the pedagogic proposals which lead to the initial research was the suggestion that learners do not always learn what they are taught and they do not, "...simply acquire the language to which they are exposed, however carefully that exposure may be orchestrated by the teacher. It is not simply a matter of converting input into output."(SKEHAN, 1996, p. 18) This was, indeed, one of the springboards for choosing TBL, which focuses first on the processing of meaning before the processing of form.

In addition, Swain's model of Comprehensible Output (1985) was also highly influential in the initial research proposal. Based on her research with French immersion students, whose fluency was highly developed, but whose accuracy left a lot to be desired in spite of the comprehensible input they had received, Swain proposed that learners needed to have classroom time in order to engage in meaningful communication, with extended turn-taking opportunities. It was this opportunity to produce output that helped to promote noticing and Swain argued that this was an essential process in order for there to be acquisition (SWAIN, 1998, p. 66). Learners needed to listen to each other's output and their own in order to notice the gaps in their interlanguage production and through systematic feedback, they would be able to develop a systematic knowledge of the language system (ALLEN, SWAIN, HARLEY & CUMMINS, 1990, p. 65). Swain's model arose out of a rejection of Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis, which posited that comprehensible input alone was sufficient for second language acquisition.

However, in 2000, Swain published an article entitled "The output hypothesis and beyond: mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue" in which the researcher reconsidered her previous research in the light of the influence of Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory (SCT) and this lead to a theoretical re-assessment of the use of the input /output terminology. She argued that language learning could occur through collaborative dialogue used for problem solving, and as the collaborative dialogue was mediated by the target language itself, it became knowledge-building dialogue, allowing for the possibility of the construction of new knowledge through the development of strategic learning processes and linguistic knowledge itself. This process was something which went beyond a simple input / output paradigm and required a change of metaphor for the conceptualisation of SLA within an interactionist perspective.

The acknowledgement of the possibility that the new 'participation metaphor' (PM), which went beyond the 'acquisition metaphor' (AM), might be called for in order to investigate further the role of learner interaction and the learning process in the EFL or ESL classroom was accepted by Swain.

Sfard (1998, apud PAVLENKO, 2000, pp. 155-156; SWAIN, 2000, p. 103) proposed two learning metaphors, namely: the acquisition metaphor (AM) and the participation metaphor (PM). Within the AM perspective, learning is a receptive process, where knowledge is seen as something that can be "acquired" and hoarded, based on the metaphor that "The Mind is a Container", which implies that the mind can grasp and thereby understand knowledge (LAKOFF & JOHNSON, 1980, pp. 29-30; LAKOFF & JOHNSON, 1999, p. 376), in a very individualist manner. In addition, the AM can also be seen in terms of Reddy's (1979) 'conduit metaphor' – IDEAS ARE OBJECTS, LANGUAGE IS A CONTAINER, COMMUNICATION IS SENDING - in which communication involves placing an object (an idea) in a container and sending or transferring it, so that output is sent by the sender and input is received by the receiver. On the other hand, the PM emphasises that learning is a collaborative process, in which social negotiation and participation through doing can lead to the co-construction of meaning.

The possibility of conducting SLA research from a new interactionist perspective, due to this shift in metaphor use, was one which attracted many researchers. Since the early and mid 1990's studies began to emerge within the field of SLA which sought to understand learners' interlanguage development from an interactionist and a SCT perspective. This was led by the research conducted by Donato (1994), Lantolf (1994), Lantolf and Appel (1994), Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995) and Ohta (1995), amongst others.

Donato argued that although the research conducted in SLA which was based on the "message model" was important, in this research tradition "The development of interlanguage

grammar remains an abstract, solitary process hidden in the heads of individuals rather than concretely available in the social relationships among learners." (DONATO, 1994, p. 35) Thus, the studies which emerged bringing together SCT and SLA attempted to redress this balance and investigate learners' interlanguage development from a new perspective. This perspective is of great interest and value for the classroom teacher, since it allows for research to take place within the classroom environment itself, investigating the intricacies of the trade-off between the teacher, the learner, the learners' cognitive development and the use of varied pedagogical approaches.

Thus, it is possible to argue that, based on two metaphors proposed by Sfard, the initial research proposal could be understood under the light of the acquisition metaphor, represented by concepts such as: acquisition; having knowledge; receiving and producing input / output. The opportunity to conduct the pilot study and analyse the data led, however, to a change in the research objective. Once the research proposal became couched in the participation metaphor, represented by concepts such as: process; context; social collaboration; interaction and development, the initial research questions changed and it became possible to investigate the learning processes which learners undergo when working collectively in groups, as a means of identifying teaching and learning approaches which may provide both the learner and teacher with a sense of progress and achievement, rather than a feeling of stagnation.

The present research is based on two interrelated research questions, both of which were posed at the start of this chapter. The first one will investigate whether collaborative knowledge-building dialogue can emerge from group TBL tasks. These tasks will be applied to different intermediate groups and all the TBL phases will be recorded so that the transcribed data can be analysed. The research will also attempt to find out whether the collaborative knowledge-building dialogue, which emerges during learner group interaction, is an example of peer scaffolding.

The second research question intends to find out whether the process of peer scaffolding can lead to the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development and subsequent interlanguage development. It is hoped that both these research questions will provide some insight into the complexity of the L2 learning process which teachers and researchers have been interested in understanding in greater depth, in the hope of bringing pedagogically rewarding change into the classroom.

2 THE MEDIATED MIND: SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR L2 DEVELOPMENT

> "Vygotsky identified two main, interconnected features that are necessarily fundamental for psychology: its tool-like structure, and its inclusion in a system of interrelations with other people. It is these features that define the nature of human psychological processes. The tool mediates activity and thus connects humans not only with the world of objects but also with other people. [...] This means that humans' mental processes (their "higher psychological functions") acquire a structure necessarily tied to the sociohistorically formed means and methods transmitted to them by others in the process of cooperative labor and social interaction. But it is impossible to transmit the means and methods needed to carry out a process in any way other than in external form – in the form of an action or external speech. In other words, higher psychological processes unique to humans can be acquired only through interaction with others, that is, through *interpsychological* processes that only later will begin to be carried out independently by the individual." (LEONT'EV, 1981, pp. 55-56, apud, ROGOFF, 1990, p. 13)

2.1 Sociocultural Theory of the Mind and Mediation

The emergence of the major themes of sociocultural psychology and sociocultural theory began with the work and research conducted by Vygotsky between 1924 and 1934. His work was also developed in collaboration with Luria and Leont'ev, both of whom began as Vygotsky's students and later continued as his colleagues and researchers in their own right. After Vygotsky's death in 1934, they continued to pursue the same line of research and have contributed towards the further development of Sociocultural Theory (SCT).

Sociocultural Theory (SCT) has dealt with a number of research issues, all of which are interconnected. According to Wertsch there are three themes which form the core of Vygotsky's work: (1) the reliance on a genetic or developmental method; (2) the claim that higher mental processes in the individual have their origin in social processes; (3) the claim that mental processes can only be understood if there is an understanding of the tools and signs which mediate them (WERTSCH, 1985, pp. 14-15). These themes are interrelated in

such a manner that is difficult to discuss them in isolation, yet there is a fundamental issue which permeates all of the above themes, that of *mediation*.

Mediation is a central aspect of SCT, which attempts to explain how the mediated mind emerges from social activity. In *Mind in Society* (1978), Vygotsky stated that mediation could occur through the use of a material tool; through dialogic verbal interaction with another person or through the use of symbolic or psychological tools or signs, such as number systems, music and most importantly, language. Language in itself is seen not only as a means of allowing for social interaction, but it also allows for the process of managing mental activity and Vygotsky writes that, "The developmental roots of two fundamental, cultural forms of behaviour arise during infancy: the use of *tools* and human *speech*." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 46). He also adds that,

> "The tool's function is to serve as the conductor of human influence on the object of activity; it is externally oriented; it must lead to changes in objects. […] The sign, on the other hand, changes nothing in the object of a psychological operation. It is a means of internal activity aimed at mastering oneself; the sign is internally oriented." (Ibid., p. 55)

According to Vygotsky, it is through the use of signs and tools that children control and direct their behaviour and master new psychological forms and this allows for the development of higher mental functions.

Thus, it is through mediation that higher mental functions[2] can actually develop. Vygotsky and Luria (1930, p.3, apud WERTSCH, op.cit., p. 23) also made it clear that the

[2] Vygotsky made a distinction between higher and elementary mental functions. Whilst natural development is responsible for the emergence of elementary mental functions, it is cultural development that enables the conversion of elementary mental functions to higher mental functions, such as attention, memory, logical thought, planning, problem solving and learning. In general terms, the conversion from elementary to higher mental functions is based on four criteria: (i) the shift of control from the environment to the individual: the ability of self-regulation in terms of behaviour, no longer being dependent on the environment to stimulate behaviour; (ii) the emergence of the conscious realization of a mental process; (iii) the social origins and nature of higher mental functions: that is, how group interaction can lead to higher mental functioning; (iv) the use of signs to mediate higher mental functions, essential in order to operate the three criteria and control your own activity. The most powerful use of signs is the use of language itself. (WERTSCH, op.cit., pp. 25-26)

transformation of existing forms of mediation or the emergence of a new form of mediation will directly influence developmental transitions. As Bruner writes in his introduction to Vygotsky's *Thought and Language*, "His [Vygotsky's] is a mediational point of view. Concepts of the language that infuses and instruments them give power and strategy to cognitive activity." (VYGOTSKY, 1962, p. ix) However, it is when a new form of mediation arises, which involves the restructuring and reformulation of an existing framework, that a turning point occurs in terms of human mental development and this is the underlying thought behind Vygotsky's genetic analysis of human mental processes.

Vygotsky stated that an analysis of human mental processes could only be understood if one considered how and where this development took place and this could only be done through genetic analysis, since this form of psychological investigation would enable the researcher to understand the ongoing dynamic nature of development and the multiple forces which can lead to growth. He rejected any other single-factor theory of development, especially those which provided atomistic explanations, arguing that no single set of explanatory principles alone could provide a complete account of development (WERTSCH, op.cit., pp. 21-22) and he wrote,

> "[…] we need to concentrate not on the *product* of development but on the very *process* by which higher forms are established. […] *To study something historically means to study it in the process of change;...*" (VYGOTSKY, 1978, pp. 64-65).

Thus, in order to obtain a holistic understanding of the development of higher mental functions, these had to be studied within interrelated and continuous levels of genetic development, which included ontogenetic development, phylogenetic development, sociocultural and microgenetic development. Vygotsky and Luria stated,

> "Our task was to trace *three basic lines* in the development of behaviour – the evolutionary, historical, and ontogenetic lines – and to show that the behaviour of acculturated humans is the product *of all three lines* of development, to show that behaviour can be understood and explained scientifically only with the help of *three different paths from which the history of human behaviour takes shape*." (VYGOTSKY & LURIA, 1930, p .3, apud WERTSCH, op.cit., p. 27)

Although some researchers, such as Wertsch, point out that advances in the social sciences means that some aspects of Vygotsky's domains of development need to be revised, he also maintains that the underlying concepts are still valid (WERTSCH, op.cit., pp. 30-57).

The first domain, phylogenetic development, was concerned with the legacy of the individual's genetic development and evolution. Most of the research conducted by Vygotsky concerning this domain relied heavily on the reading of other researchers, such as Köhler (1921, 1925), who conducted experiments with chimpanzees and their tool-mediated practical activities. Vygotsky was interested in the differences in mediational abilities between higher primates and humans according to phylogenetic development in both species. Vygotsky stated that tool use and the use of cultural artefacts was one of the conditions which had enabled the development of higher mental functions in mankind since it allowed for the creation of a society based on labour and it also allowed for the emergence of speech.

The second level of genetic development described by Vygotsky was sociocultural development, which postulated how changing cultural history exerted an impact on the individual, thereby allowing for the emergence of different values, cultures, forms of thinking, etc. One of the important arguments within this domain was that the behavioural development of man was not determined by biological factors, but rather by the change in use of mediational psychological tools and the ability to decontextualise mediational means, i.e., the ability to use more abstract signs and symbols, the most powerful of these being language.

Most of Vygotsky's empirical research on elementary and higher mental functions was conducted within the third domain, that of ontogenetic development, investigating how children integrated mediational means into their thinking processes. According to Vygotsky,

ontogenesis involved the simultaneous and interrelated generation of different forces of development, such as natural and cultural forces (in other words, elementary and higher mental functions.).

A fourth domain, microgenetic development, is usually cited in the list of the domains proposed by Vygotsky. Wertsch (1985) in fact mentions that this notion appeared in Vygotsky's analysis and is particularly clear in his descriptions of his experimental procedures. Wertsch (1985, p.55) explains that although Vygotsky did not describe this in detail, his work suggests that two types of processes of microgenesis were identified. The first concerned the short-term formation of a psychological process observed in subjects engaged in repeated experimental trials. The second concerned the "unfolding of an individual perceptual or conceptual act, often for the course of milliseconds". Vygotsky utilized this type of microgenesis in his study of speech production, thereby enabling him to observe the transformations involved in the movement from thought to speech utterance, the moment by moment learning by individuals in a particular problem-solving context.

According to Vygotsky, the growth of these domains (including microgenesis) arises from a dialectic process which is uneven, comes in abrupt bursts and is erratic. This growth can also entail regressive movement, since this is a natural process of developmental growth. These possibilities, including that of regressive movement, are of particular interest in L2 acquisition research when learners' spoken interlanguage is analysed, since evidence of this is abundant and may often lead to that which teachers and learners complain of, i.e. a feeling of lack of progress or of stagnation.

For Vygotsky, context was inseparable from human action in cognition (ROGOFF, 1990, p. 27) and it is difficult to understand an individual's intellectual development without reference to the social milieu in which the child is embedded (Ibid., p. 35).

Vygotsky saw development as a qualitative transition and problem solving not as a product, but as a process, which demonstrates the individual's potential for development. However, it is important to delve into some of the fundamental concepts and constructs in his theory which will be referred to in this current research and which has influenced recent research in SLA.

2.2 Inter and Intrapsychological processes

Vygotsky stated that cognitive development (the development of all higher mental processes) is continuous and ongoing, in which an external activity is gradually transformed into an internal one, "Development, as often happens, proceeds here not in a circle but in a spiral, passing through the same point at each new revolution while advancing to a higher level." (VYGOTSKy, 1978, p. 56)

In his "general genetic law of cultural development"[3], Vygotsky argued that this process of transformation occurred through *internalisation*, in which the activity that had occurred in a social, external plane came to be executed in an individual and internal plane. Thus, every function in a human being's development initially took place on a social plane, involving interaction between people and generating an *interpsychological* process. Owing to a series of developmental events and dynamic changes in the *interpsychological* plane, these processes could then be transformed within the individual plane, creating an *intrapsychological* process.

Wertsch extends Vygotsky's explanation to make it clear that this process of internalisation cannot be seen as a simple copy of what took place on an external plane.

[3] Vygotsky's "general genetic law of cultural development" states that, "Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category." (VYGOTSKY, 1981, apud. WERTSCH, op.cit., pp. 60-61)

Rather, it must be understood that the process of internalisation allows for the creation of a new "plane of consciousness" and it is this process that leads to the gaining of control over an external sign form. (WERTSCH, op.cit., pp. 65-67)

The implication of this in L2 learning is that learners listen to and attempt to use new aspects of the target language when interacting with their peers or a teacher, i.e., on a social plane, before they can internalise these new aspects and use them more autonomously. Ohta highlights that Vygotsky's description of the development of cognitive processes has been successfully brought into SLA research and she argues,

> "In other words, social processes allow the language to become a cognitive tool for the individual. These planes of functioning are dynamically interrelated, linked by language which mediates social interaction on the interpsychological plane, and mediates thought on the intrapsychological plane." (OHTA, 2000, p. 54)

The key issue is that the use of "tools" or "signs" is a form of mediation, which allows for cognitive development. In the EFL classroom, the "tool" which allows for interlanguage growth is the use of the target language itself. In addition, whenever learners are encouraged to work together, either in pairs or in groups, this creates a suitable environment for *interpsychological* processes to emerge and eventually transform into *intrapsychological* functions. Yet, according to Vygotsky, this transition can only occur within a dynamic region of processing, which is the Zone of Proximal Development.

2.3 The Zone of Proximal Development

Based on his ontogenetic research with schoolchildren, Vygotsky observed that children with the same IQ were able to perform tasks slightly beyond their current level of development provided they were assisted by someone else and those who were not given this

assistance, remained unable to perform the tasks. Thus, he raised the point that cognitive development could occur through the experience with cultural tools, such as language, in joint problem solving activities and contexts.

This led him to identify two distinct developmental levels. The first level of development is the *actual developmental level* of the child, in which his or her cognitive functions have already been determined as a result of a completed developmental cycle. This level is referred to in the literature as the *Zone of Actual Development* (ZAD). In this level what can be identified is the end product of a process of maturation and an ability to do something independently.

The second level of development is the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), which is,

> "…the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 86)

In the ZPD, which is a "...dynamic region of sensitivity…" (ROGOFF, op.cit., p. 14), the functions are undergoing a process of maturation and Vygotsky explains that,

> "The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state. These functions could be termed the "buds" or "flowers" of development rather than the fruits of development." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 86)

According to Vygotsky, the importance of the ZPD is that it allows the educator to understand the cycles of development a child has been through and which have fully matured, as well as identify the processes which are undergoing transition and maturation.

It is exactly in the ZPD that the transition from the *interpsychological* to *intrapsychological* functioning can start to be made. However, it is important to understand that the ZPD is not a "…physical place situated in time and space; rather it is a metaphor for observing and understanding how mediational means are appropriated and internalized." (LANTOLF, 2000, p. 17) This reminder by Lantolf is important if we consider that the field of SLA research and linguistics has proposed in the past a number of constructs and explanations which are biologically based and founded on the principle of innateness (e.g., Chomksy's LAD (Language Acquisition Device), now termed Universal Grammar (Chomsky, 2000); Krashen's *i*+1 construct which also relies on an innate LAD).

What Vygotsky was concerned with was the existence of a potential level of development in which, with the assistance of an "expert", be it a teacher, a parent or a more capable peer (thus the importance of the social interaction), and using a "tool", such as language itself, the learner is able to push himself forward.

According to Vygotsky the relationship between instruction and cognitive development is that instruction can contribute towards the creation of a ZPD, but the child's current level of development will also play an influential role in enabling the creation of a new ZPD. This idea is made clear in the following quotation,

> "We propose that an essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement." (VYGOTSKY, 1878, p. 90)

It is important to highlight this aspect of Vygotsky's construct since Dunn and Lantolf state that some scholars have argued that the notion of a ZPD is analogous to Krashen's

construct of *i*+1[4] and that both constructs can be integrated. However, researchers working within the SCT tradition have pointed out the incommensurability of both constructs and their theoretical frameworks.

Dunn and Lantolf (1998, pp. 411-442) state that the central issue in Vygotsky's construct is that it is through a dialectical collaborative process, through mediation and the tasks at hand that development and a process of maturation can take place. Thus, the focus is on the individual in interaction and it implies that no pre-existing, fixed or universal order for learning or development exists.

This, on the other hand, is quite different from Krashen's construct, which is based on the premise that there is a fixed and universal order, the *Natural Order Hypothesis*, which means that new knowledge may be assimilated or not by the LAD, depending on the type of *comprehensible input* provided. The onus for development lies in the individual. Krashen can be said to have been strongly influenced by Reddy's (1979) 'conduit metaphor', in which 'minds are containers' and receive input (DUNN & LANTOLF, op.cit., p. 424) and this stands in contrast with SCT.

The ZPD is a key construct in terms of SLA research and one of the reasons why it has been so successfully introduced into the field of second language learning is that it helps to explain a number of issues related to the EFL classroom. The first of these is that it helps teachers and researchers understand why some structures and language aspects are not mastered by some learners. What may happen in these cases is that these learners are unable to construct a new ZPD which will enable them to move from their current level of actual development.

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4 Krashen's construct of *"i*+1" states that people acquire language through *comprehensible input* with structures which are slightly beyond their current level of (acquired) competence. Thus, *"i"* refers to the learners' current competence and the "+1" refers to the next "rule" the learner is ready to acquire due to the *Natural Order* Hypothesis. Krashen argues that for acquisition to occur, input needs to contain "i+1" and so the learners' Language Acquisition Device (LAD) can assimilate the received input. (KRASHEN, 1983, pp. 28-35)

However, there may also be the case in which learners, with some form of assistance either from a teacher or from a peer, are able to successfully perform a task using a specific language aspect, but once they are working independently, they are unable to use the same language aspect. In this case, the ZPD may be under development and the learner still has to mature and internalise this specific aspect of language. The learner is still in transition from the *interpsychological* to the *intrapsychological* plane and *internalisation* has not yet taken place.

The relevant issue for SLA studies and research is that when L2 development is considered within the perspective of the ZPD, it suggests that the process of microgenesis depends on the quality and frequency of help provided for the learner and the creation of opportunities for such collaborative interaction and assistance to take place. Lantolf and Aljaafreh also point out that this assistance has to be graduated and contingent, by which they mean,

> "…it moves from explicit to more implicit, or strategic, levels and is offered only when needed and is withdrawn once the novice shows signs of self-control and ability to function independently or even rejects help when it is offered." (LANTOLF & ALJAAFREH, 1995, p. 620)

If, as Vygotsky states, this assistance may come from an adult or even a more capable peer, then this has direct implications in terms of classroom practice. In order to create an environment in which sensitivity to the type of assistance described above can be effectively fostered, it is essential that pedagogically-appropriate activities and tasks are elaborated which allow for the process of *scaffolding* or assistance to take place and which allows for this interaction between the *expert* and *novice*, as suggested by Lantolf and Aljaafreh. Yet, before the issue of the type of classroom practice activities required is addressed, it is important to

extend further the notion of *scaffolding* and how important this is for the creation of Zones of Proximal Development.

2.4 Scaffolding

Although Vygotsky himself did not use the term *scaffolding*, it has come to be used by researchers, psychologists and educationalists working within the SCT tradition. Yet, alongside the use of the term *scaffolding*, other names and concepts have also come into use, such as *guided participation*, *apprenticeship*, *expert and novice* and *collaborative dialogue*, to name but a few. A brief outline of these terms is necessary, since it will highlight the wealth of research which has developed since SCT emerged.

The term *scaffolding* refers to the dialogic process which occurs when speakers assist each other in performing a function or activity which otherwise they would be unable to perform individually, and Wood, Bruner and Ross described it as "…a process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts" (WOOD, BRUNER AND ROSS, 1976, apud. DONATO, 1994, pp. 40-41; ELLIS, 2003, p. 181; ROGOFF, 1990, p. 94).

Wood, Bruner and Ross explain that the process of *scaffolding* can involve up to six features on the part of the teacher or another pupil:

1) Recruiting interest in the task;
2) Simplifying the task: by reducing the number of steps or making the components more manageable;
3) Maintaining pursuit of the goal by motivation of the participant and direction in the activity;

4) Marking critical features and discrepancies between what has produced and the ideal solution;
5) Controlling frustration and risk during problem solving;
6) Demonstrating an idealized version of the act to be performed.

What can be seen from the description of the process above is that scaffolding not only attends to the cognitive demands of those involved, but it also ensures attention is given to the affective dimension of the process.

Wertsch's definition of the process of scaffolding explains that, "[scaffolding is a] dialogically constituted interpsychological mechanism that promotes the novice's internalisation of knowledge co-constructed in shared activity." (WERTSCH, 1979, apud. DONATO, 1994, p. 41) This concept is also found in Wood, Bruner and Ross, who make it clear that the elements which are present in the scaffolding process do not have to appear in order, nor do all the elements have to appear. It may be the case that one or more of these aspects emerges a number of times during the activity and this may occur because it is through the scaffolding process that a new ZPD can emerge, allowing for the process of maturation to begin in the *interpsychological* plane.

In addition, Wood, Bruner and Ross' description of the scaffolding process also necessarily implies that a gap exists to be bridged and a goal exists to be reached, and this therefore gives rise to the emergence of a challenge. Vygotsky had written that "…only "good learning" is that which is in advance of development." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 89) and by this it can be understood that unless activities and tasks are set which cater for the possibility of the emergence of a gap between learners' actual developmental level and their potential level of development, it will be difficult to challenge and "push" learners to move from an *inter* to an *intrapsychological* plane. This is because if the activity or task proves to

be too easy, in other words, the learner can work within his *Zone of Actual Development*, then there will be no need to create a ZPD. By the same token, if the task or activity is too difficult, it is possible that, even with guided assistance, the learner will not be able to create a ZPD, preventing any development from taking place.

This same notion of *scaffolding* has also been referred to as *guided participation* and *apprenticeship*. Referring principally to the development of children, Rogoff defines *guided participation* as a process where caregivers and children's roles are bound together with "…tacit and explicit learning opportunities…" (ROGOFF, op.cit., p. 65) and the role of the caregiver is to build bridges in order to enable children to act in new situations, alongside the children's own understanding of the emotional, verbal and non-verbal clues provided for them (Ibid., p. 67).

Rogoff (1990) then extends her notion of *guided participation* using a new metaphor to describe this "scaffolded" relation. The notion of an *apprenticeship* as a model for children's cognitive development is proposed and she highlights that the idea of *apprenticeship* applies not only to children, but it can also be seen in adults developing a specific skill (Ibid., p. 39).

Rogoff chooses the *apprenticeship* metaphor since the role of the apprentice always presupposes a relationship between an *expert* and a *novice*, and claims that,

> "Shared problem solving – with an active learner participating in culturally organized activity with a more skilled partner – is central to the process of learning apprenticeship. So are other features of guided participation that I emphasize: the importance of routine activities, tacit as well as explicit communication, supportive structuring of novices' efforts, and transfer of responsibility for handling skills to novices." (Ibid., p. 39)

The use of this metaphor is particularly useful when considered within the reality of the EFL classroom and L2 research. As in any learning situation, the teacher assumes the role

of *expert* and the *novices*, the learners, are being guided by the teacher so that they experience situations in which they may develop. However, what needs to be questioned is, whenever the pattern of interaction changes from a teacher-led or teacher-fronted lesson to group or pairwork, who is it that assumes the role of the *expert* and the *novice*? If in order for there to be any form of development a bridge needs to be created from what is known to what is new, so that through the difference or the gap a new ZPD may be created, when learners are working in groups, what happens to the *expert / novice* dichotomy?

This is an issue which L2 researchers have begun to raise. As Lantolf states, scholars are beginning to question if more than an *expert/novice* relationship can help to create new Zones of Proximal Development (LANTOLF, 2000, p. 17). From the research in L2 which has recently emerged and which is the cornerstone of this current research, it is possible that if one considers the possibility of there being multiple *experts* and *novices* in the classroom, and if it is accepted that this role is flexible and interchangeable, then one may begin to explain how group work does indeed help to create new Zones of Proximal Development and allow for the interlanguage development of learners.

2.5 Sociocultural theory and SLA research

> "…from the sociocultural perspective, *second* language learners have a *second* chance to create new tools and new ways of meaning. Thus, accents, (un)grammaticality, and pragmatic and lexical failures are not just flaws or signs of imperfect learning but ways in which learners attempt to establish (new) identities and gain self-regulation through linguistic means. In an important sense, L2 learning is about gaining the freedom to create…" (DUNN & LANTOLF, 1998, p. 427)

Research has shown that the process of scaffolding does allow for the emergence of new Zones of Proximal Development and that learners working together are able to obtain an improved level of performance since they provide some form of guided assistance to each

other. Research on the effects of scaffolding in the L2 classroom has been carried out by Donato (1994); Lantolf and Aljaafreh (1995); Ohta (1995,1997,1999) and Swain (2000), amongst others. All of these researchers are interested in conducting investigations within SCT and SLA and each one of them has been able to report on the effects of scaffolding on interlanguage development and learning, yet each has added an extra dimension to this line of enquiry. The studies developed by these four researchers, as well as the studies developed by other researchers but which expand specific lines of enquiry, will be dealt with in some detail since they provide the methodological and theoretical framework followed in this current research.

Donato's study on scaffolding attempts to illustrate how students co-construct language learning experiences in the classroom and whether learners themselves are able to aid each others' L2 development in an observable way (DONATO, 1994, p. 39). The study focuses on the recorded and transcribed protocols of three learners who were used to working together and who were given an hour-long planning session in preparation for an oral activity which would take place the following day. In order to study learners' interlanguage development, Donato uses microgenetic analysis[5] and operationalizes the concept of scaffolding using Wood, Bruner and Ross' (1976) definition.

Donato found that once learners started working on the tasks, they spontaneously chose to plan their oral task focusing on the negotiation of form rather than meaning and this process of negotiation of form also led to the creation of a shared understanding of meaning (DONATO, op.cit., p. 43). The study's overall results demonstrated that the learners were able to collectively scaffold each other's performance, using the same strategies that an expert would have used. Individually, they were able to mark discrepancies between what had been produced, but none of them had the complete knowledge in order to be able to produce the

[5] For a detailed description of microgenetic analysis, please refer to Chapter 3.

correct response. However, based on negative evidence[6], learners were able to collectively and through dialectical interaction produce the correct response. The study also showed that as learners worked collectively, the gap between the task itself and learners' individual abilities gradually reduced (DONATO, op.cit., pp. 45-46).

Since learners were able to create an effective scaffold for each other, this also allowed for individual development. Donato was able to verify this by comparing the protocols of the negotiations which took place during the planning stage with the recordings of the individual students when they were presenting the oral activity. Thus, learners who had collectively produced specific utterances and used these in the presentation stage were said to have developed linguistically individually as a result of the social interaction and the co-construction of knowledge (Ibid., p. 51).

The study demonstrated that collective scaffolding can create new Zones of Proximal Development and in which it is possible to observe learners engaging in the co-construction of knowledge and the maturing of *interpsychological* processes, through microgenetic analysis. Donato also suggests that the study showed evidence of *intrapsychological* development for some learners in the case of the use of some specific language structures. Although these results can be understood in this manner, the present researcher advocates a far more cautious interpretation of these results. This will be an issue which will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

Another example of research carried out using SCT is the work done by Lantolf & Aljaafreh (1995). In a follow-up study to Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994[7]), they investigated if regression (which is a means of restructuring the existing functional system and integrating an

[6] 'Negative evidence' refers to negative feedback which is given showing what is grammatically incorrect.

[7] Aljaafreh & Lantolf (1994) investigated the dyadic interactions between a student and a tutor who was encouraged to provide corrective feedback on learners' essays. Based on this study, they created a 'regulatory scale' by which they were able to evaluate the extent to which the teacher had provided explicit or implicit help to the learner. The results showed that over time the teacher was able to provide more implicit help to the learner, who gradually assumed more control over his own L2 production. (LANTOLF & ALJAAFREH, 1995, p. 622; ELLIS, 2003, p.191)

existing system to a new one) is part of the microgenetic development of a learner's interlanguage (LANTOLF & ALJAAFREH, 1995, p. 630).

As in their previous study, they analysed the dyadic interaction between learners and teachers, who were engaged in correcting learners' written work using the Regulatory Scale of Implicit to Explicit Help, in order to investigate whether learners were gradually able to rely less on the explicit scaffolded help of the teacher and whether this allowed for interlanguage development. What the study showed was that learners were initially aware of a gap in their interlanguage, but unsure of what was the exact problem. With the explicit help from the teacher during the first meeting, in a follow-up meeting when analysing another piece of writing, the learner required less explicit feedback from the teacher since he had been able to appropriate some of the feedback given by the teacher previously and relied less on the teacher's explicit help to identify and attempt to correct the mistakes.

Lantolf and Aljaafreh found that this overtly explicit scaffolded help provided by the teacher, the expert, allowed the learner to confront the new information with his/her previous understanding and this allowed for the creation of a new ZPD. They also found that the expert was gradually able to regulate the level of help provided, and this fostered greater autonomy on the part of the learner and they concluded that,

> "We suspect this is something that occurs frequently in expert/novice interactions and is relevant because if microgenetic development entails the quality of regulation negotiated by novice/expert dyads, it is incumbent upon the expert constantly to push the novice toward greater autonomy." (LANTOLF & ALJAAFREH, op.cit, p. 624)

Lantolf & Aljaafreh also found that in some cases learners demonstrated regression in their control over specific structures. Structures such as the present perfect, for which explicit help had been provided by the expert during a previous meeting, still required the same degree of explicit help and scaffold in a subsequent meeting.

However, what Lantolf and Aljaafreh point out is that regression should not be confused with 'backsliding'[8] as defined by Selinker and Lamdella (1981, apud LANTOLF & ALJAAFREH, op.cit., p. 621), in which the learner, who is moving from one stable stage of interlanguage development to the next, slips back into an earlier stage of development.

Thus, the researchers concluded that regression, both in the use of the L2 and in the type of scaffolding required by the expert, is a natural part of interlanguage development. Regression does not mean that the learner has gone back to the initial stage from where they had started, but it does show the dynamic process of the creation of a new ZPD and *intrapsychological* growth.

The implication of these results for SLA studies in the L2 classroom is that it highlights the importance of a cyclical learning process, since the time needed for the maturation of the *interpsychological* plane may vary according to the individual learner himself, the tasks with which he is confronted and the type of scaffolding provided by the expert. In addition, the results also lead the present researcher to question the degree to which peer to peer interaction, where one or more learner assumes the role of the expert, can provide the same degree of contingent and graduated scaffolding which Lantolf and Aljaafreh's research seems to indicate when the expert is a teacher. This is another issue which will be dealt with in Chapters 4 and 5 and which Ohta (2000) also tried to analyse.

Ohta (2000, pp.51-78) investigated the nature of scaffolded help provided by peers, the mechanisms they employed to do so and the effect that peer scaffolding had on learners' L2 acquisition. The study was conducted with two graduate non-native Japanese students involved in three learning tasks (a role-play, a translation task and a communicative interview which took place in one lesson), which were recorded on audio and video and transcribed for

8 "Backsliding" occurs when learners produce the correct target-language form on some occasions, but the incorrect form on others. It involves using a rule which was used in an earlier stage of development. (ELLIS, 1994, p. 694)

analysis. The lesson in question focused on a specific grammar point in Japanese and for the purpose of her study, Ohta focused on the data obtained from the translation task.

The discourse analysis of the transcripts sought evidence of developmentally sensitive assisted performance, demonstrating the sequential progression of development from the *interpsychological* plane to the *intrapsychological* plane. Ohta found that both learners were able to bid for and provide assistance based on either explicit requests for help or more implicit cues (these subtle cues were observable since the study was also videoed, thus it was possible to observe non-verbal prompts as well as verbal ones). She also observed that learners respected turn-taking sequences or waited for the other interlocutor to stop speaking before they assisted each other. This, therefore, enabled learners to evaluate and graduate the type of scaffold which was needed before actually providing it.

What Ohta also discovered was that at times one of the two interlocutors withheld help. The transcript analysis showed that at times this was done on purpose, since the interlocutor was sensitive to the fact that a great deal of help had already been provided. As this was done, the other learner gradually came to rely less on the scaffold provided and to become more autonomous in the solution of problems. Thus, Ohta concluded that peer interaction can indeed allow for graduated and contingent scaffolded help and that the role of the expert during the interaction is a fluid one and may change during interaction.

The data also showed that as learners became less responsive to one another in terms of providing scaffolded help, they also became gradually more autonomous and began internalising the structures which had been focused on. Yet, Ohta raises the important issue that, although the transcripts clearly demonstrated the move from the *interpsychological* plane to the *intrapsychological* plane, there is no guarantee that the structure was acquired for all time. She makes it clear that,

> "What the data do show are microgenetic processes as they occur moment by moment in this particular classroom activity. During task performance itself, we, infact, see that as Becky improves, her performance is variable and includes regression. Regression is expected as a natural part of the developmental process […] I do not claim that Becky has fully mastered this construction, but that she is on her way." (OHTA, op.cit, pp. 74-75)

Ohta suggests that further studies are needed in order to determine how a broader range of L2 learners, involved in interaction which generates scaffolded help, are able to provide graduated and contingent assistance in the ZPD. She also suggests that the type of tasks in which learners engage in might also affect the type of interaction and level of assistance which is generated.

The fourth and final researcher whose work will be drawn on is Swain's (2000, pp.97-114), who has studied learner interaction for a number of years.

Believing that comprehensible input was insufficient in itself as a stimulus for L2 language development to occur, Swain researched the oral production of immersion students in a 'French as a second language programme' in Ontario and compared it to the production of native French speakers in Quebec. The results showed that there was a significant difference between learners' and native speakers' output, and as long as students were able to communicate efficiently, there was no pressure for them to ensure greater accuracy in their production (SWAIN, 1998, p. 65).

Therefore, based on these research findings, Swain proposed that "comprehensible output" was just as important as "comprehensible input" and elaborated the *comprehensible output hypothesis* (1985) that stated that:

1) Learners have to orally produce L2 and also listen to it if they hope to achieve a level of native-like proficiency.

2) Some sort of feedback needs to be given to learners so that they can develop a systematic knowledge of the language system and its grammatical structures (ALLEN, SWAIN, HARLEY & CUMMINS, 1990, p. 65).

The premise for Swain's c*omprehensible output hypothesis* (1985) is that learners who are given classroom time to engage in meaningful communication, with extended turn-taking opportunities, are more likely to engage in sustained talk. When teachers initiate conversation, demanding quite controlled learner participation, this leads to minimal and restricted turn taking (ALLEN, SWAIN, HARLEY & CUMMINS, op.cit., p. 65). By taking longer turns in conversation, learners not only have to develop their fluency further, but they also need to pay more attention to the accuracy of their oral production. Any failure in the communication process may require further meaning negotiation amongst participants and through consistent feedback on errors (provided by peers or teachers), they will be able to notice the gaps in their production and process their language more deeply.

Swain's *comprehensible output hypothesis* rests on the fact that learners learn how to speak by speaking, producing not only meaningful speech, but also coherent and appropriate language. In order to do this, learners have to be "pushed" in their output (SWAIN, 1985, pp. 248-249) and "notice" their own output as a means of self-monitoring. Swain was able to observe this by analysing evidence of learners' Language Related Episodes (LRE), which she defined as, "…any part of a dialogue in which students talk about the language they are producing, question their language use, other- or self-correct." (SWAIN, 1998, pp.70-71)

According to Swain and Lapkin this type of regulation, or external regulation, can help the learner to modify their output and,

> "In doing so, the learner may sometimes be forced into a more syntactic processing mode than might occur in comprehension. Thus, output may set 'noticing' in train, triggering the mental processes that lead to modified output […]. […] producing language forces learners to recognize what they do not know or know only partially." (SWAIN & LAPKIN, 1995, p. 372 and p. 375)

This conclusion also mirrored the research being conducted by Pica on negotiation in which she also demonstrated how learners engaged in a process of negotiation were able to notice actual gaps in their communication (PICA, 1994, p. 499) and this allowed for the production of modified output. However, she also emphasised that the research seemed to demonstrate that this negotiation occurred when learners were dealing with aspects of lexis and larger syntactic units, but that this did not necessarily occur when it came to grammatical morphology, and she wrote,

> "Even asking learners and their interlocutors to tell stories, sequence events, or explain procedures in their tasks does not get them to negotiate much over time and aspect marking. Instead, they give greater attention to people in their pictures and stories […] than what the people are doing. So the learners segment and move larger units of syntax such as sentence elements, for example, but do little else. These findings do not mean that interlocutors *cannot* negotiate over best tense and aspect, but that many of the communication activities in which they participate – both in research and in everyday life – do not demand their attention to these areas of grammar." (PICA, op.cit., p. 518)

Williams (1999) also conducted research in order to find out whether learners were able to spontaneously attend to form in their interaction with other learners within a learner-centred, communicative classroom; whether this attention was different according to learners' level and what kinds of form they attended to (WILLIAMS, 1999, p.591). Based on a retrospective analysis of research carried out focusing on the importance of input and ouptput to promote learners' language awareness and development, Williams concluded that it was important to investigate the roles learners actually take whilst engaged in tasks which promote attention to form and meaning.

To this end, she investigated the interactions of 8 participants, (aged 18 to 21, with different nationalities), 2 from one of four different levels of proficiency (beginners to lower

intermediate). These learners were recorded for 45 minutes, twice a week, during an eight-week period. No set task was established. Instead, she recorded the lessons as they occurred. For this reason, Williams chose to solely analyse the recordings in which there was evidence of LREs, which she defined as "…discourse in which the learners generated talk or ask about language, or question, implicitly or explicitly, their own language use or that of others.", based on the instances in which there was evidence of pair or group work (Ibid., 1999, pp. 594-595).

Williams concluded that within the routine of a normal learner-centred communicative classroom, the degree and type of attention which learners direct towards form is dependent on their level of proficiency and the nature of the activity in which they are engaged in. She found that more advanced learners were more willing to spontaneously engage in form during their interactions and whilst in the lower levels this often led to learners questioning the teacher in order to clear their doubts, more advanced learners were willing to rely on their own resources and each other, involving greater evidence of metatalk and the provision of corrective feedback (Ibid., p. 605). Williams also concluded that, in the overwhelming majority of cases, learners' need to focus on form arose from lexical needs rather than grammatical needs (Ibid., p. 611).

Whilst the questions raised by both Pica and Williams in their own research remain to be answered and investigated in further detail (this present research will pick up on these points in Chapters 4 and 5), some researchers in the field of SLA research, such as Swain herself, began moving towards another direction in order to investigate further the effects of learner interaction and SLA.

Swain explained that based on the evidence of the LREs collected over the years, it was possible to observe that, when learners noticed the gaps in their own production and when they were working in groups, they attempted to solve these problems collectively and

this invariably led to a stretching of their interlanguage knowledge as they attempted to find the solution (SWAIN, 2000, pp. 100-101).

In the face of this evidence and the research evidence emerging from others working within the field of SLA and SCT, Swain proposed a modification in the use of her previous terminology "output" and exchanged this for "collaborative dialogue", in accordance with the theoretical framework underlying sociocultural theory and Vygotsky's body of work. Swain argues that she has extended the concept of output "…to include its operation as a socially-constructed cognitive tool. As a tool, dialogue serves second language learning by mediating its own construction, and the construction of knowledge in itself." (Ibid., p. 112) The importance of using the target language itself to mediate interlanguage development is an aspect highlighted by Swain.

Based on the data obtained from previous research, Swain found that on analysing the LRE transcripts of the tasks carried out by the French immersion students (the task was designed to allow learners to focus on form), evidence of learning mediated by language was found. Swain makes it clear that, "…what is occurring in their [the learners'] collaborative dialogue – their 'saying' and responding to 'what is said' – is language learning (knowledge building) mediated by language (as a semiotic tool)." (Ibid., p. 104)

Swain concludes by suggesting that more research in this field is necessary in order to find new research methodologies, which may reveal more details of the complexities of this relationship between language learning mediated by the target language itself.

The development of a recent, but strong, line of enquiry based on SCT in SLA has allowed for the emergence of a myriad of research initiatives aimed at answering some of the research questions which have been raised by classroom-based researchers for a number of years. However, as the field of SLA remained tied to the Acquisition Metaphor (AM) line of enquiry, strongly influenced by an input/output information processing approach to second

language acquisition, in which the focus was on the language produced and the learners were seen as processors or producers/ senders or receivers of a message, it seemed as if these questions were never satisfactorily answered.

Although the research carried out under the Acquisition Metaphor (AM) line of enquiry has revealed a number of important aspects concerning SLA, a change in the metaphor has allowed for a new research perspective to arise. The Participation Metaphor (PM) has brought along with it a new focus, one in which learners are regarded as people engaged in developmental processes which are realized through interaction within a context and, as van Lier puts it, this line of enquiry does face enormous challenges since,

> "By studying the interaction in its totality, the researcher must attempt to show the emergence of learning, the location of learning opportunities, the pedagogical value of various interactional contexts and processes, and the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies." (VAN LIER, 2000, p. 250)

By viewing L2 and interlanguage development from this alternative perspective, the researcher is able to bring together the cognitive aspects of language learning alongside the social processes.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a naturalistic research tradition, which is qualitative in nature and will attempt to reveal and understand the complexity of group interaction in the EFL classroom through the analysis of the transcribed discourse of participants recorded whilst engaging in task-based learning tasks.

As this research is descriptive, there is no intention to generalise the findings or to offer predictive proposals. Rather, the intention is to understand the discursive interactions which occur in the classroom setting. This type of research tradition is described by Bruner, who claimed that,

> "Explanation of any human condition is so bound to context, so complexly interpretative at so many levels, that it cannot be achieved by considering isolated segments of life in vitro, and it can never be, even at its best, brought to a final conclusion beyond a shadow of human doubt." (BRUNER in LURIA, 1987, xii apud LANTOLF, 2000, p. 19)

It is a research tradition based on the observation and interpretation of those engaged in a learning activity within the educational setting itself. In addition, there is no manipulation of the experimental condition since this makes it possible to gain certain insights into learners' mental activity and how they choose to operationalize the tasks which have been set.

Donato (DONATO, 1994, p. 39) states that if the field of SLA research desires to investigate further the influence of learners' verbal interaction and how this might aid linguistic development, then this has to be done through the observation of learners whilst they are engaged in communicative processes in which the co-construction of knowledge can be seen to take place. In this manner, it is possible to observe how the process of co-construction and scaffolding may result in "linguistic *change* among and within individuals

during joint activity." (DONATO, 1994, p. 39) It is only in this manner that it is possible to begin to understand how through collaborative interaction and negotiation, learners can create scaffolds, which will build the bridges between the *interpsychological* and the *intrapsychological* planes, allowing for some form of impact on L2 development.

Research based on the analysis of learners' verbal interaction whilst engaged in communication itself within the field of SLA has already been conducted in the past whenever the intent of the researcher was to focus on the processes occurring in the classroom which led to second language development.

Swain (1998), in a pilot study in order to find out whether learner output could lead to noticing, hypothesis formation and the use of metatalk by learners themselves, used dictogloss[9] tasks with 48 grade 8 learners from a French immersion program. The dictogloss tasks focused on four different language aspects (two focusing on the formation of plural nouns and adjectives, another focusing on the compound past in French and the last one focusing on the use of the imperfect).

Whilst the learners completed the task, their interaction during task completion was recorded and transcribed. The data of the research was therefore based on the transcripts which demonstrated evidence of Language Related Episode (LRE). A LRE is defined by Swain as dialogue in which students discuss aspects concerning the language they are using and may also attempt to self-correct (SWAIN, 1998, pp.70-71). It was based on the analysis of the LREs, as well as a post-task quantitative test based on the LRE's produced by each of the dyads, that Swain was able to obtain the results for the pilot study. Although Swain did not base her analysis of the LREs on any specific methodological approach, she does make it clear that a descriptive analysis of the LREs was sought. Swain, in her re-appraisal of her

[9] A dictogloss activity is one in which the learner listens to a short text once or twice and is then required to reconstruct it. In most cases, the selection of the text is made bearing in mind a specific focus, either grammatical or lexical.

output hypothesis once again referred to the data of the LREs as the basis for the analysis of the data within a sociocultural theory research perspective.

Whilst reading the major researchers in SLA and sociocultural theory, (DONATO, 1994, 2000; LANTOLF & APPEL, 1994; LANTOLF, 2000; OHTA, 2000; SWAIN, 1998, 2000; PAVLENKO & LANTOLF, 2000), it is clear that this area of research is still in its initial days in terms of establishing a unified and detailed methodological approach (SWAIN, 2000, p.112). This is, indeed, one of the criticisms which is levelled and Ellis (2003, pp. 185-186) clearly states that SLA research based on SCT and using task-based learning tasks does not have a satisfactory operational construct for investigation. Nonetheless, he believes that despite its current limitation, SCT has brought to the field of SLA research a greater emphasis on the role of interaction in a social-cultural perspective, which is important considering the type of work which can be done in the EFL classroom.

Qualitative microgenesis allows for the observation and the analysis of the actual developmental process undergone by learners. As Vygotsky himself suggests, Microgenesis allows for the observation of the "...process in flight...." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 68). The qualitative microgenetic analysis of the interactions which take place amongst learners is directed at understanding how this interaction can aid learning, allowing for long-term analysis, if the research is longitudinal. However, minute-by-minute of ongoing transformation is also possible to be observed when dealing with data obtained from learners' interactions, as observed by Donato (1994); Lantolf & Aljaafreh (1995) and Ohta (2000).

Vygotsky initially proposed that this analysis could take place using a minimal unit of analysis, which he identified as being the word. Wertsch points out, however, that this choice for the unit of analysis was not appropriate since by focusing solely on the word itself, it is not possible to observe and analyse the functions of memory, attention and planning. Wertsch suggests that the ideal unit for analysis should be "tool-mediated, goal-directed action" (1985,

p. 208), since it allows for the analysis of the *interpsychological* and *intrapsychological* planes, and provides a suitable framework for the analysis of mediation and interaction. The tasks elaborated within a TBL framework allow for the provision of contexts in which "tool-mediated, goal-directed action" can be observed.

Thorne (2005, p. 398) lists the different microgenetic approaches which have been used in research into SLA within a SCT and he identifies the following methodologies: (i) textual and discourse analysis of learner interaction, used by Kramsch (2000) and Pavlenko & Lantolf (2000); (ii) mediated discourse analysis used by Scollon (2001) and Scollon & Scollon (2004); (iii) microinteractional / conversational analysis, used by Ohta (2001) and conversational analysis / ethnomethodology, used by Mondad & Pakarek Doehler (2004). For the purpose of this research, the methodological approach which will be adopted will follow Ohta's microinteractional analysis, in which learners' transcribed interactions will be analysed for evidence of moment-by-moment peer collaboration and knowledge building dialogue.

3.1 Population

The target population for this research was learners who study at a private EFL school in Rio de Janeiro, (see Appendix II for a detailed description of the institution and its language courses), at two different lower intermediate levels: lower intermediate 2 and lower intermediate 3. The course, known as the Plus course, has a three-year duration and each of the six lower intermediate levels has a fifty-hour-long study programme.

The learners in three different classes for the two lower intermediate level groups were recorded. This therefore meant that a total of 48 learners, working in groups of three to five (in some cases, when learners missed the second lesson, some of the groups were asked to work as pairs in order to ensure all groups were composed of the same members for both

recording sessions), were recorded and the evidence based on the interaction of 12 different groups was obtained. This led to a total of 40 hours of audiotaped recordings (including both the planning and presentation stages for the tasks).

Learners were not previously selected to participate in the research. One of the intentions of the research was to see how learners in general, studying at this level, responded to the task-based learning tasks and the extent to which they engaged in collaborative group scaffolding. Thus, there was no need for candidate pre-selection nor prior evaluation of learners' linguisitic level.

3.2 Data collection

As mentioned previously, the type of task set to stimulate collaborative dialogue between learners is of crucial importance and TBL (Task Based Learning) tasks are ideal for this type of investigation, since they will allow for the creation of a learning situation which stimulates learner interaction and allows for the collection of data, which can then be analysed using microgenetic analysis.

The TBL tasks provide a cognitive challenge for learners and, as will be seen further on, the task design and the task cycles allow for the creation of a goal-directed activity and learning situation, in which verbal interaction is of crucial importance and which compels participants to engage in meaning negotiation and mediation using the target language itself.

On using TBL tasks for SLA research within a SCT perspective, Ellis argues that,

> "A sociocultural theory of the mind, then, provides a number of important insights for task-based research. It suggests that the study of dialogic interactions can provide a window for viewing the cognitive processes the learner is internalizing." (ELLIS, 2003, p. 184)

However, he also raises a number of important issues concerning the use of task-based learning tasks, SCT and SLA research (ELLIS, op.cit. p. 184), claiming that:

1) The researcher should be aware of how tasks can be developed in order to provide for interaction which allows for contingent and graduated scaffolding, since this will enable learners to create new Zones of Proximal Development.
2) The tasks should be regarded as opportunities to stimulate interaction, allowing learners to react to the tasks as they see fit and not as the researcher believes they should react.
3) The most suitable methodology for the kind of analysis desired is a qualitative microanalysis of learners' interaction, which will enable the researcher to understand how learning takes place.

These points are all highly relevant and will be dealt with in more detail in the section dealing with the task-based acitivities.

In order to collect the necessary data, learners' oral production during task-based activities were recorded at two different moments within a one-week period. The two lower intermediate (lower intermediate 2 and 3) groups were recorded whilst they planned and presented their tasks. These recordings thereby created a corpus, based on which it was possible to observe and analyse learners' interlanguage production and find evidence of collaborative dialogue, peer scaffolding and through microgentic analysis, identify evidence of the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development and shifts from the *interpsychological* to the *intrapsychological* levels.

3.3 The Task-based activities

> "[Language is] most daring and most advanced when it is used in a playful setting." (BRUNER, 1984, p.196 apud CRYSTAL, 1998, p. 179)

This section will discuss in detail the theoretical and practical implications of task-based teaching and learning and how useful this may prove to be as a tool for data collection and for fostering learner interaction, peer-to-peer assistance and scaffolding and the possibility of the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development.

Skehan's definition of a task is based on Candlin's (1987), Nunan's (1989) and Long's (1989) definitions, where a task ensures:

1) meaning is primary;
2) there is some communication problem to solve;
3) there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities;
4) task completion has some priority;
5) the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome." (SKEHAN, 1998, p. 95)

Willis also argues that task-based learning as an approach whereby learners,

> "...begin with a holistic experience of language use. They end with a closer look at some features naturally occurring in that language. By that point, the learners will have worked with the language and processed it for meaning. It is then that the focus on form turns to the surface forms that have carried the meaning." (WILLIS, 1996, p. 52)

The argument in favour of task-based learning is that it provides the development of cognitive functions with real-communicative needs, thus permitting learner interaction, negotiation and acquisition processes to occur. In addition, as the focus on form comes at the

end of the task, learners do not divide their attentional focus between meaning and form, since meaning has already been processed.

Skehan argues, however, that this proposition in itself does not justify the use of a task-based approach. He also emphasises the risks which may be run when using a task-based approach without careful planning and writes,

> "Unless it is appropriately handled, as task-based approach can over-emphasise the importance of just 'getting the job done' at the expense of the central purpose of pedagogy: improving target language ability. As a consequence, it is more likely to have the effect of encouraging comfortable fossilisation than that of promoting interlanguage (IL) development." (SKEHAN & FOSTER, 2001, p. 184)

Thus, Skehan and Foster (2001) provide a number of justifications for the use of tasks in the L2 classroom and emphasise the importance of paying attention to task design.

Skehan and Foster highlight how researchers have claimed that tasks are not simply a means of drawing attention to specific language forms or as an opportunity for extended target language consciousness raising, but as "a powerful catalyst for IL development." (Ibid., p. 186) It is through interaction with other learners in a communication setting that communication breakdown occurs and this will lead to the use of negotitation of meaning devices, such as the use of clarification requests, confirmation checks and many other strategies. Thus, task design needs to ensure that an opportunity for negotiation of meaning does occur, since according to Skehan and Foster this is essential in order to trigger comprehensible input (Ibid., p. 186).

However, Skehan (1998) and Skehan and Foster (2001) also demonstrate how research into information processing shows that humans have a limited information-processing capacity and must prioritise and allocate their attention. Thus, depending on what the teacher wishes to focus on, attention must be paid to the information-processing load of a task, since

this will influence the pedagogical effectiveness of each task (SKEHAN, 1998, p. 97; SKEHAN & FOSTER, 2001, p. 189).

The more demanding a task is, the more likely it is to require attentional resources from the learner in order to execute the task successfully and this means that learners will have less opportunity to focus on form. Thus, when the teacher intends to focus on form, the best option is to select a simpler task, with a lower processing load.

This finding is also mirrored in the studies conducted by Brown et al. (1984, cited in SKEHAN, 1998, pp. 102-103), who investigated task difficulty according to task design. It was shown that more static tasks were easier as there were fewer elements to manipulate. Yet, in more dynamic tasks such as narrative reconstructions, in which learners had to deal with a greater number of elements, the task difficulty was greater.

The issue of information-processing load and the division of attentional resources has also been investigated by van Patten. In his studies conducted with 220 university- level Spanish language learners, he found that when learners were asked to listen to a passage and recall both the grammar forms used and the meaning, the recall levels reduced significantly according to the learners' level, i.e., the higher the learners' language level, the higher the recall rate. This, in his view, demonstrated that learners cannot pay attention to language forms without a loss of attention to language meaning. In addition, the study suggested that it is doubtful that "…learners in the early and intermediate stages of acquisition pay much attention to form in the input" (VAN PATTEN, 1990, p. 288), since the processing load required for conscious attention and processing is serial and requires a great deal of effort. Thus, at lower levels, learners might prioritise attention to meaning rather than form. Therefore, when considering task design and the information-processing load of the task, care has to be taken in order to ensure that the pedagogical implications of such a task are in accordance with the task design.

This conclusion also led Skehan to examine how learners' selective channelling of attention may influence task design. Since a task can determine the manner in which attention is to be focused, thus the careful selection of a task may ensure the attainment of specific pedagogical goals (SKEHAN, 1998, pp. 97-98; SKEHAN & FOSTER, 2001, p. 195).

Based on his analysis of task-based activities, Skehan (1998) identified three important aspects present in task-based activities:

1- Code complexity: the degree of linguistic / lexical complexity, vocabulary load and variety demanded by the task. Thus, whilst some tasks will require the use of simpler language, others may require more sophisticated language;

2- Cognitive complexity: by determining the cognitive complexity and load of the task, it is possible to focus on fluency features or to draw learners' attentional resources towards accuracy, ensuring a greater focus on form. In his view this may be achieved by determining two elements which effect cognitive complexity, which are:

   - cognitive familiarity: tasks which have been done before, or are based on topics which are familiar to the learners, or which demand the use of a familiar 'genre' will be less demanding in terms of the cognitive processes involved,
   - cognitive processing: some tasks may make use of "ready-to-use" cognitive processes, whilst others will demand "on-line" processing; clarity of information given.

3- Communicative stress: this will effect the performance conditions, since it will allow the task-developer to control time limits for task performance, the number of participants, the length of the tasks and type of response required, as well as control the type of interaction required. These features will ensure that the task can emulate some of the real-world communicative needs faced by people during interactions (SKEHAN, 1998, pp. 99-101).

In short, according to Skehan and Skehan and Foster (2001) it is clear that the careful selection of tasks enables the teacher to create a balance within the L2 classroom, in which fluency, accuracy and complexity can be equally developed, without one aspect overpowering the other. Skehan's and Foster's (1996, 2001) extensive research and analysis of task-based learning, allowed for the identification of the types of tasks which might direct learners' attention to a specific focus. They analysed how accuracy, complexity and fluency were affected through tasks involving (i) the exchange of personal information; (ii) the narration of a story and (iii) a decision-taking task (FOSTER & SKEHAN, 1996, p. 307).

Based on a coding system for the evidence of fluency, complexity and accuracy (Ibid., 1996, p. 310) and the statistical analysis of these results, it became apparent that there was a trade-off between the different areas of task accuracy, complexity and fluency. Inevitably, one was sacrificed at the cost of the other. However, it also became clear that if there was a wish to focus solely on one of these three aspects, for example, if the researcher wanted to focus on accuracy, then a carefully chosen task could ensure a greater focus on this aspect.

In terms of the research concerning the use of the narrative tasks, it was found that when there was no obvious story line, this would create a processing-load which could contribute towards developing learners' linguistic complexity, but this would be done at the cost of fluency and accuracy. However, further research conducted by Skehan and Foster (1997, 1999) demonstrated that if an ordered and structured story line was provided, with a clear time sequence and a logical order for the narrative, this would minimise the loss of accuracy, since it would reduce the processing load (SKEHAN & FOSTER, 1999, pp. 99-105) and would allow for greater task control.

To this end, the researchers showed learners two episodes from the Mr. Bean TV series, since these were short sketches, almost entirely mimed, with an international appeal. The first sequence chosen, The Restaurant episode, was evaluated in a pilot test as having a

strong structured narrative and the second sequence, the Golf episode, was identified as having an unstructured narrative (SKEHAN & FOSTER, 1999, pp. 103-104). Based on a statistical analysis of learners' transcribed interactions, the study confirmed the hypothesis that when learners were asked to watch, then tell the episode and were given some planning time (in effect, some time for rehearsal) for the structured task, this generated greater fluency amongst learners, since the unstructured task led to the use of more repair strategies when telling the story. In terms of greater complexity, this was also achieved for the watch, then tell condition, but the results were the same for both the structured and unstructured tasks. In addition, there was also a general increase in accuracy in their production. Their overall conclusion was that fluency could be affected by task structure, complexity by the conditions in which the task was carried out (particularly in terms of reducing the processing load by providing planning time) and accuracy was affected by task structure and the opportunity to engage in task preparation.

What Foster and Skehan's (1996) research and analysis of different task designs and conditions for the operation of such tasks demonstrated was that it is possible to control certain pedagogical outcomes when using tasks and that teachers should consider these variables when setting up task-based learning activities. These conclusions and results were important for the present research since they provided a methodological backbone for the design of the tasks to be used in the research.

The importance of providing planning time before task execution was highlighted not only in the previous research, but in subsequent research which has analysed this question in far more detail. Yuan and Ellis (2003) studied how the provision of pre-task planning or on-line planning conditions affected learners' accuracy during task performance. In their view, pre-task planning involves the process in which learners plan the propositional content and isolated chunks of language to encode it. Learners will not, necessarily, be able to recall how

to say what they want to say during performance, but they will be able to recall the general schema. They, therefore, conclude that "…pre-task planning does not generally assist formulation, especially of grammatical morphology…" and this will subsequently lead to greater complexity and fluency rather than accuracy (YUAN & ELLIS, 2003, p. 7).

On the other hand, on-line planning involves learners paying attention to the "…formulation stage during speech planning and engage in pre-production and post-production monitoring of their speech acts." (Ibid., 2003, p. 6) Thus, they argue that learners are able to access their Long-Term Memories (LTM) and search for grammatical information, especially in terms of morphology.

The research conducted by Yuan and Ellis focused on narrative tasks similar to those used by Skehan and Foster (1999), but the tasks were executed by learners working individually, since their intention was that learner performance was not influenced by interactional variables in order to obtain the data they were looking for (YUAN & ELLIS, 2003, p. 9). The research was carried out analysing learner performance under three different conditions: (i) with no planning time, in which learners had to perform the task immediately after seeing the pictures; (ii) with pre-task planning, in which learners had to perform the task 10 minutes after looking at the pictures and having an opportunity to write notes in order to help them with the narrative content, organization and language, (these notes were removed just before the production stage) and (iii) with on-line task planning, in which learners had to perform the task immediately after seeing the pictures, but were given unlimited time in order to enable them to formulate and monitor their speech plan.

Yuan and Ellis (op. cit) concluded that learners in the on-line planning group were more fully engaged in searching their linguistic repertoire and monitoring their speech production due to the greater amount of time they spent carrying out the task (Ibid., 2003, p. 19). In addition, the same researchers found that pre-task planning conditions did not lead to

greater accuracy. This was seen to be evidence that learners will choose to use pre-task planning time to search for content rather than to improve their linguistic accuracy (Ibid., 2003, p. 22).

Although this present research recognises the value of the results obtained by Yuan and Ellis (op. cit.), the fact that the learners worked individually might have influenced in some manner the fact that the pre-task planning time condition did not lead to greater accuracy. This present research will, therefore, continue to draw on what Yuan and Ellis refer to as a pre-task planning condition (without allowing learners to take notes), similar to that adopted by Foster and Skehan (1996) and Skehan and Foster (1999). In this manner, it is hoped to verify whether this same result applies in the case in which learners are working in groups, rather than individually.

Yet, another aspect to be considered when dealing with TBL, is the actual sequence which can be followed when implementing tasks within a TBL approach. Both Skehan (1998) and Willis (1996) propose a three-stage task, with a pre-task section, a during-task stage and a post-task stage. Skehan's task stages do not significantly differ from Willis' (1996) stages in task-based learning. There are, however, a number of differences which are important to highlight and are shown in Table 1.

Whilst Skehan accepts that the teaching of new language items may occur in the pre-task phase, since it can trigger some partial learning process which has previously taken place (Skehan, 1998, p.138), Willis (1996) rejects this possibility. Willis also rejects the notion of "structure trapping" (coined by SKEHAN, 2001, p.185, when referring to WILLIS), in which it is possible to select and create a task to specifically focus on a structure. She argues that, "From the task objectives, you may be able to predict broad areas of language use, e.g. whether speakers will be talking about the past, present or future, but there are surprises, even then." (WILLIS, 1996, p. 34)

This research proposal intends to adopt most of Willis' (op. cit.) detailed model for TBL, since as it is less prescriptive in terms of the role of the teacher conducting the task, and it should allow learners greater freedom. However, the considerations raised by Skehan's and Foster's research into the design of the narrative tasks will also be taken into consideration.

Table 1 – A comparison of Willis' & Skehan's TBL model.

Willis, J (1996, pp.56-65) – TBL Model	**- Skehan (1998, pp.137-149) – TBL Model**
1 – Pre-task	**1 – Pre-Task**
Involves: - Brainstorming ideas; using pictures to introduce idea; - doing pre-task activities/games to highlight lexis; - not doing any pre-teaching - giving thinking time; - looking at a text which might be used.	Involves: - Teaching Introducing new elements; - Consciousness raising Mobilising stored language which is not in use; recycling language; easing processing load, by familiarising learner with the task; - Planning Using planning to improve fluency, accuracy and complexity.
2 - The Task Cycle	**2 – During-Task Phase**
Task Involves: - doing task; - teacher monitoring / encouraging oral production; - teacher not correcting form;	**Task** Involves: - doing the task; - helping learners formulate what they want to say, but not correcting.
Planning Involves: - preparing for report stage; - drafting / rehearsing oral report; - teacher helping learners polish their production; - peer-editing if writing is involved; - producing something suitable for public performance; - allowing learners to ask questions about language.	**Planning** Involves: - preparing for coming report stage; - drafting, redrafting and rehearsing what will be said / written.
Report Involves: - asking learners to report; listen to each other, take notes; - teacher giving feedback on reports, without correction; - learners listening to fluent/native speakers doing same task, comparing task execution.	**Report** Involves: - asking learners to report to other groups.
3 - Language Focus	**3 – Post-Task**
Analysis Involves: - teacher setting language focus task, based on texts read / heard; - teacher working on some of the language doubts which come up.	**Consolidation and reflection** Involves: - learners analysing their own or others' performance; - encouraging learners to notice the gap in their own production.
Practice Involves: - teacher conducting practice activities based on language analysis work already on board.	

However, the research will also use an adapted version of Willis' model (1996, pp. 56-58), since the model provides the teacher and researcher with a variety of options within the different stages and these will be narrowed down for the purposes of this research. Thus, the tasks used for this research will have the following sections:

Pre-task phase

There is an introduction to topic and task. It is at the pre-task stage that learners can activate any necessary cognitive processes in order to complete the task. The objective of this pre-task phase is to create the conditions within which learners' schemata may be activated concerning story-telling and narratives. It is possible that reference may be made by learners to the use of narrative verb tenses, but it is important to remember that this will not necessarily guarantee that learners will use this specific form. The procedures of this phase are the following:

- The teacher helps students understand the theme and objective of the task, e.g. using a brainstorming activity, to introduce the topic.
- There is no pre-teaching of new structures.
- There is no recycling of relevant lexis, unlike Willis' suggestion.
- The teacher presents the task and establishes the task requirements, e.g., provide an explanation that the task cycle / the during-task phase will be recorded and that learners will be required to perform the task in public. According to Skehan (1998, p. 148), by pre-warning learners of an upcoming public performance or of a recording session, which can be used in the post-task phase, this will help them direct their attentional resources and this pressure will improve their accuracy.

During-task phase

The during-task phase requires that learners engage in the task and it is at this point that, according to Skehan and Foster, the careful design of the task is of great importance. By

establishing certain variables, such as selecting the type and difficulty of the task; pre-warning the learners of a performance during the post-task phase; establishing a time-limit for the task completion and determining the number of students in each group, it is possible to influence the learners' attentional resources and this can be used to meet the researcher's and teacher's pedagogical needs. This phase is divided into three sub-sections: the task; planning and reporting.

Task

- The task is re-read / analysed in groups and learners engage in the task itself, using whatever language they find necessary and useful.

Planning

- The planning stage prepares learners for the report stage in the during-task phase.
- The teacher may monitor learners during this phase, but will not be allowed to interfere or correct them in any manner. This degree of freedom is essential since the backstage role assumed by the teacher should allow learners to elect experts within their own groups. It also follows that this procedure enables learners to react to the tasks as they see fit and not as the teacher or researcher believes they should react.
- Learners are not allowed to write anything down, but they may conduct the planning stage as they see fit (they may opt to rehearse the presention itself, or select relevant lexis, or focus on content, etc.).
- It is important to emphasise that learners need to polish their language so that it is appropriate for a public performance.
- The planning time for each task is a maximum of ten minutes.

Research into the effects of planning time on task performance suggests that the control of task characteristics is not sufficient to ensure the intended outcomes. According to Foster and Skehan (1996) (SKEHAN, 1998, pp. 71-73), when only 10 minutes were provided for planning time, this allowed for a positive improvement in learners' fluency, complexity and accuracy, with no negative trade-off effect in any of the three aspects. In addition, the study demonstrated that when given up to ten minutes planning time, learners initially direct their attentional resources to the accuracy of their speech production, followed by a subsequent focus in their fluency and finally towards speech complexity. Given more planning time, learners were found to channel their attention towards speech complexity.

Report

- The members (or a member) of the group briefly perform to the whole group. They will be encouraged to pay as much attention to their own performace as they did whilst working on the planning stage.
- Whilst group members perform/ report, the other learners will listen to each other.
- Unlike Willis' model, for the purpose of this research, learners will not be asked to listen to the oral performance of native speakers doing the same task, since the objective of the research is to encourage learners to analyse their own language production and evaluate if they are able to scaffold each others' learning process.

Post-task phase

The post-task stage, (which will involve a feedback session, reflection and consolidation), allows learners to focus on form. Learners will be using their own language production as a source for analysis and language development.

Analysis

- Learners will analyse transcripts of their recorded performance. The transcripts of all groups can be used for a comparison activity.
- Learners will be asked to focus on the negative and positive aspects which they themselves identify in the transcripts of their presentation.
- Teachers may monitor learners' analysis and clear any doubts.
- At the end of the analysis phase, a feedback session will be needed in order to highlight the linguistic aspects or any other aspects which students have noticed as a result of the task-based learning session.

What becomes clear in Skehan's and Foster's (1999, op. cit.) analysis of tasks and task based learning is that to improve in one area necessarily means to compromise another, since their research indicates that there is a trade-off between the accuracy, complexity and fluency components of oral production. This information-processing view of interlanguage development is also shared by van Patten, as previously discussed.

However, although the current research accepts a number of arguments proposed by Skehan and Foster in terms of task design and also accepts their research findings, the researcher questions whether the trade-off suggested by Skehan, Foster and van Patten (op. cit.) also occurs when learners work in a group setting, rather than individually and in dyads. In fact, this is one of the suggestions proposed by van Lier (2000, p. 256) in his proposal for an ecological approach[10] towards the investigation of language learning. In addition, it is possible that qualitative analysis, using a microgenetic approach, might reveal additional aspects concerning interlanguage development which a purely quantitative analysis might not

[10] van Lier's "ecological approach' towards language learning rests on three premises: (i) it rejects scientific reductionism and does not accept that every phenomenon can be explained in terms of a simpler component; but rather in terms of the emergence of a new phenomenon; (ii) not all of cognition and learning can be explained in terms of "processes that go inside the head" and (iii) that the perceptual and social activity in which the learners engages in is learning itself and central to the understanding of learning. (VAN LIER, op.cit., p. 246)

reveal. These are a selection of the questions which the research also hopes to deal with once the data is analysed.

The two task-based activities themselves will provide the researcher with recorded data which, after being transcribed, will allow for a qualitative microgenetic analysis of the learners' discourse. This, in turn, may establish whether peer scaffolding occurs during group interaction, whilst participating in a task-based activity, and whether this gives rise to the creation of a ZPD and eventual Interlanguage development.

The first task is a structured narrative task (according to the Foster and Skehan characterisation), which involves the elaboration and narration of a story by the learners working in groups. The narrative is based on a Sempé cartoon-strip story. The second task is based on a five-minute excerpt from a Mr. Bean video, in which the character is attempting to set up a picnic in the park and fight off an annoying fly, whilst his car is being stolen. According to Foster and Skehan (1996), this is an example of an unstructured narrative task, since the narrative is difficult to anticipate and there is no logical sequence to the narrative, unlike the cartoon strip story. Both tasks were chosen for their similarity to the tasks used by Foster and Skehan (1996) and Skehan and Foster (1999).

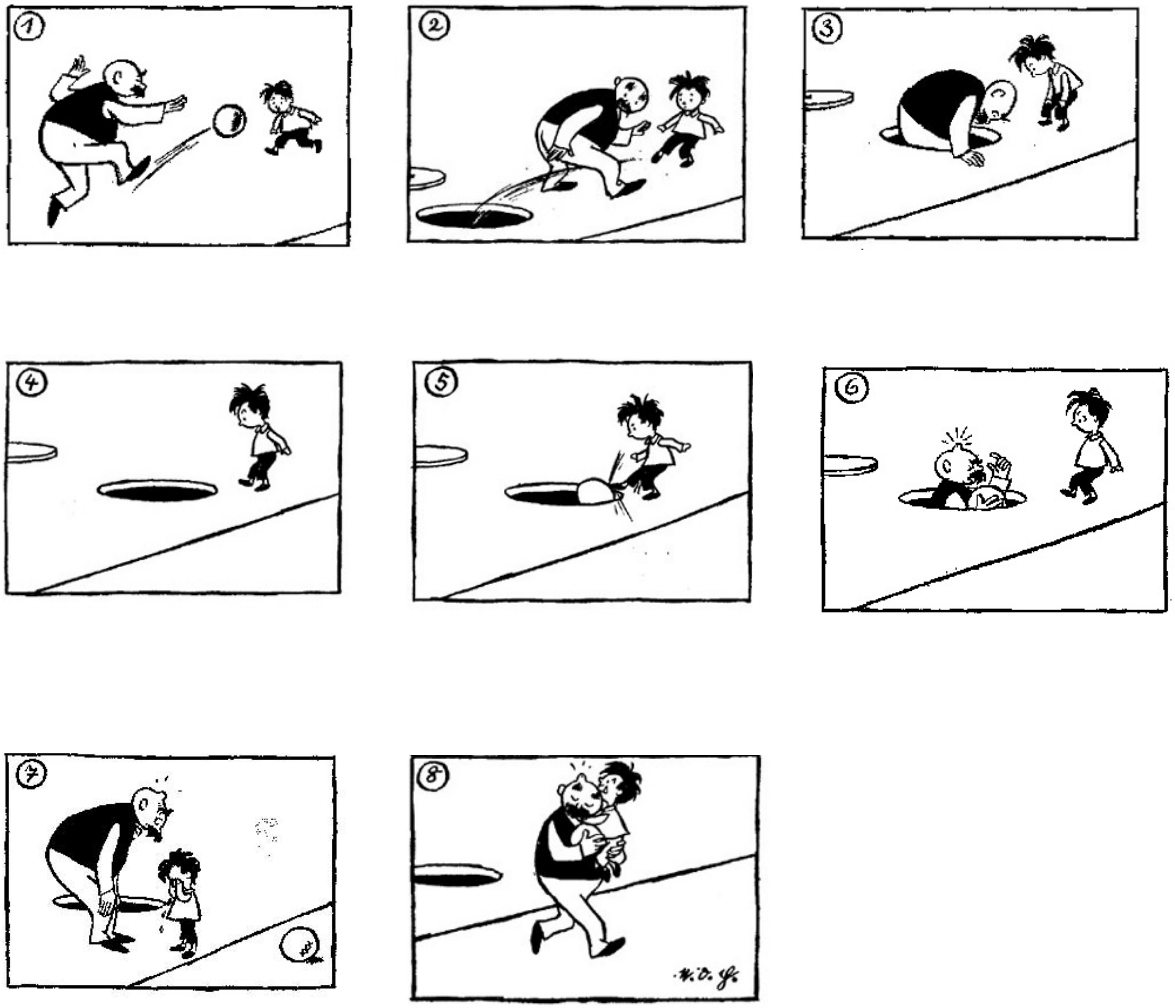
In addition, if Ellis' recommendations concerning the use of TBL tasks are recalled, one of the suggestions is that tasks should be selected so that learners' interaction can be graduated and contingent. By selecting tasks which, according to Foster and Skehan, have different processing loads, thereby making one more demanding than the other, it was felt that once learners had analysed their transcripts and were ready to start the second task, the greater difficulty in the unstructured task might provide a challenge to learners and force each other to provide a greater degree of scaffolding.

Task 1

The narrative with a clear structure is the same for both Lower Intermediate sub-levels, since it is believed that students will be able, with the aid of peer scaffolding, to create new Zones of Proximal Development.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Task 1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Task type</td><td colspan="2">Narrative with a clear structure</td><td>Example: Tell the story from the cartoon.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Planning time</td><td colspan="3">Detailed planning: 10 mins.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pre-task:</td><td colspan="3">- Elicit from students the important elements in a good narrative.
- Tell students they will have to reconstruct the story of the cartoon in groups, paying specific attention to their oral fluency and use of vocabulary when re-telling the story. They must also not forget to use language and grammar which is appropriate when telling a story. They will then present their reconstructed versions to the other groups. All the groups will be recorded in the during-task phase, as well as in the oral reconstruction stage. It is expected that their oral production in the report stage is fluent, accurate and appropriate. Tell sts they will have a planning time limit of 10 mins.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">During-task:</td><td>Task:</td><td colspan="2">- Students are given and analyse the cartoon strip.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Planning:</td><td colspan="2">- 10 mins. to reconstruct the story and plan the presentation of the reconstructed story (no writing is allowed).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Report:</td><td colspan="2">- Listen to the reconstructions of all the groups.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Post-task:
(to be on the same day)</td><td colspan="3">- Elicit from students their verbal reactions to the narratives. Ask them to point out the strong and negative points they may have noticed whilst doing the task itself and whilst listening to each other.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Post-task:
(to be done in a follow-up visit)</td><td colspan="3">- Analyse / compare the transcripts of the different groups.
- Elicit from sts their reactions to their narratives.
- Focus on the elements sts point out as being positive or negative and analyse any points they wish to focus on.</td></tr>
</table>

Cartoon Strip Story Task



Task 2

The unstructured narrative is the same for both Lower Intermediate sub-levels, since it is believed that students will be able, with the aid of peer scaffolding, to create new Zones of Proximal Development.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Task 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Task type</td><td colspan="2">Unstructured narrative | Example: Tell the story from the video.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Planning time</td><td colspan="2">Detailed planning: 10 mins.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pre-task:</td><td colspan="2">- Analyse the transcripts of the previous Task 1 presentation stage and ask students to identify the positive and negative points.
- Elicit from students the aspects they considered to be positive and negative in their production, write these on the board and elaborate with them strategies for improvement in terms of these selected aspects.
- Tell students they will have to reconstruct the story of the video in groups, paying specific attention to their oral fluency, use of vocabulary and any other aspects they find relevant when re-telling the story. They must also not forget to use language and grammar which is appropriate when telling a story. They will then present their reconstructed versions to the other groups. All the groups will be recorded in the during-task phase, as well as in the oral reconstruction stage. It is expected that their oral production in the report stage is fluent, accurate and appropriate. Tell students they will have a planning time limit of 10 mins.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">During-task:</td><td>Task:</td><td>- Students are allowed to watch the 5 minute video excerpt once.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Planning:</td><td>- 10 mins. to reconstruct the story and plan the presentation of the reconstructed story (no writing is allowed).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Report:</td><td>- Listen to the reconstructions of all the groups.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Post-task: (to be done on the same day)</td><td colspan="2">- Identify the strong and weak points in their narrative reconstructions the second time-round.
- Complete a self-observation form.</td></tr>
</table>

3.4 Transcript analysis

The transcript analysis for the purposes of this research was based on a microgenetic approach. Although Swain's research (1998, 2000) was able to demonstrate examples of learner interaction and collaborative dialogue based on the analysis LREs which learners produced, for the purpose of this research, which is seeking evidence of peer scaffolding, a more explicit construct was sought in order to provide clearer evidence that peer scaffolding was actually taking place. To this end, the researcher decided to analyse the transcripts based on the characterisation of scaffolding described by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976). It was decided that this approach would allow for the observation and analysis of both the planning and the presentation stages in terms of evidence of knowledge-building dialogue and peer scaffolding using the characterisation developed by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976). They identified the main features of scaffolding as being:

1) Recruiting interest in the task: in which the "expert" uses expressions, phrases to focus on the task itself. There is an affective dimension involved in this aspect.
2) Simplifying the task: in which the "expert" facilitates an aspect of the task sub-goal or main goal itself in order to allow the "novices" to fully participate in the task. This is an attempt to ensure that the task is successfully completed, even if this means slightly modifying the intended result, so that a more effective scaffold can be offered for the "novice".
3) Maintaining pursuit of the goal: in which the "expert" encourages the "novices" to keep to the sub-task or the main task.
4) Marking critical features and discrepancies between what has been produced and the ideal solution: in which the "expert" points out a gap so that the "novices" can collaborate and bridge the gap.

5) Controlling frustration during problem solving: in which the "expert" and the "novices" or the "novices" themselves interact in a collaborative attempt to bridge the gap. There is an affective dimension involved in this aspect, so that motivation is not lost, nor are participants defeated by the task itself..
6) Demonstrating an idealised version of the act to be performed: in which the "expert" produces the model for the "novices".

Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) defined effective scaffolding as the possibility of controlling the elements of the task that were beyond the learner's capability, thereby allowing him to solely concentrate on the elements that were within his competence. In addition, it is through this effective scaffolding that an individual will be able to achieve a goal and solve a language problem, which would be beyond their individual efforts. What Wood, Bruner and Ross also highlight is that scaffolding will attend to both the cognitive demands of the task as well as the affective nature of the task in hand (ELLIS, 2003, p. 181).

Once the full data from the recording sessions was transcribed, the researcher decided to use only eight of the total twenty-two protocols generated by the data collection process. These eight samples were believed to offer adequate data for analysis.

The complete data obtained as a result of the transcription of the recordings can be found in Appendix III.

3.5 Learner self-evaluation in the Post-Task stage

A final part in the whole process of implementing the two TBL tasks was to collect feedback from the participants in the Post-Task Stage of Task 1.

The Post-Task 1 stage required two things from students. The first was for them to provide verbal feedback concerning their own participation in the task and their collegues'

presentations. This was recorded by the researcher (See Table 2 in Chapter 5) and was also written on the board before students began analysing their own transcripts for the presentation stage of Task 1. The second was to record students' feedback on the transcripts of their presentation for Task 1. The idea behind this procedure was to confront student's perception about their own production with the reality of it, as seen in the transcripts, as a means of raising their awareness to any possible gaps in their interlanguage. (The results of both Post-Task feedback stages can be seen in Chapter 5).

4 DATA ANALYSIS

In order to analyse the data obtained as a result of the transcription of the recorded planning and production stages of the task-based learning tasks, it is important to focus once again on the objectives of the research.

The objective of the research is to investigate the following:

(i) Do intermediate-level, teenage Brazilian English language learners participating in group task-based learning tasks in which they are using the target language itself, engage in collaborative, knowledge-building dialogue which is an example of peer scaffolding?

(ii) Is there evidence that this peer scaffolding helps to create new Zones of Proximal Development, which subsequently allows for the possibility of interlanguage development?

In order to answer the first research questions, data analysis will initially focus on the transcripts of the planning stage of task-based learning tasks. In order to provide the answer to the second research question, both the planning and the presentation stages of the transcripts of the TBL tasks will be analysed.

The initial focus on the transcripts of the planning stage of the TBL tasks will allow for the analysis and identification of examples of knowledge-building dialogue and peer scaffolding using the characterisation developed by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of this characterisation) in order to identify the presence and function of scaffolding. Reference to Wood, Bruner and Ross's characterisation of the functions of scaffolding will be made in Italics whenever it appears.

The data presented in this chapter has been selected as explained in Chapter 3. The complete protocols for each group's transcribed interaction can be found in Appendix III. As all participants' interaction has been numbered in each of the protocols, reference can also be made during the data analysis to a specific turn. This will always be indicated by referring to the protocol number and the line reference as such: [9].

Of all the groups whose interactions in the planning and presentation stages were recorded for Tasks 1 and 2, it was decided to restrict the focus on the protocols of 8 groups, since it was felt that these provided the researcher with sufficient data.

As each group's transcripts for the planning stage are analysed, evidence of the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development will also be highlighted through the use of microgenetic analysis of the learners' collaborative dialogue, since their verbalisation using the target language itself during the problem-solving tasks is evidence of the mediation which is occurring amongst the learners and which allows for the externalisation and possible internalisation of new meaning.

This will be followed by an attempt to analyse whether there is any evidence in the transcriptions of the presentation stage of the task-based learning tasks that peer scaffolding allowed, through the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development, for learner interlanguage development and this will also be done using microgenenetic analysis.

As mentioned previously in the discussion on research methodology, the data obtained from the recorded groups provided a substantial source of transcribed data for the research. Although the raw data obtained as a result of the recordings is presented in its full form in Appendix III, for the purpose of the analysis of these protocols, excerpts have been selected from different groups, working at different levels, either on the first, the second task, or both tasks. These excerpts have been chosen because they are particularly rich samples of different examples of collaborative and knowledge-building dialogue. It is important to mention,

however, that other examples of collaborative dialogue can also be found in the rest of the transcripts, as well as examples of where little or no collaborative dialogue was seen to take place. This last aspect will be discussed in greater detail in the conclusion.

The data analysis will focus on the protocols selected for each of the lower intermediate levels (lower intermediate 2 and 3). Thus, for lower intermediate level 2, a total of 3 protocols have been selected (Protocols 1 to 3), whereas for the lower intermediate 3 level, a total of 5 protocols have been selected (Protocols 4 – 8).

4.1 Lower Intermediate 2

The participation of these Lower Intermediate 2 Group 2 members in both tasks was characterised by a high level of involvement and negotiation amongst all group members.

Protocol 1 – Task 1 – Group 2 – Planning Stage

[1] S1: Okay, Let's start.
[2] S2: Two guys was play football.
[3] S1: Ah, guys, "esse aqui é um garotinho"
[4] S2: Two peoples was playing
[5] S1: Two peoples! Ahh!
[6] S2: Peoples "não tem...."
[7] S1: Two peoples was playing football when the ball fall down in a [...]

From the onset, it is possible to see how one of the students takes on the role of ensuring that all participants become actively involved in the task itself, and S1 *recruits* everyone's interest in the task by encouraging them to start. Indeed, S1 maintains this role throughout Task 1 and also ensures in other moments that the group maintains their *pursuit of the task goal* within the time limit set. In the excerpt above, he ensures that the group stays on task by *marking a critical discrepancy* between what had been said and the illustration itself, when he draws the group's attention in L1 to the fact that the subject of the story is a little

boy. This challenge encourages speaker S2 to produce the phrase “two peoples”, which S1 [5] also marks as an unsatisfactory response and adds an affective marker indicating his frustration. Speaker 2 [6] goes on to express doubt concerning the use of “people”, however, he is cut short by S1, who despite being aware of the inadequacy of the phrase, is anxious to keep to task and to complete it within the time limit. This leads S1 to accept S2’s solution of “two peoples” and to incorporate it into his own sentence in order to get the narrative moving ahead.

Speaker’s 1 initial rejection of “two peoples” appears to be based on meaning rather than form (based on his remark in line [3]), yet the use of the phrase is not contested by the other group members, who seem to accept it at this stage of the task. However, as the task progresses, the group substitutes this phrase for “the father and the boy”, which seems to satisfy all speakers. It seems as if S1’s explicit scaffolding in this part of the interaction focused on meaning, although S2 may have had some doubts as to whether the form was appropriate or not [6], but it is difficult to be certain of this. This raises the question of how and why students consciously choose to focus on one aspect during their negotiation and not on another. What informs these choices?

As can be seen from the continuation of the group interaction, as soon as S1 produces the sentence beginning with “two peoples”, S3 *marks a discrepancy* in the use of the past form of “fall” and decides to correct and *demonstrate the idealised version.*

[7] S1: Two peoples was playing football when the ball fall down in a
[8] S3: fell down [...]
[17] S2:when
[18] S1: suddently
[19] S3: the ball
[20] S1: the ball
[21] S3: it fell down
[22] S1: fall, fell down
[23] S2: down [...]

In this exchange what becomes clear is that S1, who had taken the initiative to guide the group up until now and had assumed the role of the "expert", is also attentive to the contributions of other group members and allows himself to be corrected by S3, since he recognises S3 as the "expert" at this stage. S3 fully assumes the role of the expert: he sets the model twice during the exchange ([8] and [21]) and what he does is to provide an explicit scaffold for the rest of the group. It could also be said that this scaffold is graduated. S3 produces two models in this part of the interaction, but he does not offer any assistance later on to S1 [line 43] when the group goes over the narrative. By removing the scaffold, this allows S1 to become slightly more autonomous and self-correct. It is possible to see S1 struggling to self-correct and use the correct verb tense and throughout the rest of this group's exchange, S1 constantly monitor's himself in terms of the correct use of the past tense of fall. With the elaboration of the scaffold by S3, S1 was able to create a new ZPD and later on, in the presentation stage, it is possible to see the learners' gradual transition to a new *intrapsychological* plane.

The following exchange is perhaps one of the richest in this group and it shows how far learners can engage in collaborative dialogue between each other, they can scaffold knowledge and hypothesise about language use. It also demonstrates that, although they engage in all of these processes, it does not mean that their hypotheses about the language will always be the right ones. However, the fact that they are questioning certain aspects of language use shows that they are attempting to create new Zones of Proximal Development.

[25] S3: The grandfather,
[26] S1: The grandfather,
[27] S3: [unclear]
[28] S1: eh,
[29] S2: was, was take the ball
[30] S1: eh
[31] S2: was take the ball in the hole
[32] S1: "Elas vem pro nosso grupo"

[33] S3: [Unclear] was take the ball in the hole and in the end
[34] S1: And ...
[35] S2:"Como é pegar mesmo?"
[36] S1: Was take
[37] S3: Take
[38] S2: "Não é catch não? Que nem Pokemon, catch.
[39] S3: "Catch?, catch é gato."
[40] S2: "Não, C, A,U,G, H, T."
[41] S1: Catch, "Eu acho que é take, não? Bia, pegar é take né?
[42] Bia: [Unclear]
[43] S1: "Vamos começar de novo." Okay. At the beginning, a, the, a boy and his grandfather was playing football when su, sudently, the ball fall, fell down, in a hole. The friendly grandfather was [S3: taken] taken the ball [S3: in a hole], but, [S3: in a hole], when, ..., [...]

Speaker 2 produces the phrase "was take the ball" [29 & 31] two times and S3 [33] repeats it. When looking at the transcripts for all the groups at this level, the use of "was take" appeared with a high degree of frequency. It is possible that learners are suffering some form of Portuguese interference in the use of this phrase by attempting to translate the phrase "foi pegar" into "was take".

However, S2 is not satisfied with this, he notices the gap in their interlanguage production [35] and *marks the discrepancy* by questioning in L1 the correct form of "pegar". The exchange between S1, S2 and S3 shows that all three are unsure of the use of the phrase and the appropriate meaning of take. The three group members try to *control their frustration* by finding a collective solution to the issue at hand and make use of all the strategies and knowledge of language they possess. They resort to their knowledge of the real world and S2 tries to find a parallel with the Pokemon cartoon and RPG card game, which is played by students at this age[11]. S3 challenges S2's use of "catch" [39] based on a pronunciation misunderstanding. He mixes up the pronunciation of "catch" with "cat", which if pronounced with a strong Portuguese accent may sound similar to "catch". S2 immediately corrects S3 by

[11] Pokemon is a Japanese cartoon which is based on RPG and the game which is played by the characters in the cartoon can also be played by teenagers since the Pokemon RPG cards seen in the cartoon are also sold. However, the most sought after RPG cards are all written in English, so learners are able to learn a great deal of English from these cards.

providing the spelling of the past tense of “catch” [40]. Indeed, S2 is not only *marking the discrepancy* between what was produced and the idealised version, but he is also correctly *demonstrating* the idealised version. This is a very good example of very explicit scaffolding and the type of strategy a teacher might adopt in a similar situation. It is at this stage that S1 appeals to a student in another group who might probably considered to be an “expert” within the class in order to verify the use of “take”. The “expert” confirms that “pegar” is “take” and the group accepts her solution.

When S1 starts the narrative over again, he begins to say “was...”, but before he finishes, S3 provides an alternative “was taken”. The question is, what prompted S3 to produce a past participle? Could this have been influenced in some respects by the correction provided by S2 when he spelt out “caught”, which is the past participle? This question will remain unanswered. The data, however, demonstrates that the learners remained unsure of the use of “take” in their narrative reconstruction.

This excerpt makes it clear that all three group members were aware that “was take” sounded odd and they felt a gap might exist between their production and the idealised version. Although S2 did provide the correct version halfway through the discussion, he was not recognised as the expert by the other group members. Unlike S3’s correction and scaffold for the past tense, S2’s scaffold was not recognised by his peers. However, as S2 does not insist on his version, it is possible that he himself is not completely sure of his suggestion.

What can be seen from this group’s interaction for the planning stage of Task 1 is that learners did notice a gap in their interlanguage use. This was only possible, however, because they were working in a group and were able to scaffold each other’s production. The collaboration between group members was essential to guarantee a heightened awareness of the gap in their IL and this is what allowed for the effective elaboration of scaffolds and the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development.

Protocol 1 – Task 1 – Group 2 - Presentation

S1: A father and his boy was playing football when, when the ball fell down in a hole. The father was, was take the ball, when and then he's back, é, he injured his head and so he get the ball and go to home with his son. Very happy.

This first protocol clearly demonstrates that the learners did engage throughout in knowledge-building dialogue and peer scaffolding. It is clear how S3 provides a scaffold for the use of the correct form of the past tense and then expertly withdraws his scaffold, enabling the other group members to become gradually responsible for their own learning. This is particularly true of S1, who becomes aware of his use of "fall" and corrects himself every time he notices the incorrect use of past form of "fall".

In the final presentation the past tense is produced automatically. Perhaps without the assistance of S3, the "expert", the "novice", S1, would not have become aware of his incorrect use of "fall". By participating in this knowledge-building dialogue and negotiation, a new Zone of Proximal Development was created, which enabled S1 to perform slightly beyond his ZAD and his current level of competence.

Whether we can, from this single example, affirm that interlanguage development occurred in the case of S1, is difficult to say. There is no doubt that some form of transformation occurred and that a possible process of internalisation began to occur with the creation of a new ZPD. It can be argued that a change occurred in the *interpsychological* plane allowing for the emergence of a new *intrapsychological* plane. However, without further longitudinal evidence from data, it is difficult to say that there was some form of definitive IL development for S1.

Yet, what also becomes clear is that, even though an appropriate scaffold might be offered by one of the group members, as in the case of S2 using the correct word “catch”, unless learners are cognitively ready for the scaffold, it will not be used. This might also be related to the fact that the other group members did not recognise S2 as the “expert” at that moment. Had a teacher provided the same answer as S2, would S1 and S3 have accepted the use of “catch”? Alternatively, they might indeed accept the use of “catch” if provided by the teacher, but would they have used it in their own production?

It is possible that this small example might mirror what teachers often see happening in their classrooms. Despite the presentation of an ideal model, once the target structure has to be used, it is used incorrectly by the learner. It may be that in these cases the scaffold is far beyond the learners’ current cognitive ability, making it difficult to create a new Zone of Proximal Development. Thus, learners prefer to remain in their current Zones of Actual Development.

When the same group’s participation in the second task is analysed, once again it is possible to see the degree to which negotiation and knowledge-building dialogue is important in the interaction of these learners, but how peer collaboration might also allow for a “negative” collective scaffolding process, which might temporarily hold back interlanguage development.

Protocol 2 – Task 2 – Group 2 – Planning Stage

[4] S2: and he start to put the rest. While he, while he’s putting, while he’s doing it, a robber was trying to
[5] S1: broke in
[6] S3: broke into
[7] S2: was broking into
[8] S1: breaking into his car
[9] S2+S3: broking into [firm tone of voice]
[10] S3: “porque é passado”

[11] S1: was broking, breaking into [...]

As in the previous Task, this group identifies a gap in their IL and work together to *control their frustration* and reach a negotiated and collaborative solution for the most appropriate use of "break into". S1 completes S2's sentence by using the phrasal verb [5], and it is possible that he suggested "broke in" in its past tense, since the story required the use of the past. Indeed, when learners in the Lower Intermediate 2 level analysed the presentation transcripts of their Task 1 narratives (See Chapter 5 for further details), one of the aspects they identified as requiring greater attention was the use of the irregular verbs in the past and this may have motivated and drawn their attention to the correct use of the past form. However, what S1 failed to notice, and the rest of the group as well, was that the use of "was trying to..." by S2 [4] required the use of the infinitive.

Once S1 produces "broke in", S3 [6] *maintains the pursuit of the task* and *marks an additional discrepancy* by adding a different preposition, maintaining the past simple form. However, S2 [7], quite correctly, decides to change the simple for to the progressive, indicating a continuous action, which is perfectly relevant and appropriate considering the way the scene was shown on the video. S2's contribution can be seen as a means of *maintaining the group's pursuit of the task*, which in this case is to select the most suitable verb form. It is at this moment that S1 [8] *marks another discrepancy* and *demonstrates the idealised solution* by suggesting the use of "breaking into", picking up on the fact that "was" had already been used. Through the group's collaborative dialogue, S1 was able to create a new ZPD and attempted to scaffold this for the others.

However, S2 and S3 were unable to understand this scaffold and justified the use of "broking into" explaining the need to use the past form. [10]. Outnumbered by the other group members and considering the intensity of the correction (this is clear in the recording from S2 and S3's tone of voice), S1 incorporates the solution by repeating the corrected form. Yet, he remains uncertain of this, he adds the "breaking into" as well.

As can be seen below, it is S1 who presents the final narrative in public and when he comes to the use of "break into", he favours the solution provided by the other two group members. Yet, his stumbling over the correct form of the verb in the presentation stage is a strong indicator that he is aware that a gap exists in his IL, but he does not have the knowledge to overcome this doubt.

Protocol 2 – Task 2 – Group 2 – Presentation

S1: [...] [S3: while] While this, a robber was trying to br, broke, broke into his car, but he [...]

The group interaction shows that group members did attempt to *control their frustration* by collaborating together until they had reached a satisfactory solution. Whilst it is clear that S2 and S3, alongside other group members, began to create a new ZPD, in the end they remained within their Zones of Actual Development. The transcript of this negotiation points to the fact that S1 was cognitively ready to modify a hypothesis about a specific language point and to create a new ZPD. If this has been a teacher-led interaction, it is quite possible that with the "expert" scaffolding of the discussion by a teacher, S1 might have created a new ZPD. However, as the collaborative dialogue was conducted by the learners themselves, and two of the three group members assertively assumed the role of "experts", even though they did not have the correct solution, (although the logical thought process behind their solution was correct), their belief in their own "expertise" outweighed the "novice's" *markings of the discrepancy*. It could therefore be said that, at this moment, interlanguage development and the burgeoning of the *intrapsychological* plane, was hampered by the group collaborative dialogue.

Protocol 3 – Task 1 – Group 3 – Planning Stage

In this next group's protocol for the planning and presentation stages of Task 1 what stands out is that what is negotiated during the collaborative planning stage is different to the eventual presentation.

[1] S1: The boy, éh, was play
[2] S2: shoot the boy (pause). The father and the son
[3] S3: son playing
[4] S2: were playing with the ball
[5] S3: "Estavam?"
[6] S2: Were playing with the football when the
[7] S3: when the ball fall the, the,
[8] S1: Teacher, teacher
[9] S2: Fall.
[10] S3: Fall in the hole.
[11] S1: Yeah.[…]

Quite early on in the planning stage S2 *marks the discrepancy* between S1's and S3's production and *demonstrates the idealised version* using the past continuous form "were playing" [4]. S3 accepts S2's "expert" version and checks if she has really understood the correction, the concept and the form for the plural using L1 [5] ("Estavam?"). S2 confirms the hypothesis by repeating the *idealised form* in a full sentence [6]. However, it can be seen that S1 is not paying attention to this collaborative dialogue and the scaffold set up by S2, since her attention is elsewhere and she is trying to speak to the teacher. Evidence that S1 did not participate in this scaffolding process can be seen in the transcript of the presentation stage, in which S1 begins re-telling the narrative and does not use the form negotiated by S2 and S3.

Protocol 3 – Task 1 – Group 3 – Presentation

S1: The dad and the boy <u>was playing</u> football and the ball,
S2: when the ball <u>fell</u> [S3: <u>fell</u>] into the [S1: hole] hole and the father was, take go down, to take the ball when the father back […]

However, what is intriguing in this presentation is the appearance of the correct use of the past simple irregular form of "fall". S2 produces the target item correctly and S3 reinforces and reports it in the presentation stage. Yet, the transcript of the planning stage shows that all three agreed to the use of the present form of the verb [7, 9 & 11]. This can be seen by the repetition of the item by S2 [9] and S3 [10] and S1 adding the encouraging affective remark marker "Yeah", helping all to *maintain pursuit* of their goal and demonstrating a collective solution to the problem. The question which needs to be asked is, what made these students change from "fall" to "fell", since in their own group collaborative dialogue no evidence was shown that any attempt was being made to create a new Zone of Proximal Development?

It is important to point out that as the groups presented their narratives, learners were encouraged to listen to each other. It is possible that just by listening to each other they may have noticed possible gaps in their own language production when they compared their planned narratives with the performed narratives of the other groups. Group 3 was in fact the 4th and last group to present their narrative, (the groups did not present their narratives according to their group number, but rather according to the order in which they wanted to present their narrative versions). The first group to present their narrative completely avoided the use of the verb "fall". Yet the second group did use the verb in its appropriate form, although the third group did not and used "fall" instead.

Whether the contrast between the two presentation's provided sufficient positive evidence for S2 and S3 when it came to their own presentation is difficult to say, but this may be an explanation as to why a change in the use of the target item occurred. Evidence of this

type of influence amongst the groups during the presentation stage became apparent especially in Task 2[12]. However, as the evidence is based on what is not said, as opposed to the evidence based on the transcribed dialogue building negotiations, it is difficult to ascertain whether this was what actually happened by merely basing the conclusions on microgenetic analysis.

4.2 Lower Intermediate 3

The participation of the Lower Intermediate 3 groups in both tasks differs from that of the Lower Intermediate 2 groups in terms of the extent to which learners elaborated their narratives in the planning stage, which owing to their greater proficiency in L2, allowed them to negotiate in far greater detail using the target language itself. This is also clear when one looks at the full transcriptions for these groups (see Appendix III).

There can be no doubt from the transcript that of the three students in Group 2, S3 plays a limited role in the planning stage and most of the interaction occurs between S1 and S2. What can also be observed here is that S1 and S2 prefer to listen to each other and then reconstruct the whole narrative again, starting from the beginning and adding parts or modifying any examples of language use which they believe to be inappropriate.

Protocol 4 – Task 1 – Group 2 – Planning Stage

[4] S1: […] Once upon a time there was an old man playing ....
[5] S2: football

[12] In Task 2 what happened was that as the first group ended their narrative, the following group added details to their own narrative which they might have forgotten to add in the planning stage but which caught their attention as they listened to the previous group. This became particularly clear as learners itimised the things which Mr. Bean brought out of his picnic basket and laid out on the tablecloth. This happened in all groups and it became a type of "memory game" for the learners, without any form of teacher-prompting.

[6] S1: football with his grandson. É, the ball felt in the .... the hole, in the hole and the old man went to take it. When he came back, the granddaughter was very bad and kicked his head. É, the grandfather get very angry and had a ... argue with him. After, é, the grandson ask apologise for the grandfather and they be happy forever.
[7] S2: Wait. Once upon a time there was an old man playing with his grandson, é, football, soccer. When ...They were playing very happy when the ball fell in the hole. The, the old man went to, went to look for the ball. When he was, é, he come, came, coming up from the hole, he knocked his head on the side of the hole and he got very angry and start arguing with his grandson. His grandson got very sad and start crying. After asking apologise
[8] S3: they are sorry
[9] S2: ....they ..... they apologise each other and they went to eat an ice cream. And the story finishes.
[10] S3: And put some ice in the grandfather's head.
[11] S2: And put some ice on the grandfather's head.

In this extract, S2 [7] waits until S1 [6] has completed her version of the narrative before she starts everything again, making slight modifications and attempting to elaborate in more detail certain aspects of the narrative. She indicates that she is *maintaining pursuit of the goal* when she exclaims, "Wait" and then demonstrates and performs her *idealized version* of the narrative. She also *marks discrepancies* when she corrects S1's use of "felt" for "fell" and when she *marks the discrepancies* in the use of "had a ... argue with him", which she incorrectly substitutes for "start arguing with" and "ask apologise" which is changed for "After asking apologise". Although the hypothesis formed are not correct, they nonetheless demonstrate an awareness that a gap does exist and an attempt is made to deal with this gap. S2 also *marks a discrepancy* and produces an *idealised version* of "got very angry".

In terms of a microgenetic analysis of the learner's production, this shows that both of their current Zones of Actual Development are no longer satisfactory and an attempt is being made to collectively create scaffolds for one another in order to allow for the emergence of a New Zone of Proximal Development.

In comparison with the other transcripts, which have been analysed so far, there would seem to be very little knowledge-building dialogue occurring in this example, since learners

produce monologues and wait for each other to finish before they correct each other. However, S2 does build her own "monologue" based on the original production by S1 and when the group's presentation is analysed, it is possible to see the extent to which a scaffold was indeed created by the two learners for each other.

Protocol 4 – Task 1 – Group 2 – Presentation

S1: Once upon a time there was a old man playing with his grandson, soccer. They were playing very happy when the ball fell in the hole. They wen .., the grandfather went to look for it, when, and when he was coming up from the hole he knocked his, his head in the side of the hole. He got really sad and start arg.., arguing with his grandson. É, his grandson got really, é, ...
S2: mad
S1: ... mad and start crying. Then, afterwards, they apologised each other and offer eat an ice cream. The end.

When S1 tells the narrative it is possible to see that she has incorporated S2's correction of the appropriate verb tense of "fall", in addition to incorporating the use of "he knocked his head" and "got really sad" and "got really mad". It is also possible to see S1 *marking a discrepancy* in the use of "After asking apologise" by suggesting another alternative, "apologised each other", which of all the three attempts came closest to the best alternative.

There can be little doubt that the type of scaffold created by S1 and S2 for each other was effective, since in the case of S1's presentation, it is possible to see the incorporation of the corrections. In fact, such was the ZPD created by S2's scaffold for S1 that, through microgenetic analysis, it is possible to see S1 generalising the use of "get + infinitive". This example therefore seems to suggest that the process of scaffolding allows for a number of different types of effective scaffolds. The effectiveness of a scaffold will depend on the learning situation and the learners who are engaged in that particular moment of interaction.

Yet, what is even more interesting in this group's interaction is that in the second Task-Based task it is possible to see S1 and S2 focusing on a language aspect which they had used incorrectly in their first task and which had passed unnoticed to them, but which they now deal with in Task 2. Both speakers used the structures: "start arguing"(S1 and S2) and "start crying" (S2). However, S2 *marks the discrepancy* in the use of this structure and *demonstrates the idealised version.*

Protocol 5 – Task 2 – Group 2 - Planning

[18] S2: […] Once upon a time, on a nice day, Mr. Bean was on his free time, ehm, on a nice day, in a nice park, Mr. Bean started to carry a, start carrying a picnic
[19] S1: Start to prepare
[20] S2:He started preparing
[21] S1: No, prepare!
[22] S2: Once upon a time, in a nice day, Mr. Bean started preparing his picnic in a beautiful park. He, eh, [unclear negotiation] [...]

As can be seen from the interaction between S2 and S1, although S2 [20] demonstrates the *idealised form* of the structure, S1 does not accept S2 as the "expert" and disagrees with the suggested alternative by using a very strong affective marker, "No,…". The use of this marker indicates how both students are *maintaining the pursuit of the goal* which they themselves have chosen: which in this case is to explore further the use of a specific structure, as well as complete the narrative. However, as S2 was the one to present the group's final narrative, she maintained the use of "started preparing".

Protocol 5 – Task 2 – Group 2 – Presentation

S2: Once upon a time, on a nice day, at a park, Mr. Bean started preparing carefully his picnic. […]

What this collaborative dialogue reveals is that learners at a specific stage may seek each other's help and provide a scaffold for each other when attempting to solve a problem. However, they will not always rely on each other's language ability. The implication in this exchange seems to suggest that if a student is not cognitively ready to move from his or her current ZAD, even if they are given positive and helpful scaffolds, if the scaffold which is developed is cognitively beyond the learner's level, it will not suffice and the student will prefer not to take a risk and stick to what they already know and feel comfortable with. Again, this begs the question: had a teacher provided the same scaffold, would the student have accepted it or not?

In the following protocol, this group of 5 students was not only able to collectively scaffold each other's knowledge, but they also engaged in a very active process of cognitive restructuring throughout their interaction.

Protocol 6 – Task 1 – Group 5 – Planning Stage

[16] S1: […] The father, é ...
[17] S2: The father catched the ball.
[18] S1: Yes, and the son was with afraid.
[19] S4: Was with, was with afraid?[questioning tone of voice]
[20] S1: Was afraid of ...
[21] S2: Was afraid with
[22] S1: Was afraid that the father don't come back
[23] S4: AHH! [...]

In this excerpt of the interaction, S4 [19] explicitly *marks the discrepancy* of form in S1's use of "was with afraid?", not only by repeating the phrase as it was said, but also by indicating the discrepancy by her tone of voice. On her signal, all the other group members immediately attempt to *control their frustration* by coming up with alternative solutions. S1 [20] presents a suitable correction, but before she finishes, S2 [21] suggests an alternative, which is incorrect. It is only then that S1 proposes an alternative solution, this time contextualising the structure in a complete sentence and *demonstrating an idealized solution*. Once again it is possible to see the level of motivation amongst the students and how by working together they are able to *maintain pursuit of their goal* and find a solution to the problem – a solution which meets with the approval of S4 who indicates this by an affective marker [23]. What stands out in this exchange is that S4, who noticed the gap, was unable herself to produce the correction, thus her role as the "expert" was simply to guide the group and encourage them to work together in order to find a solution.

In a continuation of the group's planning stage it is possible to observe once again this group's attempts to negotiate meaning and form, allowing them to collectively scaffold their own learning process.

[38] S3: […]Then the boy ....
[39] S2: hit the father ...
[40] S1: Okay. The boy shoot the head
[41] S3: [unclear] shooted. It's shooted.
[42] S1: "Chutou"?
[43] S2: No, it's kicked. Shoot "é acertar"
[44] S1: He kicked his head and then […]

The phrase proposed by S2 [39] "hit the father" is accepted by S1, as indicated by the affective marker "Okay" [40], and this *recruits the group's interest* and draws their attention to her proposed alternative "The boy shoot the head". Yet, S3 immediately *marks a discrepancy* and produces her *idealized version* [41], producing a verb using the past tense,

but forgetting that the verb is irregular. S1 uses L1 [42] (“Chutou”?) in order to verify that S3 wanted to use the past form and by doing this she not only *maintains pursuit of the goal*, but she also clearly opens up the space for other group members to contribute and collectively *control their frustration* by attempting to solve the problem together. It is at this point that S2 [43] demonstrates another *idealized version* and explains why, using L1 in order to make her point quite clear. The strategy of using translation to aid in the explanation is also a means of *simplifying the task*. In fact, despite the fact that S2’s explanation is inaccurate in terms of the correct meaning of the word, it seems to function as a perfect scaffold for the rest of the group members, since S1 [44] accepts it and incorporates it into the narrative.

This therefore suggests that this type of explicit scaffold is indeed sufficient and satisfactory for the creation of a new ZPD. Once the group’s presentation stage is analysed, it is possible to see that S3 uses the solution presented by S2, indicating that a new ZPD was successfully created and that this led to the formulation of a new *interpsychological* plane, since the protocol demonstrates the internalisation of a structure by one of the group members.

This is true not only of the use of “kicked”, but it is clear that the use of “was afraid that” was also consolidated within this group, since S5, who had not participated in the original dialogue and had only listened to the negotiation, was also able to produce the target form correctly during the presentation.

Not only were the group members able to find a solution collectively to their problem, but it also seems as if the scaffold created enabled the students to internalise, at that moment, the form of both structures in this context, allowing them to gradually gain conscious control of a specific aspect of language.

Protocol 6 – Task 1 – Group 5 – Presentation Stage

S2: […] The father tried to catch the ball, then
S5: and the son was afraid that his father, not, eh, wouldn't come back.
S3: The son kicked his father head.
S1: Thinking that it was the ball.
S3: The father, "não", I'm sorry, the son asked for the father if he forgive him and he said yes and finished the history.

The same degree of group collaboration and co-construction of knowledge and hypothesis formation can be observed in this group's participation in Task 2. From the start of the planning stage a doubt is raised over the type of insect seen in the video snippet.

Protocol 7 – Task 2 – Group 5 – Planning Stage

[15] S3: One day, that man that was in the film [laughter]
[16] S1: was making a picnic and a bee appeared
[17] S2: There was a bee or a fly?
[18] S3: A fly
[19] S4: "Foi uma mosca"
[20] S5: "Fly é what?"
[21] S4: "Mosca"
[22] S5: "Fly é mosca?"
[23] S2+S3: Then fly appeared and the man
[24] S1: when the fly appeared […]

When S2 raises the question: "There was a bee or a fly?" [17], her use of both 'fly' and 'bee' seems to indicate that her doubt is based on which insect really appeared. S3 [18] immediately provides the answer, confirming it was a fly, as does S4 using L1 [19]. What S3 and S4 are doing are *controlling group frustration* by providing a scaffold for the rest of the group: S3 provides the *idealized* response in L2, whilst S4 ensures the meaning of S3's response is understood by providing the L1 equivalent, thereby *simplifying the task* for S5.

The use of L1 here acts as a confirmation to all group members of what concept they are talking about and this is a manner of ensuring that everyone *maintains their pursuit of the goal* in order to continue with the task.

This scaffold is insufficient for S5 [20] since she felt the need to check once again the meaning of the word “fly”, to which S4 [21] provided the answer again in L1. S5 remains unconvinced and checks yet another time [22], but this time her question meets with no response from the rest of the group. Instead, S2 and S3 continue with the narrative and they both remove the scaffold at one go. Without discussing this aspect with the student’s themselves, it is difficult to understand why the group members opted to remove their assistance for S5. However, by analysing the dialogue it is possible that both S2, S3 and S4 felt that sufficient and explicit assistance had been provided previously and that S5’s repeated questioning need not be answered again since they all had a greater goal, which was to complete the planning of the narrative before the presentation.

However, the doubt within the group as to whether they should be referring to the word ‘fly’ or ‘bee’ continues when S2 uses the word ‘bee’ instead of ‘fly’.

[25] S2+S3: […] the man was prepared to eat his food, his cake
[26] S1: little cake
[27] S2: However, ...
[28] S1: his little, little, little cake,
[29] S2: However, his, ... no, he, .. however <u>the bee</u> wanted to eat his little cake [laughter]. Then, ehm,
[30] S3: After that <u>the fly, the bee, I don’t know</u>,
[31] S1: No the man started to
[32] S2: No, the man put <u>the bee</u> in the bag, the little cake in his bag […]

This prompts S3 [30] to *maintain pursuit of the goal* and *control group frustration* by proposing that both options are possible. This strategy proves to be quite useful, since from

that stage onwards, group members feel free to use either 'fly' or 'bee', both in the planning stage and the presentation itself, without loosing more time negotiating this aspect and thereby being able to direct their attention to more important aspects of the task at hand.

Protocol 7 – Task 2 – Group 5 – Presentation Stage

S4: One day a man was preparing a picnic
S1: And he was putting his little cake, ehm, he was preparing his little cake and put a cherry on the top of it and a fly appeared.
S2: And, ehm, it started, ehm, disturbing him, to.., and trying to eat the, the cake.
S3: After that a man started to rob his car and when he get it, he saw that the steering wheel doesn't exist and, ..., and
S5: he crossed with the bee
S3: Oh yes, the man, Mr. Bean, was fighting with the bee and [laughter] and ehm, and he get the fly into her hand, but it is seen, seemed it was dead, but when he opened her hand, his hand, it wasn't he. And the story finished. [laughter]

One aspect which also merits attention, in lines 25 to 29 of the planning stage, is when the learners begin playing around with the language itself in order to convey the exact meaning they are looking for. When S1 [26] adds the adjective "little" to S2's description of the cake [25], this then prompts S1 to continue following her line of thought and she emphasises the smallness of the cake by repeating the adjective "little" [28] in an attempt to show how very small the cake was (in the video Mr. Bean takes out a fairy cake with a cherry on top). S2 then continues with her narrative and incorporates the use of little, but a non-linguistic clue is given as to how she feels about the use of the adjective since she laughs at this stage [29]. This is not the only transcript which demonstrates learners playing with the language, not only in an attempt to express the meaning they really wish to convey, but also for pure ludic satisfaction and delight. On these occasions, learners are also scaffolding the learning process for each other, in a much less formal manner. Yet, in this case, if one looks at the rest of the transcript of the planning stage, it is possible to see that S2 does incorporate the

use of the adjective in her narration, as she repeats the whole phrase again (see Appendix III for the full transcript of this group's interaction). This example mirrors research findings by Barone and Tarone (2001) in which they conclude that ludic language play can indeed aid acquisition, since it may raise learners' awareness of specific L2 features (TARONE & BARONE, 2001, p. 375, apud LANTOLF & THORNE, 2006, p.193).

The collaborative dialogue developed by this group in both tasks shows the extent to which hypotheses are formed about the language. It also shows the extent to which the issue of form and meaning is closely bound for learners. In Task 1 when learners discuss the use of "shoot" and "kick" their initial focus is on the selection of the appropriate form of the verb and it is only once this is produced with the "ed" ending that questions are raised concerning the appropriacy of the use of the verb, related to its meaning. In Task 2, however, whilst most group members are concerned with the lexical choice in terms of what they had seen in the video, only one group member needed to focus on form as well as meaning.

The last Lower Intermediate 3 group protocol to be analysed is perhaps one of the most interesting in terms of the collaborative-dialogue dynamics which can be seen to emerge from the planning to the presentation stage in Task 1. The group is composed of three boys and S1 immediately assumes the role of "expert", whilst the other two are quite happy to be the "novices". The dialogue which ensues in the planning stage clearly shows the influence which an "expert" can exert within a group. Not only does the "expert" guide the other students, but he also "marshals" their interaction and helps them to continue on task, *recruiting interest* in the task itself and *maintaining pursuit of the goal* throughout the planning stage using phrases such as (See Appendix III for the full transcript of this group's interaction):

[9] "Let's talk orally"

[27] "Now let's go…"

[30] “In the end, what happened?”

[35] “First the story from the beginning.”

When the learners start the task, S1 determines the choice of lexis which should be used and introduces the word “sewer”.

Protocol 8 – Task 1 – Group 6 – Planning Stage

[2] S2: A guy play with another ball. Then they shoot the ball ...
[3] S1: inside, the sewer
[4] S2: Inside the?
[5] S1: sewer, “esgoto”
[6] S2: Sewer? [incorrect pronunciation]
[7] S1: Sewer, “s, é”, e, w, e, r
[8] S2: sewer. Then the boy shot ... [...]

This initial dialogue illustrates how S1 [3] demonstrates *the idealized* solution by producing “sewer” and then, based on S2’s question [4], he provides the supportive conditions necessary by repeating the target lexis and providing *task simplification* by translation [5]. S2 repeats the new item, with the incorrect pronunciation, which immediately prompts S1 [7] to repeat the target item again and to spell out the word. The scaffold provided by S1 is so detailed and sufficient that S2 rehearses the new item again in an attempt to gain control of it [8]. The spelling out of a word is an example of the type of scaffold which was used a number of times by learners (see Protocol 1, Group 2), which is interesting considering that English is not a syllabic language. Why learners use this strategy is an interesting question. This would not be the type of scaffold a teacher might normally provide. A teacher might invariably focus on the meaning and explain by exemplification. Yet learners, by spelling out the word, explicitly chose to focus on the form of the word and this is something that merits further investigation. However, it does seem as if this strategy satisfies both “experts” and “novices”.

In the next excerpt of the planning stage, S1 [18] once again *marks a critical feature* and draws S2's attention to a *discrepancy* in his production.

[17] S2:[…] but, eh, but in the end they [unclear] and they go home happy.
[18] S1: They went.
[19] S2: What?
[20] S1: They went.[…]

S1 corrects S2's use of the verb tense and S2 [19] checks this again by questioning S1. In fact, throughout this planning stage, S2 often questions his peers, the "experts", by either asking in English "What?" or, if no one has answered him, by trying again in L1, as can be seen in the next part, in which he shows his understanding and *maintenance of the task goal* through the affective marker "Ah, yes!" [25].

[21] S3: […] I think the boy appeared is kicking the head of the man...
[22] S1: kicking the ball, yes, he kicked the head [S2: What?] of the man, thinking it was the ball.
[23] S3: it was the ball.
[24] S2: "O que?"
[25] S1: The boy he kicks the head of the man [S2: Ah, yes!] thinking it was the ball. [...]

However, S2's explicit questioning of the "expert" pays off in the planning stage itself and it is at this point that it is possible to understand the effectiveness of the scaffold provided by S1 to S2 and the degree to which a new ZPD was actually created and in the case of this language aspect, a new *intrapsychological* plane may have emerged. In this next part, S3 narrates a part of the story and uses the incorrect verb tense for "go home". This time, it is S2 [34] and not S1 who immediately *marks the discrepancy* and produces the *idealized form* for S3.

[32] S2:[…] the boy cried ...
[33] S3: goes home happy.
[34] S2: and they went home. [...]

Yet, in the exchange which immediately ensues between S2 and S3, S2 adds a preposition and changes the word "home" for "house". This prompts S3 [53] to point out the *discrepancy* and to present the *idealised form*, although S2 fails to understand the full implication of S3's correction and only corrects part of his sentence.

[52] S2: […]And the man [S1: apologised] apologised his son and they, they went to house happy.
[53] S3: They went home happy.
[54] S2: They went to home happy. [unclear] […]

What is possible to observe from this exchange is that the roles of "expert" and "novice" are flexible within a group and as students participate in the planning process of the task, their roles may change from one moment to the next. There may be an overall "expert" identified by group members, as is the case here, where S1 is the predominant "expert". Yet, at any given moment, this role may be delegated to another student, and their contribution and encouragement are equally accepted, as is clear in this short excerpt when S3 [16] compliments S2 on the use of the past perfect [15]:

[15] S2: […] The boy wait, wait a long time before the ball appeared, and then after the ball appeared, the guy appeared complaining [unclear] because he had hurt his head.
[16] S3: Very good. […]

It is also clear that what the students do when they accept each other's suggestions is to *control group frustration* and ensure that all are focused on task and *maintain the pursuit of their ultimate goal*, believing that the opinion of all those in the group is worth something and that group effort can help them achieve a better result.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this group's interaction occurs towards the end of the planning stage. S1, who had initially determined that the word needed to describe the picture was "sewer", decides that a better word is possible.

[55] S1: […] Instead of saying sewer, say hole.
[56] S2: Ah?
[57] S1: Instead of saying sewer, say hole.
[58] S2: Hole?
[59] S1: Hole, "buraco".
[60] S2: "Ah, tá! Vamos, vamos" [...]

Again, S1 uses a similar strategy: he demonstrates the *idealized performance* when he produces "hole" and, as had previously happened, S2 [56] questions this using the affective marker "Ah?" to indicate his doubt, to which S1 [57] responds by repeating his previous remark. However, what is clear here is that, if a student assumes the role of "expert", the "novice" will treat him as such and this means that he may be asked to provide further explanation, just as a teacher might have to do in the same situation. S1 then answers by providing the translation [59], as he had done at the start of the planning stage [5], so that by *simplifying the task*, the concept and meaning of the word are understood by S2. Once S2 [60] is satisfied by the explanation, he demonstrates this by using the affective marker "Ah, tá!" (Oh, okay!) indicating they are *maintaining pursuit* of their goal and then encourages the rest of the group to continue and *recruits interest* in the task again by saying "Vamos, vamos…" (Let's go, let's go…).

What is difficult to understand from this dialogue is why S1, at the end of the planning stage, decides to substitute the word "sewer" for "hole". There is not enough evidence from the interaction to conclude that S1 may have decided to *simplify the task*, which is a strategy which can be used by learners when they are scaffolding a learning experience. However, during the planning stage, neither S2 nor S3 had used the word "sewer" and this had been left

to S1 at all moments. Once S1 proposes the word “hole”, both S2 and S3 use it immediately afterwards whilst they are still working on the planning stage and they also use it in the presentation stage.

Protocol 8 – Task 1 – Group 6 – Presentation Stage

S1: The father and his son were playing soccer.
S2: Suddenly, his son kicked the ball and the ball fall into the hole.
S3: After that the father entered the hole to get the ball.
S1: The boy waited a long time.
S2: When his father was getting out of the hole, his son kicked his head thinking it, that it was the ball.
S3: The father complained and pointed his head to show the boy has hurt him.
S1: The boy starts crying.
S2: And then the father apologised his son and he go, they went home.

From the presentation stage it is possible to observe that all the items which were elaborated by the group members were produced according to the aspects which were discussed and negotiated by the group members. The use of the past tense of “go” is correctly used by S2, suggesting that both S1’s initial scaffold and S3’s correction of the preposition provided sufficient assistance for S2 to be able to produce the correct form in the presentation. A new ZPD was definitely created by S2 and a transformation was seen to occur in his *interpsychological* plane allowing for greater consolidation of the *intrapsychological* plane.

4.3 Discussion

Considering the two research questions asked at the start of this Chapter, the microgenetic analysis of the eight protocols provides clear evidence that peer scaffolding can indeed take place amongst teenage lower intermediate learners working in groups and that new Zones of Proximal Development can arise as a result of this scaffolding process.

However, one needs to be more cautious when affirming that the creation of a new ZPD actually leads to interlanguage development. There are a few cases in which the data seems to provide evidence of this, but as Ohta (2000) concluded, this evidence is solely contextual and short-term and cannot be generalised in terms of long-term acquisition. Both research questions will now be discussed in more detail.

The lower intermediate learners, working on TBL tasks using the target language itself, did engage in collaborative dialogue and scaffolding, based on Wood, Bruner and Ross' (1976) characterisation of the features of the scaffolding process. In addition, as the teacher was not allowed to interfere in the learners' planning process (as required by the task design), the scaffolding which took place occurred between the learners themselves, the peers, who assumed the roles of "expert" and "novice" according to the specific demands of a given moment of negotiation.

What the data also revealed was that the scaffolding which took place followed a very similar pattern in all the eight protocols analysed. The process of peer scaffolding used one or more of the following strategies:

1) Using affective markers to indicate discrepancy of form: Protocol 1 [5]
2) Using L1 to indicate discrepancy of meaning: Protocol 1 [3]
3) Using L1 to indicate discrepancy of form: Protocol 1 [35]
4) Marking the discrepancy by repeating the incorrect form: Protocol 6 [19]
5) Marking the discrepancy by demonstrating the idealised form: Protocol 1 [8], [21], [36-38]; Protocol 2 [5 – 9]; Protocol 3 [4], [6]; Protocol 4 [20-22], [41]; Protocol 5 [20], [22]; Protocol 6 [20-22], [40-41], [43]; Protocol 8 [3], [18], [20], [22], [34], [53], [57]
6) Controlling frustration by initiating explicit group collaboration: Protocol 1 [35-41]; Protocol 2 [5-11]; Protocol 5 [19-22]; Protocol 6 [19-22]

7) Requesting explicit scaffolded help from an “expert”: Protocol 1 [41]; Protocol 3 [5]; Protocol 6 [42]; Protocol 7 [20], [22]; Protocol 8 [4], [6], [19], [22], [24], [56], [58]
8) Relating language use to knowledge of the real world: Protocol 1 [38]
9) Spelling out the idealised form: Protocol 1 [40; Protocol 8 [7]
10) Justifying the demonstration of the idealised form: Protocol 2 [10]; Protocol 6 [43]
11) Maintaining goal pursuit by checking meaning: Protocol 7 [17]
12) Using affective markers to indicate goal achievement: Protocol 6 [23]; Protocol 8 [16], [25], [60]
13) Simplifying the task by providing the translation: Protocol 6 [43]; Protocol 7 [19], [21]; Protocol 8 [5]

Further microgenetic analysis of the data obtained from all the recorded and transcribed interactions (See Appendix IV) might allow for a generalisation concerning the types of strategies favoured by the learners when carrying out a narrative task-based task. Nonetheless, a broad view of the eight protocols seems to suggest that the scaffolding strategies used by the learners are, on the whole, rather similar to those used by an EFL classroom teacher.

This is an interesting result and mirrors some of the findings made by Donato (1994). The learners participating in the present research have been studying in a formal EFL environment for at least four years (or more, depending on what age they started learning English). They have, by now, grown accustomed to a specific classroom routine, which is common to many EFL institutions which follow a loosely-based communicative and inductive approach to language teaching and learning, in which a more student-centred approach is favoured.

Teachers may use a number of strategies to elicit correction and feedback from learners and most of these routines are quite similar to the scaffolding strategies employed by the learners themselves. Learners have grown to expect specific error correction and feedback routines in the EFL classroom. These routines are nothing more than effective teacher-led scaffolding strategies and which encourage learners to create new Zones of Proximal Development in order to promote the internalisation of knowledge through the maturation of the *intrapsychological* plane.

The microgenetic analysis of the scaffolding processes developed by the learners seems to suggest that learners have expertly appropriated the scaffolding strategies used by the teachers and have, with slight modifications, applied these to their own collaborative group interaction.

Within the "apprenticeship" metaphor used by Rogoff (1990), the role of the "expert" and "novice" allows for the creation of bridges to overcome existing gaps in knowledge and she highlights the importance of routine activities in the bridging of these gaps. In Chapter 2, one of the questions raised was whether, with the lack of a recognised and official "expert", another "expert" might emerge from within a given group, i.e., in a classroom situation in which learners are working in groups, would it be possible for an "expert" to emerge from within this group of learners and scaffold their own learning process. Although research in SLA using SCT as a theoretical underpinning provided evidence that this does indeed occur, what the present research shows is that perhaps there is a certain inevitability that this does happen. This is possibly due to the fact that the previous classroom routine set up is so pervasive in the learners' mental model of what an appropriate learning situation should include, that the process of scaffolding naturally emerges as a solution when working within a group situation and when the "teacher-expert" is unavailable to provide support.

What the research data analysis also suggested was that learners can indeed provide contingent and graduated scaffolds and regulate the level of assistance provided. Lantolf and Aljafreeh's (1995) study demonstrated this, as did Ohta (2000). The learners in this present research were able to bid for assistance when the need for this was felt and, on the whole, the assistance provided by the "experts" was quite explicit. There were certain examples of more subtle scaffolding, when learners used voice intonation and affective markers to mark a discrepancy and thereby prompt an intensive collaborative-knowledge building interaction. Unlike Ohta's (op. cit.) study, in which she found that learners respected turn-taking sequences before jumping in and providing the scaffold, the learners in this research rarely showed this level of constraint. When looking at the complete learner interaction transcriptions, what stands out is the high degree of interruption that takes place amongst participants. This, undoubtedly, has a great deal to do with a strong cultural aspect and the fact that all participants in the research share the same cultural and linguistic background. Yet, this does mean that, based on the evidence of the eight protocols, that on occasion the scaffolds provided by the learners are not noticed as effectively as they might be if turn-taking was respected to a higher degree.

The data points to the fact that learners do, on occasion, withhold a scaffold or, as the case may be, provide the same scaffold a number of times. This is evidence that learners can graduate the scaffolding process to a certain extent, allowing for the gradual autonomy of the learner. However, more data would have to be analysed in greater detail in order to ascertain the degree to which these lower intermediate learners are able to do this effectively.

In answer to the second research question, the peer scaffolding which took place between the learners in each group did allow for the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development. However, what the microgenetic analysis showed was that within the same group, certain learners were able to create a new ZPD, whilst others were not. In fact,

evidence of the creation of a new ZPD could only be observed for those learners who spoke during the interaction and therefore, their speech was transcribed. For those learners who only listened, it is impossible to say, based on microgenetic analysis, that a new ZPD was created.

In the cases in which new ZPD were seen to be developed (and this is one of the advantages of using a microgenetic approach, since the minute-by-minute transformations can actually be observed in the transcript) it is possible to see learners using the target language itself to hypothesise, construct and reconstruct knowledge on a specific aspect of language use, irrespective if it is a focus on form or on meaning.

The transcripts demonstrate that learners begin their interaction working within their own ZAD, but as they are collaborating and each individual is at a different level of cognitive development, these subtle differences emerge once the negotiation and co-construction of the narrative begins. It is exactly this which allows one learner to assume the role of an "expert" at one stage of the interaction, but to assume the role of the "novice" at the next and it is this which gives rise to the emergence of new Zones of Proximal Development. As no single learner has the solution to the problems which arise during their negotiation, they all rely quite heavily on the possibility of assistance coming from someone within the group.

The collaborative and group interaction generates the "sensitive" region which Vygotsky called the ZPD and this can be clearly seen in the transcripts of the learner interactions, in both lower intermediate levels. The transcripts also show that even though a ZPD may have been created by certain group members, as they may be aware that there is something incongruous in their use of the interlanguage (IL), not everyone is necessarily able to sustain the cognitive demands of working within this new ZPD. Some regress to their current ZAD whilst others remain within the, as yet, immature ZPD and *interpsychological* plane. On the other hand, a few others demonstrate that they have indeed been able to successfully complete the transition form the *interpsychological* plane to the

intrapsychological plane and, in either the planning stage itself or the presentation stage are able to use the target aspect of the language they were elaborating with success.

What Ohta (2000) questioned in her research and what this present researcher also believes needs to be considered with attention and care is whether a single piece of evidence that a specific language aspect has been dominated by the end of a specific task and interaction sequence can allow the researcher to affirm that interlanguage development has occurred in the long-term. Longitudinal evidence might help elucidate this. However, if the process of regression is seen as an inevitable and natural part of interlanguage development, as suggested by Lantolf and Aljafreeh (1995), it is also possible that even though a specific language point has indeed been internalised in a given context and situation, a change in the context may provoke repeated regression. It is exactly for this reason that a cyclical learning process, which stimulates continual revision, can be so beneficial for the language learner, since it will cater for this need for constant revisiting and the provision of new opportunities to test out existing hypothesis about language use.

In view of this, this present research argues that the creation of a new ZPD does indeed allow for the possibility of interlanguage development, as can be seen in the transcripts. However, it is not possible to generalise that the interlanguage development seen to take place in the transcripts is a guarantee of long-term interlanguage development.

Considering the importance of the pedagogical implications which van Lier (2000) assigns to this line of enquiry, the researcher believes that the data analysis of the transcripts of these lower intermediate-level teenagers, working on TBL tasks in groups, shows that a microgenetic analysis of learner interaction does indeed reveal a number of interesting factors concerning how learners can scaffold the learning process for themselves. In addition, it provides evidence of how they themselves can create their own learning opportunities and the

importance of ensuring that group work, based on problem-solving activities, is indeed allowed to happen in the EFL classroom.

Group work fosters motivation and provides a challenge, which, at the lower intermediate level, may be essential in order to ensure that the feeling of stagnation, which learners so often complain about, can be avoided. Yet, apart from all the affective motivational arguments in favour of group work, the research transcripts showed that learners kept to task using the L2 itself and only on minor occasions did they resort to L1. This is a strong argument in favour of group work at this level. Teachers often complain that learners resort to too much L1 when working in groups and this is often seen as a good argument in favour of a more teacher-centred approach. The results of this research clearly demonstrate that, if a task is challenging enough, this will not happen.

5 CONCLUSION

> "Development in children never follows school learning the way a shadow follows the object that casts it." (VYGOTSKY, 1978, p. 91)

Vygotsky's quote seems to be apt in many aspects when the research described in the previous chapters is considered. A SCT perspective on SLA research can indeed provide enriching data concerning learners' language learning process, since it provides both the researcher and classroom teacher with a new window from which to observe and consider aspects of EFL classroom interaction, pedagogical practice and learner development.

As mentioned previously, the change in the metaphor, from an AM to a PM, which has guided a great deal of research in SLA following a SCT perspective over the past years, has allowed researchers to delve into the "murky" waters of EFL learning processes, rather than simply analyse the product of approaches and methodologies which were being tested and evaluated for their effectiveness. This shift in metaphor by no means diminishes the research carried out before under the AM, it simply attests to a readiness to consider SLA research from a different perspective and a new angle. In addition, as Thorne states, a SCT approach towards research means that there is no separation between "…understanding (research) from transformation (concrete action)." (THORNE, 2005, p. 403) and this is exactly what allows the researcher to focus on the "process in flight", as Vygotsky (1978, p. 68) defined it.

The conclusion to this research will pick up on some general themes, which have been touched on in the body of the research itself. These will be dealt with in greater detail in order to answer some of the questions which have been raised and have not, as yet, been fully addressed.

One of the reasons why the researcher initially decided to conduct a research with intermediate level learners was to address the problem which both teachers and learners expressed, which was a feeling of stagnation once a certain level of language learning had

been reached. In addition to this, an alternative teaching paradigm, using task-based learning, was also sought as a way of helping learners become aware of their own interlanguage production, whilst at the same time seeking to ensure that a balance was maintained between oral fluency, accuracy and complexity.

The research developed by Foster and Skehan (1996), Skehan (1998) and Skehan & Foster (1999) demonstrated that there was a trade-off effect between accuracy, complexity and fluency in terms of learners' processing capacities. This, therefore, meant that the careful selection of task variables needed to be taken into consideration when planning task design. In addition, they argued that the more complex a task was, the greater the attention to content, which automatically led to a withdrawal of attention to form (See Chapter 3 for this discussion) in order not to overburden processing capacities. Indeed, the argument in favour of a limited processing capacity was also put forward by van Patten in his research and he concluded that,

> "…the simultaneous processing of meaning and form (i.e. form that is not related to utterance meaning, for example, features of concordance) can only occur if comprehension as a skill is automatized, thus releasing attention for a focus on form. However, features of the language that carry significant information (e.g. lexical items, certain kinds of verb morphology) can be consciously processed by learners at all levels." (VAN PATTEN, 1990, pp. 289-290)

Thus, attention to structures, which carry message meaning, such as the lexicon, will be activated first and only afterwards, if it is possible, will there be a focus on the formal features of language. This line of argument was also supported by research conducted by Pica on learners' ability to negotiate form (1994), in which she found they paid more attention to lexis rather than grammatical morphology. Williams (1999) also found that learners' ability to attend to form depended on their proficiency level and generally focused far more on lexical, rather than grammatical needs (See Chapters 2 and 3 for a more detailed discussion). Thus, in

terms of the research reported, it appeared as if the ability to balance accuracy, fluency and complexity in the EFL classroom, even when adopting a TBL approach, could prove to be a difficult task at lower levels due to learners' own processing and cognitive abilities.

However, in a recent reappraisal of recent research concerning the trade-off between task complexity and learners' needs for cognitive resources, Robinson (2001) argues that pushed output can indeed be encouraged through a process of internal feedback, self-monitoring and correction which allows learners to make cognitive comparisons of the speech utterances and own input models (2001, p.303). He concludes that the greater,

> "...the *cognitive demands* of a task, the more they engage *cognitive resources* (attention and memory), and ...More complex tasks should lead to more pushing of output, and analysis of IL than simpler counterparts." (ROBINSON, 2001, p. 305).

This is especially true of tasks in which greater learner interaction is encouraged (such as when learners are working in groups), since it leads to greater negotiation amongst learners.

Indeed, Robinson questions the evidence of recent research regarding the argument in favour of a limited-capacity processor and states that "...form and content need not always be in competition for scarce attention resources..." (Ibid., p. 307). He argues in favour of a *multiple resource theory* in which there are believed to be no capacity constraints on attention as long as the tasks draw simultaneously on different "resource pools" as they gradually become more complex.

Although this research has not, at any stage, analysed in greater depth the issue of attention in language learning (indeed, this would be a whole issue to be studied in its own right in terms of the data obtained from the present research), this is something that cannot be completely left aside. If the research data reported by Skehan, Foster, van Patten, Pica, Williams and Robinson is taken into consideration, it is important to raise the question

whether evidence from the present research points to any of the two distinct lines of argument.

It goes without saying that the results of a quantitative and confirmatory piece of research should not be compared with the results from a qualitative, interpretative and descriptive piece of research, such as the research described in this thesis[13]. Nonetheless, microgenetic analysis may begin to provide the field of SLA research with complementary data which may reveal aspects of learner interaction and learning processes which a purely quantitative analysis might not reveal.

What the transcripts reveal, (and this has already been discussed in Chapter 4) is that learners spontaneously decided to focus on both form and meaning during their planning time and the focus on form was not solely restricted to lexical components, but, quite significantly, to grammatical components as well, focusing principally on verb tense and aspect.

Whether the learners' ability to focus on the grammatical forms they chose falls within what van Patten termed the ability, at all levels, to focus on "certain kinds of verb morphology" (VAN PATTEN, 1990, p. 290) is difficult to say, but the present research does contest, to a certain degree, van Patten's argument that learners at an intermediate stage may find it diffucult to attend to form (Ibid., p. 288).

The results of this present research also conflicts in part with the findings presented by Williams (1999), in which the researcher concluded that learners tend to pay more attention to lexical rather than grammatical aspects when interacting and that this is directly related to their level of proficiency. From the recording transcripts it is possible to see that both the lower intermediate 2 as well as the lower intermediate 3 learners engaged in knowledge

[13] Ellis, in a summary of research carried out in the field of form-focused instruction (FFI) since the 1960's, highlights the methodological problems present in the confirmatory studies carried out to date, in that these experimental studies require a "scientific" rigour which is difficult to find in the studies conducted and in the descriptive studies, which ideally should be longitudinal and classroom-based, but which, on the other hand, suffer from the difficulty of allowing for generalizability since they are highly context-dependent, leading to variable and incidental focus-on-forms (ELLIS, 2001, p.28-31).

building dialogue concerning grammatical aspects. In fact, it might be argued that the lower intermediate 2 learners were far more concerned with their use of the correct verb tense and were aware that this was an aspect they needed to focus on more intensely, as can be seen from the feedback collected following the Post –Transcript analysis (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Learner's reactions following the Task 1 Post Task Feedback stage and their reactions to the transcript analysis

Group	Task 1 Post-Task Feedback	Task 1 Post-Transcript Analysis Feedback
Lower Intermediate 2	-Used the correct verb tenses. -Used lots of linkers.	-Surprised to see how difficult they found it to use specific irregular verbs in the past, e.g. fall / fell; feel / felt; take / took; go / went. -Felt that their use of linkers was very limited. Suggested alternatives: suddenly; finally; despite + ing; so; when.
Lower Intermediate 3	-Not sure if correct verb tenses were used. -Didn't use linkers to make the narrative flow.	-Narratives had no middle, but had clear and good beginnings and ends. -No variety of linkers used – constantly used 'then'. Suggested alternatives: surprisingly; unexpectedly; suddenly; after that; one day; however. -It was difficult to tell a story when not writing it down. -There was a good variety of verb use.

What the transcripts seem to suggest is that learners at a lower intermediate level are indeed capable of focusing both on the grammatical and lexical form, as well as meaning, during the planning stage of a task in preparation. The research results presented in this thesis are in line with the results obtained by Izumi, Bigelow, Fujiwara et al. (1999) on the affects of noticing[14] on SLA. The latter researchers concluded that learners were, in some cases, able to focus on more grammatical elements (IZUMI, BIGELOW, FUJIWARA et al., 1999, p. 442) and, this may have happened due to the fact that, as learners were aware of their own output, they were prompted to notice the inadequacies of their own interlanguage and pay greater attention to form. However, they also pointed out that in some cases, despite clear evidence

[14] The term 'noticing' is being used here as a reference to a cognitive process which involves learners comparing the form noticed in the input and their representation of the same form in their IL (ELLIS, 2003, p. 346)

based on their own output, learners were unable to become aware of the gaps in grammar (Ibid., 1999, p. 446).

What needs to be considered, however, in terms of both van Patten's (op. cit.) and Williams' (op. cit.) research (as well as all the other examples of research mentioned throughout this thesis), is that the means used for data collection in both pieces of research was entirely different to the present research. In the case of van Patten, he worked with learners on an individual basis. In Williams' research, although she recorded and analysed learners' group interaction, there was no set task and she depended on interaction which arose spontaneously from the work being carried out in class. As the latter research was based on the *Interchange* series coursebook, although it is excellent in many aspects, it may lead to a very teacher-dependent classroom setting. It is questionable whether the subjects in Williams' research were provided with challenging and adequate moments for group interaction, which fostered the real need for group negotiation and the necessity for the provision of scaffolds, as were the learners in the present research, largely due to the task design used for the research.

It is this researcher's belief that the differences in research design may have, undoubtedly, influenced the research results on all sides and this may account for why the present research may have generated learner scaffolding and led to instances where new Zones of Proximal Development seem to have been created, not only in terms of a focus on meaning, but also on grammatical form.

Based on the post-task feedback collected from learners immediately after Task 1 and after the transcript analysis phase of Task 1, it is possible to see how learners' perception of their own production was different for the two different levels and how the perception of their own production affected the analysis of the transcripts for their final production for task 1 (see Table 2).

Both the post-task feedback and post-transcript analysis elicited from learners their own reactions without any imposition from the teacher or the researcher. Two important aspects were revealed: (i) how at different levels of learning, learners' perception of their own language production is different and graded and (ii) how this perception, when compared to evidence of production, allows for very pro-active definitions of what needs to be paid attention to next.

If the Lower Intermediate 2 group's post-task feedback is analysed, it is possible to see that they have a very limited conscious awareness of the existence of a gap in their interlanguage production. Based on the planning stage transcripts for this level, the research demonstrated a number of examples in which learners were indeed able to notice a gap in their production during their interaction and in these cases they were able to create scaffolds for one another and generate new hypotheses about the language. In some cases, these new hypotheses were still incorrect, but at least a new ZPD began being created. In other cases some hypotheses were rejected and this could have happened because not everyone was cognitively ready to work beyond their current ZAD and they may not have been aware that a gap actually existed.

However, once these learners looked at their transcripts of the final production stage for Task 1, their shock when they recognised their difficulty in the use of the past forms of the irregular verbs was very revealing. They became aware that in their oral production, they were not paying attention to this, even though when they analysed their transcripts they immediately noticed the mistakes. Their gap, therefore, was not in terms of knowledge of the language itself, but awareness of their use of the language during oral interaction. This observation led to a group decision to become more critically aware of their use of the irregular verbs in the past once they began their second task. A second aspect which worried the learners at this level, was the effective use of linkers, which led to a decision to

incorporate a greater variety of linkers. What becomes clear from this group is, however, that the focus chosen by the learners when it came to the second task was very much limited to linguistic form rather than meaning, but it was through the form that they were best able to express meaning.

On the other hand, the Lower Intermediate 3 group's post-task feedback analysis demonstrated less certainty and greater critical awareness of their own level of production (and there is only a six-month difference in language learning between both groups). Yet, this greater understanding of their own level of production also led to a very different reaction when the transcripts for the final production were analysed. Their greatest interest was in their lack of ability to re-tell the narrative as they so wished, paying the necessary attention to the content of the story. This group's evaluation following the transcript analysis focused far more on the issue of content and meaning.

The summary in Table 3 highlights the aspects which each group decided to focus on during their planning stages for tasks one and two (the summary includes the protocols which were analysed and discussed in detail, as well as the rest of the protocols collected and transcribed in Appendix IV. Those which are only shown in Appendix IV are in Italics).

Table 3 – Group focus during the planning stage for Tasks 1 and 2.

Level/ Group/ Protocol	**Task 1**	**Level/ Group/ Protocol**	**Task 2**
LI 2 *G1* *P9*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking verb tense.* *- Checking narrative development.*		Recording lost.
LI 2 G2 P1	- Checking verb meaning. - Checking meaning relevant lexis.	LI 2 G2 P2	- Checking verb tense.

LI 2 G3 P3	- Checking verb tense. - Checking verb meaning. - Checking story content.	*LI 2* *G3* *P11*	*- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking verb tense.*
LI 2 *G4* *P10*	*- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.*	*LI 2* *G4* *P12*	*- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb tense.*
LI 3 *G1* *P13*	*- Checking story content.* *- Checking verb tense.* *- Checking narrative development.*	*LI 3* *G1* *P16*	*- Checking story content.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.*
LI 3 G2 P4	- Checking verb tense. - Checking narrative development.	LI 3 G2 P5	- Checking verb meaning. - Checking meaning relevant lexis. - Checking verb tense. - Checking narrative development.
LI 3 *G3* *P14*	*- Checking story content.* *- Checking narrative development.*	*LI 3* *G3* *P17*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb meaning.*
LI 3 *G4* *P15*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking narrative development.*	*LI 3* *G4* *P18*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking verb tense.*
LI 3 G5 P6	- Checking lexical use. - Checking meaning relevant lexis. - Checking verb tense. - Checking structure form.	LI 3 G5 P7	- Checking narrative development. - Checking meaning relevant lexis. - Checking story content. - Checking narrative development. - Complexifying lexical use.
LI 3 G6 P8	- Checking lexical use. - Checking meaning relevant lexis. - Checking verb tense. - Checking story content. - Checking narrative development.	*LI 3* *G6* *P20*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking verb tense.* *- Checking story content.* *- Checking narrative development.*
LI 3 *G7* *P19*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking narrative development.*	*LI 3* *G7* *P21*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb meaning.* *- Checking verb tense.* *- Checking story content.* *- Checking narrative development.*
	Group not present first recording.	*LI 3* *G8* *P22*	*- Checking lexical use.* *- Checking meaning relevant lexis.* *- Checking verb meaning.*

As can be seen by contrasting what learners explicitly said they would need to focus on and by comparing this to the transcripts of the planning and production stages, it is possible to see that on the whole learners did focus on what they intended to, but this did not mean that all the other aspects were excluded. Even though the Lower Intermediate 3 group intended to focus more on the aspect of story content and meaning, they also focused on form as doubts arose during their dialogic interactions. The Lower Intermediate 2 group, which had

decided to focus on the accurate use of verb tenses and linkers in Task 2, were also seen to work substantially on the lexical meaning.

Interestingly enough, although both groups felt a need to work further on their use of linkers, this never explicitly came up in the transcripts of the planning and production stages for Task 2. However, by looking at the transcripts, it is possible to identify an attempt to vary the use of linkers. This seems to suggest, therefore, that learners consciously decide, when left to their own devices, what to focus on explicitly and what can be dealt with on a more implicit level. However, the results of the present research are not extensive enough in order to reach a final conclusion in this respect.

What this summary does indicate, however, is that although all groups were set the same task, the way in which they operationalised the tasks differed according to their own group interests, even though more or less the same issues were raised by the groups. It also suggests that learners' interaction and ability to scaffold learning within a SCT approach may influence their attentional resource capacity. To take this issue further, it is important to return to the question of attention in L2 learning.

According to Schmidt, the multi-faceted role of attention in the language learning process requires further attention from SLA research. He argues that attention is necessary for all aspects of L2 learning and concludes stating that,

> "...attention must be directed to whatever evidence is relevant for a particular learning domain [...]. In order to acquire phonology, one must attend to the sounds of target language input...[...]. In order to acquire vocabulary one must attend to both word form (pronunciation, spelling) and to whatever clues are available in input that can lead to identification of meaning. In order to acquire pragmatics, one must attend to both linguistic form of utterances and the relevant social and contextual features with which they are associated. In order to acquire morphology (both derivational and inflectional), one must attend to both forms of morphemes and their meanings, and in order to acquire syntax one must attend to the order of words and the meanings they are associated with. (SCHMIDT, 2001, pp. 30-31)

Schmidt draws a correlation between the use of the word “attention” and “noticing”, which he defines as the ability to perceive the surface structures of utterances in input. Yet, he makes it clear that what learners notice or attend to is not the raw data of input, i.e. the abstract aspect of language, but rather they notice utterances, or parts of these utterances, i.e., the concrete side of language which is significant in some way or another to each individual learner. The significance of what is noticed, therefore, within a group setting, will inevitably lead to a different focus within each group, even though they may be working on the same task, but it also means that within the same group, individuals may focus or not on the aspects scaffolded by peers. In addition, if the task, as in the present research, follows a TBL approach, in which communication needs to be both meaningful and accurate, this may mean that the focus selected by learners will arise according to the negotiations, communication breakdowns and gaps which emerge collectively and need to be bridged, irrespective of learners’ language proficiency.

In view of the discussion concerning learners’ cognitive processing abilities and the trade-off effects that may occur between a focus on form and meaning, Doughty (2001) asks when should focus on form happen in the language classroom. Her final conclusion, based on a review of recent research is that an immediate contingent focus on form, tapping into the powerful resource of recently made utterances, is perhaps the ideal way to deal with this and she writes,

> “If the verbatim format of recent speech remains activated in memory and available for use in subsequent utterance formulation, this can be taken to be an important cognitive underpinning for facilitating the opportunity to make cognitive comparisons.” (DOUGHTY, 2001, p. 253)

Thus, according to Doughty, the most efficient means of promoting cognitive comparison would be to provide immediately contingent recasts. Through the process of recasting, the

learner has access to the difference between what she/he produced and the idealised version, thereby allowing the learner to notice the gap in their own IL production. Although Doughty points out that the research into the effectiveness of recasts is by no means conclusive, it seems to suggest that immediate recasts allow the working memory (WM) to compare what was produced with the idealised version (Ibid., p. 257).

If one considers Doughty's (2001) conclusions and those of Schmidt (2001) in terms of sociocultural theory, collaborative dialogue, peer scaffolding and SLA, it is possible to see why in the present research evidence was found, at a lower intermediate level, for a focus both on form and meaning.

The first important point is that the tasks and the data collection were carried out in a group setting. As has been argued by those who follow a sociocultural and interactionist perspective, it is in a social and collaborative setting that learners will be able to co-construct new meanings and understandings. As learners may be at different stages of interlanguage development (even if on the whole they may be grouped within a specific level), they may during their interactions question, stimulate and motivate the others to analyse their existing hypotheses about language use.

To this end, the importance of group work cannot be understated. In research conducted considering certain aspects of classroom practice from an interactionist perspective, both Long & Porter (1995) and Williams (1999) highlighted the importance of groupwork in order to stimulate learners' interlanguage development and attention to form as well as meaning

Long & Porter (1995) pointed out the pedagogical benefits of learners working in groups and stated that group work not only provided learners with increased language practice opportunities, but it also allowed for an improvement in the quality of learner talk. This occurred because learners were compelled to interact with each other, leading to greater

meaning negotiation, using the interlanguage itself, and allowing for exchanges which promoted "… cohesive and coherent sequences of utterances, thereby developing discourse competence, not just (at best) a sentence grammar." (LONG & PORTER, 1985, p. 209) They also argued that learners were able to engage in information exchange similar to conversations held outside the classroom, enabling the spontaneous and creative use of language where there was both a focus on meaning and form. (Ibid., 1985, p. 210)

Williams took the issue of group work a step further and argued that this pattern of interaction went beyond simply working together in close proximity. It enabled learners to create a supportive environment in which greater attention to form could be fostered (WILLIAMS, 1999, p. 585). She also pointed out that what the research seemed to be indicating was that through groupwork, learners were able to select what they wished to focus on and she concluded that "…It may be that in doing so, they signal that they are ready to acquire the feature." (Ibid., p. 589) Thus, group work seems, not only to stimulate collaborative and knowledge-building dialogue, but it also leads to a focus within a specific group which might be different for another group.

The idea that learners can decide what they need to focus on is corroborated when the transcripts for Tasks 1 and 2 are analysed. Although all groups were set the same task, with the same variables, the tasks were operationalised in slightly different ways, leading to learners choosing to focus on different aspects according to their needs. The summary in Table 3 shows the aspects which each group decided to focus on during their planning stages.

The fact that learners working on the same tasks chose to focus on slightly different aspects can be easily explained in terms of another prominent element in sociocultural theory, which is based on an extension of the work developed by Vygotsky and formalised by Leont'ev (1975, 1981), which is Activity Theory.

Activity Theory proposed a new unit of analysis in order to carry out investigations within a Vygotskian perspective and framework. This unit of analysis is *activity*, mediated by mental activity (WERTSCH, 1985, pp. 199-200). Leont'ev proposed that people's actions were motivated by needs (biological, i.e. the need to satisfy hunger or cultural, i.e. the need to learn a language) and that these needs became motives once they were directed towards a specific object. According to Wertsch's summary of Leont'ev's theory, *motive* is the first level of analysis formulated within Activity Theory and its unit of analysis is *activity*, which is mediated by mental reflection and explains why something is done (Ibid., p. 203).

The second level of cognition identified by Leont'ev was the *goal*, which could be analysed by the unit of goal-directed *action*. This level explains what is done and according to Leont'ev, the reason why activity and action need to be distinguished is that an action can vary and be independent of an activity. (Ibid., pp. 203-204).

The third level of analysis proposed by Leont'ev, reported by Wertsch, was based on an *operation*, which was associated with the *conditions* in which the action is carried out and sought to answer the question of how the action could be carried out (Ibid., p. 204).

Thus, these three levels as summarised by Lantolf and Appel, may help to explain the following, "…the level of motive answers why something is done, the level of goal answers what is done, and the level of operations answers how it is done." (1994, p. 21) What becomes clear is that the same action can be realized through different activities, since people's motives may be different. In addition, the way they approach the task at hand will depend on their objectives. In more recent research, Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001) summarise this idea by claiming that,

> "It doesn't matter that in the operational domain they [the learners] are all engaged in the same overt behaviors, for example, listening and repeating, reading and writing, communicative/task-based group work. Cognitively, they are not all

> engaged in the same activity. And this is ultimately what matters, because it is the activity and significance that shape the individual's orientation to learn or not." (LANTOLF & PAVLENKO, 2001, p. 148, apud LANTOLF & THORNE, 2006, p. 240)

Although all learners were engaged in the same tasks, irrespective of their level, it can be argued that they were in fact involved in different activities, since each group brought to the task at hand different language learning experiences, abilities and personal histories and had different motives when it came to solving specific problems which arose, as well as different goals, i.e. they all had the same general goal, which was to complete the task within the given time limit and, in the case of Task 2, to focus on the aspects they themselves had identified as being important to focus on. However, during the planning stage itself of the task, different sub-goals arose, as can be seen from the transcripts themselves and from Table 3.

This meant that, although the tasks were based on the same variables and the researcher had a clear expectation of what the learner could do within the task constraints (with the carefully selected task design variables proposed by Skehan and Foster, 1999), once learners became engaged in the problem-solving activity itself, they were able to construct the task in different ways, creating at each moment of interaction unique learning opportunities which could not be said to have been the same for all groups. In addition, the motives and goals which led each group to interact the way they did was dependent on the *intersubjectivity* created amongst group members and this inevitably affects the learning which takes place, as Lantolf himself has stated, "No two dialogic encounters ever result in the same relations between utterances and replies." (LANTOLF, 1993, p. 222)

Thus, if tasks, carried out in groups, can lead to a variety of learning opportunities which are constructed according to the learners' needs at that specific moment, what TBL within a sociocultural approach allows for is a Focus of Form (FonF), as defined by Long (op. cit.). A FonF approach to language learning is a pedagogical process which is motivated by an

interactionist view of the language learning process and which arises spontaneously according to learners' needs (LONG & ROBINSON, 1998, pp. 22-23). This concept of focus on form is different to that adopted by Spada who understands form-focused instruction (FFI) as, "…any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners' attention to language form either implicitly or explicitly...", in either a spontaneous or pre-determined fashion (SPADA, 1997, p.73).

By using task-based learning with groups of learners, encouraging interaction and the scaffolding of learning, it is possible to allow learners to become active participants in their own learning process and not mere passive collaborators. Donato states that a "…central concern in sociocultural theory is that learners actively transform their world and do not merely conform to it." (DONATO, 2000, p. 46).

The present research has been able to demonstrate through the microgenetic analysis of the learners' interaction that collaborative dialogue will generate peer scaffolding and that this process of scaffolding will also lead to the creation of new Zones of Proximal Development and interlanguage development, as observed immediately during the presentation stages of the TB approach. Swain, in her research, reported that interaction amongst learners showed evidence of,

> "…learners noticing the "gap" in their interlanguage, that is, noticing the difference between what they want to say and what they are able to say. […] Equally, as important, sometimes noticing the hole triggers a search for a solution: Students engaged in a language production task alone or together work to solve their linguistic difficulties, making forms and meaning the focus of their attention. The students formed hypothesis and tested them against available resources. […] Verbalization of the problem allowed them the opportunity to reflect on it and, apparently, served as one source of their linguistic knowledge." (SWAIN, 1998, p.79)

This result, even though it was based on research carried out by Swain when her main interest was based on the role of pushed output, still highlights the importance of interaction itself and demonstrates that when learners challenge their own limits of knowledge and decide

to reformulate hypotheses concerning the target language, using the target language itself, they are ready to move from their current ZAD and create a new ZPD. In addition, as the role of the teacher effectively is one of a guide during the interaction itself, learners are given more extended opportunities to solve communication problems and this will generate more learning opportunities without excessive reliance on the teacher. In effect, the moment the teacher leaves the arena of the "expert" and allows learners to take on this role within their groups, the learning challenges emerge and the learners in the present research responded positively to this. In this manner, learners were able to participate more actively in their own learning process and this newly found feeling of autonomy, stimulated by the tasks and the research approach adopted, may have helped them to overcome the feeling of stagnation which intermediate level learners so often complain about.

The present research touched on a number of pedagogical and research issues which merit further research attention. In their latest book on sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development, Lantolf and Thorne present Leont'ev's description of the different stages that research into psycholinguistics has gone through. According to Leont'ev, the third generation of psycholinguistic studies considers the interaction between communication and psychological process in a more comprehensive manner and he states,

> "The third generation eschews interest in the psycholinguistics of the sentence and focuses instead on the utterance as its basic unit of analysis. From this perspective, language teaching and learning is not focused on rule-governed a priori grammar systems that must be acquired before people can engage in communication, but is instead concerned with enhancing learners' communicative resources that are formed and reformed in the very activity in which they are used – concrete, linguistically mediated social and intellectual activity." (LEONT'EV, 1981, p.99 apud LANTOLF & THORNE, 2006, p.7)

The acceptance and belief in this approach gives rise to Lantolf's and Thorne's proposal for the adoption of a *dynamic assessment* (DA) pedagogical approach, which is grounded in Vygotsky's theory that instruction carried out within a learners' ZPD, through mediation,

leads to development (LANTOLF & THORNE, 2006, p. 355). In addition, the DA approach allows for the prediction of the future in terms of instruction, based on the observation and analysis of the present and the unfolding of learning, which can be seen to take place minute by minute (Ibid., p. 330). This approach is based on the fact that feedback needs to be given to the learner, who might be working individually or in groups, as she or he performs the task, so that through mediation, the learner will be able to create a new ZPD.[15]

The implications of this approach towards second language learning are potentially wide ranging, since if anything became clear from the present research is that, exactly because of activity theory, it is impossible to predict what type of learning may emerge from learners' dialogic interactions and what they choose to scaffold for each other. Although this is a liberating perspective for learners, and perhaps a very pedagogically sound approach, which may eventually ensure greater language development amongst learners due to its intrinsically motivating approach, it may face the same drawbacks which Long's FonF approach also created, i.e. in language courses in which a syllabus is followed, how much space is there for this type of pedagogical approach?

However, what may be applicable in most EFL classrooms is a greater awareness that groupwork will stimulate learner interaction using the target language itself and by including carefully designed activities within a traditional communicative approach, it may be possible to foster peer scaffolding, which will be of great benefit for learners. Thus, more research into the use of TBL in classrooms as a stimulus for peer scaffolding might be necessary in order to develop a greater understanding of how different tasks allow for the scaffolding process,

[15] The research into DA reported by Lantolf and Thorne is, as yet, in it's early days and quite limited. They make reference to four examples of research which were carried out within a DA approach and what stands out is the diversity in methodology and research design adopted by the four researchers (LANTOLF & THORNE, op.cit., pp.338-348).

which is graduated and contingent, to occur and also allows for the creation of new ZPD both in the short and longterm, thereby encouraging interlanguage development[16].

In terms of research, the proposal by Lantolf and Thorne also highlights the need for a more consolidated methodological research approach. As could be seen from the reviews presented in this thesis, the variety in methodological research approaches adopted for the studies which analysed the focus on form question, as well as the question of SCT and SLA, shows that no generalisable results may be presented since the methodologies are so different. It is true, however, that the issue of generalisability may not be a priority within the SCT tradition.

However, since both the learner and classroom practice are being investigated in the hope of elucidating and understanding further aspects of the learning process, (which may lead to changes in pedagogical practice), it is essential that a consistent methodological research approach is a designed, based on a longitudinal parameter, so that some form of replicability may be ensured and researchers working within a SCT approach towards SLA may state, with greater certainty, that this approach indeed allows for interlanguage development.

[16] It is worth noting that this research only focused on the narrative tasks described by Skehan and Foster. They also used other types of task design which could be looked into in more detail.

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7 APPENDIX

7.1 APPENDIX I

Data Collected from the Teachers Questionnaire about Learner's Oral Production at Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate Level

Below is a selection of some of the more relevant questions which were included in the teachers' questionnaire concerning intermediate learners' oral production and the reasons learners may have some learning difficulties. The questionnaire was an open-ended questionnaire, where respondents were free to supply their own answers and justifications. There were a total of 18 respondents to all questions.

1- What holds back a le arners' oral progress?	
a- lack of knowledge	9
b- lack of skills	2
c- lack of knowledge and skills	5
d- lack of knowledge and psychological influence	1
e- Neither	1

3- When learners fail to use or grasp a new or previously taught lexical item or grammatical concept, is it because they don't understand the form or the meaning of the item?	
a- Form	0
b- Meaning	13
c- Form and Meaning	5

4- When learners' oral production shows that they haven't grasped either the form or meaning of the lexical or grammatical concepts taught, how do you deal with this?	
a- re-explain + more practice	5
b- re-explain in a different manner + more practice	1
c- do concept work again + more practice	2
d- do concept work again in a simpler manner + L1 + more practice	1
e- re-explain in a different manner	2
f- new input + concept work again + controlled practice	1
g- more practice	3
h- re-explain + concrete examples	1
i- more examples	1
j- adopt heuristic activities for sts to reorganise oral production	1

5- When you teach a new grammatical concept or new lexical items and you do a series of practice activities, do you expect learners to produce the new item during an oral production activity?	
a- Yes	13
b- No	5

6- Will you move on with the syllabus if you know learners' haven't quite grasped either the form or the meaning of lexical or grammatical items they were recently exposed to?	
a- Yes	12
b- No	4
c- Yes & No	2

7.2 APPENDIX II

The Sociedade Brasileira de Cultura Inglesa S.A. (SBCI S.A) is a well-established language school, which has existed in Brazil since 1934. There are thirty three branches in Rio de Janeiro, four in Brasilia, one in Porto Alegre, one in Caxias do Sul and three branches in Goiania. The branch's work is carefully monitored by the Academic Division of SBCI S.A and the staff are given the training needed in order to maintain the quality of the teachers.

The administrative and pedagogical headquarters of SBCI S.A is in Rio de Janeiro, where all the pedagogical decisions are taken and where there is the centralised development of course materials, planned lessons and the development of testing materials. The clear methodological and pedagogical principles and beliefs of Cultura Inglesa, as well as the high level of academic training and qualification of the teachers, ensures that the quality of work within this institution is maintained.

SBCI S.A. has courses for different age groups: children, teenagers and adults. The courses have the following outline:

For children:	Kid's
For beginners aged 9-13:	Junior (9-10)
	Basic (11-13)
For beginners aged 14-17:	Young Express (Basic & Lower Intermediate Level)
For non-beginners aged 14-17:	Plus (Intermediate Level for teenagers)
	Master (Advanced Level)
For adults:	Cultura Express (Elementary to Intermediate Level)
	Express Plus (Upper Intermediate Level)
	Express Master (Advanced Level)

The participants in this research will come from the Plus regular course.

7.3 APPENDIX III

VERBAL PROTOCOLS – COMPLETE TEXT OF THE EIGHT PROTOCOLS USED IN THE DATA ANALYSIS CHAPTER

Lower Intermediate 2
Protocol 1 – Task 1 – Group 2

Group 2: S1, S2 & S3

Planning Stage

[1] S1: Okay, Let's start.
[2] S2: Two guys was play football.
[3] S1: Ah, guys, "esse aqui é um garotinho"
[4] S2: Two peoples was playing
[5] S1: Two peoples! Ahh!
[6]S2: Peoples "não tem...."
[7] S1: Two peoples was playing football when the ball fall down in a
[8] S3: fell down
[9] S1: (...) Carla, how do you say "buraco"?
[10] T: I can't help you. I'm not here.
[11] S1: Ahh!
[12] S3: Hole.
[13] S1: A guy and [S3: Helped his father] and his grandfather
[14] S3: Yes
[15] S2: playing football
[16] S1: was playing football
[17] S2: when
[18] S1: suddently
[19] S3: the ball
[20] S1: the ball
[21] S3: it fell down
[22] S1: fall, fell down
[23] S2: down
[24] S1: in a hole.
[25] S3: The grandfather,
[26] S1: The grandfather,
[27] S3: [unclear]
[28] S1: eh,
[29] S2: was, was take the ball
[30] S1: eh
[31] S2: was take the ball in the hole
[32] S1: "Elas vem pro nosso grupo"
[33] S3: [Unclear] was take the ball in the hole and in the end
[34] S1: And ...
[35] S2:"Como é pegar mesmo?"
[36] S1: Was take
[37] S3: Take

[38] S2: “Não é catch não? Que nem Pokemon, catch.
[39] S3: “Catch?, catch é gato.”
[40] S2: “Não, C, A,U,G, H, T.”
[41] S1: Catch, “Eu acho que é take, não? Bia, pegar é take né?
[42] Bia: [Unclear]
[43] S1: “Vamos começar de novo.” Okay. At the beginning, a, the, a boy and his grandfather was playing football when su, sudently, the ball fall, fell down, in a hole. The friendly grandfather was [S3: taken] taken the ball [S3: in a hole], but, [S3: in a hole], when, ...,
[44] S3: she was, he was
[45] S1: ...but, but the...
[46] S3: “Que que é isso?”
[471] S1: “A careca dele”
[48] S2: But the ...
[49] S1: “Como que é bater? Professora, neto é como?
[50] T: If you don’t remember, you’d better think of another word.
[51] S1: But
[52] S2: He hurt, “ele machucou”, he hurted the, the, his head.
[53] S1: But the guy
[54] S3: the grandfather hurted his head
[55] S1: ehm, Guilherme [unclear] A father and a boy was playing football. Suddenly the ball fell down in a hole. The father was take the hole. When he back, he back hurt, no, no, sorry, he [unclear] back into it. So, she take the ball and go home with the boy.

Presentation Stage

S1: A father and his boy was playing football when, when the ball fell down in a hole. The father was, was take the ball, when and then he’s back, é, he injured his head and so he get the ball and go to home with his son. Very happy.

<u>Protocol 2 – Task 2 – Group 2</u>

Group 2: S1, S2 & S3

Planning Stage

[Sts wasted a lot of planning time chatting.]
[1] S1: Mr. Bean he [laughter] , Mr. Bean went to a picnic and
[2] S2: Mr. Bean went to a picnic and when he arrived there he, he had a suitcase, a chair and
[3] S1: he arrived the park and with a suitcase, pink, and his fabric and he began to put
[4] S2: and he start to put the rest. While he, while he’s putting, while he’s doing it, a robber was trying to
[5] S1: broke in
[6] S3: broke into
[7] S2: was broking into
[8] S1: breaking into his car
[9] S2+S3: broking into [firm tone of voice]
[10] S3: “porque é passado”

[11] S1: was broking, breaking into

Presentation Stage

S1: There was a day in the park when Mr. Bean wanted to make a picnic. He began to ... took, took off the things of his suitcase picnic, picnic suitcase and first he took off the muffin, the fabric, sorry, the fabric and after that the juice and the muffin, after that. [S3: while] While this, a robber was trying to br, broke, broke into his car, but he didn't get because the wheel wasn't there, was in the..., suitcase of Mr. Bean. And after that, then Mr. Bean, began to eat his muffin, a bee appeared and started to fight with him for the muffin and, and like this when the teacher turned off the video.

<u>Protocol 3 – Task 1 – Group 3</u>

Group 3: S1, S2 & S3

Planning Stage

[1] S1: The boy, éh, was play
[2] S2: shoot the boy (pause). The father and the son
[3] S3: son playing
[4] S2: were playing with the ball
[5] S3: "Estavam?"
[6] S2: Were playing with the football when the
[7] S3: when the ball fall the, the,
[8] S1: Teacher, teacher
[9] S2: Fall.
[10] S3: Fall in the hole.
[11] S1: Yeah.
[12] S3: And the father was, was, take, take the ball in the hole (laughter) [Unclear]
[13] S1: Was took the ball.
[14] S2: Took the ball.
[15] S1: But, but, é, the father
[16] S3: "Não, é..."
[17] S2: But the father looked him ... [unclear]
[18] S1: When he,
[19] S2: he back, when he back the boy think
[20] S1: No, no, ó, "ele bateu a cabeça",
[21] S3: Não naõ,
[22] S2: the boy thinks the head the dad is [S1: Ah!] the ball and shoots the head and, and the dad entered, that, é, entered him
[23] S3: her, no him, ehm, (pause)
[24] S1: He said the boy I'm sorry
[25] S2: to the dad
[26] S1: to the dad and cried and the dad say, said no problem and, and
[27] S3: Go out
[28] S2: Finished. The end.

Presentation Stage

S1: The dad and the boy was playing football and the ball,
S2: when the ball fell [S3: fell] into the [S1: hole] hole and the father was, take go down, to take the ball when the father back
S1: the father get up, the boy think the head
S2: see the head of the dad
S1: And, the, the boy, é, shoot the head of the father and the boy cried and the dad said that's okay. And they go out.

Lower Intermediate 3
Protocol 4 – Task 1 – Group 2

Group 2: S1, S2 & S3

Planning Stage

[1] S1: É, once upon a time, é, there was a ma.., a old, a old man, playing, é, with his child and when he kicked ...
[2] S2 & S3: [giggles]
[3] S1: que foi?
[4] S1: Once upon a time there was an old man playing ...
[5] S2: football
[6] S1: football with his grandson. É, the ball felt in the ....the hole, in the hole and the old man went to take it. When he came back, the granddaughter was very bad and kicked his head. É, the grandfather get very angry and had a ... argue with him. After, é, the grandson ask apologise for the grandfather and they be happy forever.
[7] S2: Wait. Once upon a time there was an old man playing with his grandson, é, footba, soccer. When ...They were playing very happy when the ball fell in the hole. The, the old man went to, went to look for the ball. When he was, é, he come, came, coming up from the hole, he knocked his head on the side of the hole and he got very angry and start arguing with his grandson. His grandson got very sad and start crying. After asking apologise
[8] S3: they are sorry
[9] S2: ...they ..... they apologise each other and they went to eat an ice cream. And the story finishes.
[10] S3: And put some ice in the grandfather's head.
[11] S2: And put some ice on the grandfather's head.

Presentation Stage

S1: Once upon a time there was a old man playing with his grandson, soccer. They were playing very happy when the ball fell in the hole. They wen.., the grandfather went to look for it, when, and when he was coming up from the hole he knocked his, his head in the side of the hole. He got really sad and start arg.., arguing with his grandson. É, his grandson got really, é, ...

S2: mad
S1: ... mad and start crying. Then, afterwards, they apologised each other and offer eat an ice cream. The end.

Protocol 5 – Task 2 – Group 2

Group 2: S1, S2 & S3

Planning Stage

[1] S1: [Unclear] A bee
[2] S2: A bee, he start annoy him
[3] S1: Who?
[4] S2: No, while he
[5] S3: "encher"
[6] S1: Once, Mr. Bean in a nice day, Mr. Bean started to carry with him a nice picnic, ehm, very carefully, and
[7] S2: he started reading
[8] S1: É, como é que é "enquanto isso"?
[9] S2: Eh, while this
[10] S1: While this, in his car, é, there was, a burglar was trying to rob his car. He opened his, é he opened [S3: the door] the door and turned on the car when he realised that, ehm, "como é que é volante?"
[11] S2: Steering wheel
[12] S3: Steering wheel
[13] S1: The steering wheel, was not there. While this, Mr. Bean eat his picnic, was read, while Mr. Bean was reading in his picnic a bee started annoying him and he started, é, started to
[14] S2: argue
[15] S1: and he started to argue, tried to kill, Mr, Bean tried to kill the bee,
[16] S2: But he didn't do, he didn't do it.
[17] S1: "Agora vamos contar a história inteira." [Now let's tell the whole story]
[18] S2: Once upon a time, on a nice day, Mr. Bean was on his free time, ehm, on a nice day, in a nice park, Mr. Bean started to carry a, start carrying a picnic
[19] S1: Start to prepare
[20] S2: He started preparing
[21] S1: No, prepare!
[22] S2: Once upon a time, in a nice day, Mr. Bean started preparing his picnic in a beautiful park. He, eh, [unclear negotiation]
[23] S3: "Começa"
[24] S2:Once upon a time, in a nice day, Mr. Bean was preparing his, ehm, picnic, a picnic carefully. Eh, while that a burglar, eh, opened his, his, the door of his car and tried to rob it. When he realised that the steering well, wheel, was not there.
[25] S1: While that, in the park, Mr. Bean was reading when a bee started annoying him wanting to eat his cake. He start fighting with the bee, trying to kill her, but he didn't do it and the film ended with Mr. Bean trying to kill the bee.

Presentation Stage

S2: Once upon a time, on a nice day, at a park, Mr. Bean started preparing carefully his picnic. He started [S3: While that], while that in the, ehm, parking [S3: parking lot] parking, a burglar start, ehm, open his door car and ehm, [S1: turned] and turned on, when he realised that the steering wheel was not there. While that, in the park, Mr. Bean started reading his book when a bee started annoying him, wanting to eat his cake. His, he tried to kill the bee but [S3: fight] to fight with the bee but he didn't do it. And the story ended.

Protocol 6 – Task 1 – Group 5

Group 5: S1, S2, S3, S4 & S5

Planning time

[1] S1: The father is, is ...
[2] S2: is playing ....
[3] S1: the grandfather is playing football with his ...
[4] S3: with a boy ...
[interruption – re-organisation – request help for the word "teaching"]
[5] S1: The father is teaching his
[6] S2: or her son
[7] S3: his son
[8] S1: how to play football. But when the son shoot the ball, the ball falls
[9] S3: falled down in the
[10] S2: the hole
[11] S4: Ahm? How do you say "buraco"?
[12] S1: In the prison? [unclear muttering] The father ..
[13] S2: his father fall
[14] S3: fell
[15] S4: Se não acha que ficou muito "fall, fall'?
[16] S1: The father, é ...
[17] S2: The father catched the ball.
[18] S1: Yes, and the son was with afraid.
[19] S4: Was with, was with afraid?[questioning tone of voice]
[20] S1: Was afraid of ...
[21] S2: Was afraid with
[22] S1: Was afraid that the father don't come back
[23] S4: AHH!
[24] S2: of the father
[25] S4: No.[unclear]
[26] S5: Then, the father appeared with a ...
[27] S3: appeared with a ...
[28] S1: appeared with a big, a big,
[29] S4: How do you say "escada mesmo"?
[30] S1: No, no, no, no. He appeared with [unclear for a couple of seconds – recorder fell]
[31] S2: The father appeared with a ....
[32] S4: "Machucado" in the head.

[33] S3: And the head,...maybe he hit the head ....
[34] S4: “Ah, ele chutou a cabeça do pai!”
[35] S3: Shut up Giovanna.
[36] S2: Speak in English!
[37] S1: How do you say “bater sua cabeça no chão?” [Asked teacher who encourages them to think]. He hit his ....
[38] S3: Then the boy ....
[39] S2: hit the father ...
[40] S1: Okay. The boy shoot the head
[41] S3 [unclear]: shooted. It’s shooted.
[42] S1: “Chutou”?
[43] S2: No, it’s kicked. Shoot “é acertar”
[44] S1: He kicked his head and then
[45] S5: the grandpa was very, very angry with him
[46] S1: because he hurt him
[47] S4: He hurt him?
[48] S1: He hurts
[49] S3: He hurted
[50] S4: But, anyway, the father love his son and forgive him.
[51] All: AAHHH!
[52] S1: Anyway the father hurt his son?
[53] S3: How do you say again “bater a cabeça”? [unclear mumble]
[54] S4: The end of the story.[unclear mumble]

Presentation Stage

S1 [others helping out – choral]: The father is, was teaching his son to [S2: how to ..] how to play football.
S3: But the ball, but the ball fall in the “buraco”.
S2: The father tried to catch the ball, then
S5: and the son was afraid that his father, not, eh, wouldn’t come back.
S3: The son kicked his father head.
S1: Thinking that it was the ball.
S3: The father, “não”, I’m sorry, the son asked for the father if he forgive him and he said yes and finished the history.

Protocol 7 – Task 2 – Group 5

Group 5: S1, S2, S3, S4 & S5

Planning Stage

[1] S4: [a lot of laughter before starting] The man was going to a picnic, but he [laughter & muffling of microphone]
[2] S1: “Eu falei que é picnic Marina [laughter]
[3] S2: First, [negotiation] First, the man [laughter], the man go
[4] S3: One day, a man, Mr. Bean
[5] S2: Mr. Bean? One day, okay,

[6] S4: His name is Mr. Bean.
[7] S3: One day that man...., he, one day, that man...ehm, was going to the picnic. When he was prepared to eat his food, a bee come
[8] S1: come a bee and...
[9] S2: then he got up and messed up
[10] S5: What's this?
[11] S2: messed up
[12] S5: What's this?
[13] S3: make a mess
[14] S2: made a mess, ehm .... [small pause]
[15] S3: One day, that man that was in the film [laughter]
[16] S1: was making a picnic and a bee appeared
[17] S2: There was a bee or a fly?
[18] S3: A fly
[19] S4: "Foi uma mosca"
[20] S5: "Fly é what?"
[21] S4: "Mosca"
[22] S5: "Fly é mosca?"
[23] S2+S3: Then fly appeared and the man
[24] S1: when the fly appeared
[25] S2+S3: the man was prepared to eat his food, his cake
[26] S1: little cake
[27] S2: However, ...
[28] S1: his little, little, little cake,
[29] S2:However, his, ... no, he, .. however the bee wanted to eat his little cake [laughter]. Then, ehm,
[30] S3: After that the fly, the bee, I don't know,
[31] S1: No the man started to
[32] S2: No, the man put the bee in the bag, the little cake in his bag
[33] S1: After that, the fly started to [unclear] [laughter]. Then, after that, the fly started to circ Mr. Bean
[34] S5: To what?
[35] S1: To circ, and he tried to fight with the bee.
[36] S4: Tried to do a karate with the bee.
[37] S2: No he fighted with the bee, fighted with the fly, the end.
[38] S4: "É, mas fala que tinha um homem tentando robar o carro dele."
[39] S3: And has a guy trying to rob his car.
[40] S2: Okay. But when the man opened the door, he
[41] S3: he, he ..... "Que que aconteceu mesmo?" [muffles microphone] He, he, he
[42] S4: He look that he hadn't "volant" [laughter] How do you say "volante"?
[43] T: Steering wheel

Presentation Stage

S4: One day a man was preparing a picnic
S1: And he was putting his little cake, ehm, he was preparing his little cake and put a cherry on the top of it and a fly appeared.
S2: And, ehm, it started , ehm, disturbing him, to.., and trying to eat the, the cake.
S3: After that a man started to rob his car and when he get it, he saw that the steering wheel doesn't exist and, ..., and
S5: he crossed with the bee
S3: Oh yes, the man, Mr. Bean, was fighting with the bee and [laughter] and ehm, and he get the fly into her hand, but it is seen, seemed it was dead, but when he opened her hand, his hand, it wasn't he. And the story finished. [laughter]

Protocol 8 – Task 1 – Group 6

Group 6: S1, S2, S3 & S4

Planning Stage

[1] S1: A guy playing with a ball (laughter)
[2] S2: A guy play with another ball. Then they shoot the ball ...
[3] S1: inside, the sewer
[4] S2: Inside the?
[5] S1: sewer, "esgoto"
[6] S2: Sewer?
[7] S1: Sewer, "s, é", e, w, e, r
[8] S2: sewer. Then the boy shot ...
[9] S1: Let's talk orally. The man, this man ...
[10] S2: This man shoot the ball
[11] S1: No, this man shoots the ball to the boy and then the boy shoots the ball to the man, but the ball fall in the sewer.
[12] S2: Yes. And the man entered ...
[13] S1: The sewer, to get the ball
[14] S3: the ball .. and when he ...
[15] S2: The boy wait, wait a long time before the ball appeared, and then after the ball appeared, the guy appeared and complaining [unclear] because he had hurt his head.
[16] S3: Very good. The little boy started crying ...
[17] S2: but, eh, but in the end they [unclear] and they go home happy.
[18] S1: They went.
[19] S2: What?
[20] S1: They went.
[21] S3: I think the boy appeared is kicking the head of the man...
[22] S1: kicking the ball, yes, he kicked the head [S2: What?] of the man, thinking it was the ball.
[23] S3: it was the ball.
[24] S2: "O que?"
[25] S1: The boy he kicks the head of the man [S2: Ah, yes!] thinking it was the ball.

[26] S3: So the ...
[27] S1: Now, let's go ...
[28] S2: What's this? A hurt? A shadow?
[29] S3: Hurt. Hurt the head of the man.
[30] S1: In the end what happened?
[31] S3: The boy and the, let's say it's his father, eh, the boy ...
[32] S2: the boy cried ...
[33] S3: goes home happy.
[34] S2: and they went home.
[35] S1: First the story from the beginning.
[36] ALL: Yes.
[37] S2: A father and his son were playing soccer.
[38] S3: football
[39] S1: Yes, soccer, when suddenly the ball fall out in the sewer. The father goes down to fetch the ball. The boy waited a long , long time and when his father had appeared, he [S2:Yes] he kicked it thinking it was the ball. His father ..... How do you say "brigou" in English?
[40] S2: Fight?
[41] S3: No?
[42] S1: His father complained with the son and, but the son start crying. However, he and the father, the father said sorry and they went home happy. [At this moment sts ask teacher if they can write down their story – as they can't, they decide to rehearse once again.]
[43] S1: ... thinking that was the ball.
[44] S2: The father or the man?
[45] S1 + S3: The father.
[46] S1: The father ...
[47] S3: complaint
[48] S1: complained and, "como é que é contar?"
[49] S2: Counted his head, his head to your son.
[50] S1: To show the son has hurt ...
[51] S2: No, to show the son has hurt him.
[52] S1: But then the boy start crying.
[53] S2: And the man [S1: apologised] apologised his son and they, they went to house happy.
[54] S3: They went home happy.
[55] S2: They went to home happy. [unclear]
[56] S1: Instead of saying sewer, say hole.
[57] S2: Ah?
[58] S1: Instead of saying sewer, say hole.
[59] S2: Hole?
[60] S1: Hole, "buraco".
[61] S2: "Ah, tá! Vamos, vamos"
[62] S1: The boy, no the father and his son were playing.
[63] S2: Suddenly, the ball fall in the hole [S1: in a hole] in a hole.
[63] S3: After the, [S2: that] after that, the father entered the hole to, to take the ball
[64] S1: then the boy waited a long time before he sees [unclear]
[65] S2: When his father was getting out of the hole, he kick the head of his father and, and hurt him, thinking it, that it was the ball. [planning time ends]

Presentation Stage

S1: The father and his son were playing soccer.
S2: Suddenly, his son kicked the ball and the ball fall into the hole.
S3: After that the father entered the hole to get the ball.
S1: The boy waited a long time.
S2: When his father was getting out of the hole, his son kicked his head thinking it, that it was the ball.
S3: The father complained and pointed his head to show the boy has hurt him.
S1: The boy starts crying.
S2: And then the father apologised his son and he go, they went home.

7.4 APPENDIX IV

VERBAL PROTOCOLS – COMPLETE TEXT OF ALL THE REST OF THE RECORDED TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE LOWER INTERMEDIATE GROUPS

Lower Intermediate 2

Protocol 9 - Task 1 – Group 1

Planning stage

S1: The, the old man (laughter)
S2: No, the boy playing football
S3: Very bad.
S1: Vamos fazer sério,
S2: Agora é sério.
S3: The boy are playing football, when the ...
S1: with the grandfather
S2: and he played very bad.
S4: No, when the ball, é, "caiu", é
S2: the ball in the "bueiro" (laughter) And the grandfather (laughter) come down (laughter)
S3: Is get up to (S2: to "bueiro") enter. What is "bueiro"?
S2: He is coming up the hole and the boy kicked the head of the
S3: grandfather
S2: thinking it was a ball because he was bald (laughter).
S1: Pera aí. The grandfather and had [unclear]
S4: In the end it finish with a , "não tem que fazer a parte da moral".
S2: "Então, é isso aí. Começa assim. (laughter)".
S1: The grandfather and the, "como é que é neto"?
S2: grandson
S1: and boy, and the boy
S3: The boy is playing football with her, him, her?
S1: No, grandfather, when
S3: when [S1: the boy] the ball in the hole
S1: No, when the boy, é,
S3: kicked the ball in the hole
S1: The grandfather "resolve como é que é?"
S3: resolves enter in the hole.
S1: The grandfather enter in the hole
S3: to catch the ball
S2: catch the ball, aí
S3: when the boy
S1: the boy, é,
S4: He hurt the boy. He hurted the boy.
S1: Hurt. The boy looked the grandfather in the hole. After [unclear]

S2: The grandfather, the boy think that the head was a ball.
S1: The boy kicked him
S2: kicked, the, head of grandfather thinking it was a ball and the grandfather had a "galo" (laughter) in her head. É...
S3: The boy
S1: "Como é que é tomou um esporro?"
S3: "Ah, não precisa", the grandfather
S2: make the boy "chorar" é cry
S3: and the boy was crying
S1: And the boy he cried and had
S4: "Pera aí, pera aí. Naõ acabou não."

Presentation Stage

S2: The boy was playing football, with, é, [S1: the grandfather] the grandfather when the ball fall in the hole and the grandfather come to get it. É, the boy kicked [S1: the head] the head thinking it was a ball and, é, "fala aí", and they go to home.

Protocol 10 - Task 1 – Group 4

Planning Stage

S1: The father and
S2: É, and, her, his, his son, ehm the father
S1: shoot the
S2: No
S1: kicked
S2: kicked the ball
S1: kicked the ball and the boy
S2: kicked the ball into the, the, "buraco"?
S1: Teacher, "buraco"?
T: Hole
S2: the hole
S1: then father
S2: he, é, go into the hole also, to get the
S1: the ball
S2: the ball and he go over the ball
S1: and when he, he come back
S2: come back he, he
S1: he hurts her head, his head, he hurts his head, and the boy cry because
S2: because his father is,
S1: has injured. Only. Finished.

Presentation Stage

S1: The father and his son were, are [S2: playing] playing [S2:football] football when the ball go into the hole, a hole.

S2: Then the father entered into the hole and, eh,
S1: and get over the ball.
S2: When she get over, when he come back
S1: came back,
S2: é, he hit and he hurt her head,
S1: his head and his son cry,
S2: cried. Finished.

Protocol 11 - Task 2 – Group 3

Planning Stage

S1: In a beautiful day a man went to a park and, eh, are do, and were doing, was doing [laughter] a picnic. He started to put the food on the dress, with a, a radio and a ..., chair. Suddenly a insect started to, [hushed:] "Como é irritar?"

S2: É make someone angry

S1: Make, make, suddenly a insect, eh ..., [ahhh!] Suddenly a insect [S2: started] started to made him angry and he, was trying to kill the insect. [Muffled discussion and tape recorder is switched off]

S1: In a beautiful day a man went to a, the park and, he [S2: decided] decided to do a picnic. He started to put the food in the grass and a, suddenly a insect started to makes him angry. He tried to, to killed, to kill the insect and, but, he, didn't ...[pause] Carla, how do you say "conseguir"?

Carla: Manage

S2: Manage?

S1: Manage. [laughter] [Tape recorder switched off]

Presentation Stage

S1: In a beautiful day a man went to a park and decided to make a picnic. While he, his car was being rob for a boy, but Mr. Bean wasn't seeing anything. He was putting the food and drinks on the grass. And suddenly, a insect started to boring him and he tried to [S3:kill] to kill it but he didn't manage [S3: manage (correcting pronunciation)]

Protocol 12 - Task 2 – Group 4

Planning Stage

S1: Mr. Bean, ehm, was in the park, he was preparing, ehm, while a boy was [unclear discussion], when the boy ....
S3: He opened the door of the car, the car's door, (laughter), and a boy, a boy, teacher, how do you say volante? [T: steering wheel], Steering wheel.
S2: The car didn't have a steering wheel, ehm, and Mr. Bean [unclear discussion]
S3: Then he go out, [pause], he start fighting with the flier, finished.
S1: Mr. Bean decided to, to, make?, make?
S2: Make.
S1: Make a picnic in the park. When, when he, no. While he was getting the, the place [S2: the place] a boy,
S2: a boy was stealing the car and when the boy, ehm, when the boy opened the car he, he saw, he saw that the car
S3: didn't have a steering wheel.
S2: steering wheel.
S4: The steering wheel was with Mr. Bean in his bag. Ehm, when he decided to start eating, a flier started annoying him, so he, [S3: fighted], he fighted [S1: fight] with the flier, trying to kill, kill it, but he couldn't. "Acabou". [laughter]

Presentation Stage

S1: Mr. Bean decided to make a picnic in a park, ehm,
S2: While he was preparing
S1: was preparing the place
S2: the place, a boy tried to [S3: steal] steal his car. When the boy,
S4: opened the car,
S2: the car, he,
S4: he saw that didn't have a [all in unison] steering wheel. The steering wheel was with Mr. Bean in his bag. Ehm,
S3: When he decided to eat, ehm, a flier [S2:flier] started annoying him
S2: him
S3: him, and he [S1: start fight], tried to kill, tried to kill it.

Lower Intermediate 3

Protocol 13 – Task 1 – Group 1

Planning Stage

S1: There was a man ....
S2: ... a man playing with a ball and ...
S1: ... maybe he and his father
S2: Yeah [unclear] .. his parent, and the, and ..
S1: ... the ball fall down...
S3: falled
S1: falled
S3: falled in the hole
S1: falled in the hole and the father...
S2: ..and or..
S4: (shush)
S2: and ..after that the father dropped the .. the ..
S1: ...the hole...
S2: ... the hole and tried to take the ball, ehm, for the guy
S1: for the kid
S2: ehm, and while he, he was, ehm, trying to pick up the ball, eh, he ...
S3: [unclear] his head on ...
S4: .. the boy he ... (pause)
S2: he hurt his head and was complaining to his, to his son and after that, the, the son, his son started to cry and, and, the last, the father was very upset, think, and eh, was and ...
S4: be back home (raising intonation)
S3: yeah, yeah
S2: yeah, [unclear] to home and they're very happy after that. That's it.

Presentation Stage

S2: A dad, and father were playing football in the street and when they are put, ehm, playing their ball fall in the hole and the daddy tried to pick up his ball. When the daddy was, eh, going up in the hole, the son, eh, kicked his head and the, the dad, the daddy was going to complain with his son and then after that his son started to cry and the, eh, after that, they, they apologised theirselves and go to home.

Protocol 14 – Task 1 – Group 3

Planning Stage

(Sts take time to start)
S1: A boy play football
S2: ...Jim and his dad was playing, were playing football.
S1: [Ele caiu no buraco]
S2: Suddenly, Jim kicked(éd) the ball and the ball fall into the hole. To the sewers of the city. Ehm, then his dad were, was going to pick it up. [pause] Jim were, eh,

stayed there waiting and when, and when his dad had, had showed up, he thought it was the ball and kicked it. He hurted his daddy and he grounded with Jim, when he got the ball.

S1: Right.
S2: Eh, then, Jim and his daddy come back home happy.

Presentation Stage

S2: Jim and his daddy were, were playing football on the streets, when suddenly Jim kicked his, eh, the ball between his daddy's legs and it fell to the hole. Then his dad, eh, picked up the ball in the, eh, sewers and suddenly something rounded showed up. Éh, Jim kicked it but then discovered it was his daddy's head and not the ball. His dad grounded him and he took him to home crying.

Protocol 15 – Task 1 – Group 4

Planning Stage

S1: Probably, this man is his father
S2: And play football with his (S1: Yes) his son.
S3: He, é, shut the ball
S1: Yeah, shut the ball to his son.
S1: Shut the ball down to the hole
S4: the man down the hole
S3: the man go down to the hole
S4: the boy stay looking
S2: and the boy ...
S1: No, then he hit his head
S2: in the [unclear]
S1: and the boy hit the father's
S2: and he's waiting outside the [unclear], but when the man put his head off, the boy ...
S3: kicked him
S1: his head thinking it was the ball
S2: it was the ball
S1: The father probably
S3: the father, eh, have, ...
S1,2,3,4: [Unclear, all speaking together]
S2: ...with him and talk to him
S4: the father become
S2: hurt and
S3: and then
S2: and why because that he began to cry
S3: and then ...
S4: in the end
S3: probably apologised

S2: finally
S1: finally he apologised his son
S2: and grab, grabbing
S1: or hugging
S2: grabbing take a hug in his son
S3: and he continues happy
S1: Forever.
S4: For the rest of his, your life.
S3: It's touching (laughter)
S2: What do you think of this story? (laughter)

Presentation Stage

S1: There was a father and son playing soccer, when, é, when, but after that the boy kicked the ball and the ball fell to the ho, in the hole. The father wou, ..had, had gone to pick up the ball and when he come back the boy thinked this head, his head was the ball. But, it was obviously the father head. And the ... the father argued with his son and the son become ashamed and he begun, began to cry. Eh, finally, they sorry each other and the father get a big hug of his son and go home, went to home.

Protocol 16 – Task 2 – Group 1

Planning Stage

S1: A man was trying to make a picnic and he ....[Unclear]
S2: [unclear] It was a muffin. And he got a muffin and some orange juice.
S3: And he was
S2: And while he was preparing the picnic the car was robbed.
S1: A man was trying to rob his car.
S2: And he remembered that had a, the ....
S1: "volante", part of his car, ...
S2: "Como é volante?"
T: steering wheel.
S2: He remembered he had a ... steering wheel and a, and a ....
S1: And eh, an insect [unclear]
S2: [unclear] and the insect
S1: What is the insect doing?
S2: and started bothering him, and then he [unclear] it,

S1: Yeah

S2: and he tried to kill her and he

S3: And he was still arguing

S2: And then he got a knife and started to, tried to kill her

S2: Yes.

S3: Yes, kill her with the knife.

Presentation Stage

S1: There was a man in the park called Mr. Beans and he wanted to do a picnic, and, eh, he started to put the food and drink on the grass and suddenly a, a, an insect started to try to, to eat the, the muffin. Eh, while the, a thief wanted to rob his car and noted that there wasn't a, ah, [S2: Steering wheel] a steering wheel and, and after that Mr. Beans started to fight with the, with the insect. Finished.

Protocol 17 – Task 2 – Group 3

Planning Stage

S1: An orange juice, ..., a seat, ..., [unclear] a pink suitcase, then he opened his pink suitcase and took out a little seat and a piece of cake, juice and a book.
S2: And a bottle, with a berry.
S3: When he was eating, there was an "abelha"
S2: an insect steal his, but it has no, [gesture demonstrating a sting]
S1: Okay, okay.
S3: Because it was inside the suitcase. Then he's fight with "abelha". Ahm, [unclear]
S2: a bee showed up between them and started to,
S1: eat,
S2: No, and tried to eat his cake. But he [unclear – all speaking together] with the bee. He started to fight with the bee and ran away and then ended like this.

Presentation Stage

S2: Mr. Bean was happy in the middle of a green park with a pink suitcase on its hands. He opened the suitcase and took out of it a little seat, an orange juice and a single muffin, with a berry. Then a burglar tried to open his car and tried to steal it, but it had no steering wheel,

because the steering wheel was inside the pink suitcase of Mr. Bean. Then, a bee showed up and tried to eat the muffin and Mr. Bean started, started to fight with the bee and his, he ended up, he ended up like this.

Protocol 18 – Task 2 – Group 4

Planning Stage

S1: A man go to the, eh, go to the park. [laughter] Then he opened a pink suitcase. [laughter] Then he, then he opened his suitcase and took out a, a little sit and a piece of cake
S2: A orange juice
S1: and a, muffin, [S3: a muffin] with a ... berry. Then ... when he was eating a man tried to steal his car, but it had no, eh, "volante"?
S3: Yes, yes, the thing that you can control the car
S1: Okay, okay. The thing that he could use to control the car. Because it was inside, eh, [S2: in the middle of the car] his wallet, [S2: yes], his wallet no, his suitcase. And he fight with the, "abelha"? Then his fight with "abelha".
S3: Wasp, "abelha"
S1: A bee showed up, eh, started to, to
S2: eat?
S1: No, and tried to eat his muffin.
S3: But he started a fight
S1: with the bee, and he started to fight with the bee and ran away, ..., and he end like this.

Presentation Stage

S1: Mr. Bean was happy in the middle of a green park with a pink suitcase on its hands. He opened the suitcase and took out of it a little seat, an orange juice, and a single muffin, with a berry. Then a, a burglar tried to, eh, open his car and tried to steal it. But it had no steering wheel, because the steering wheel was inside the, the pink suitcase of Mr. Bean. Then, a bee showed up and tried to eat the muffin and Mr. Bean tried to f, started to fight with the bee and his, he ended up, he ended up like this.

Protocol 19 – Task 1 – Group 7

Planning Stage

S1: One day, a man and a boy
S2: (laughter)
S1: ... was playing football with his granny, granny, grandpa,
S2: grandpa
S1: Okay, his grandpa.
S2: However, he don't know, é, play football well, é (....) The grandpa ... (laughter)
S1: The ball down the (giggles). Teacher, can we start again? (T. replies yes.)
S2: One day a little boy was playing football with his grad, grandpa and unhappy, unhappy, he shoot the ball on, on the ...(pause)

S1: and the grandpa down, down the stirs to take the ball ...
S2: stop, stop, stop, let's start again.
S1: Then the, his grandpa, when he went also (laughter)
S2: stop. We'll start again.
S1: Let's try again. One day, a little boy (laughter) was playing football with his grandson, grandpa and, and unhappily he shoot the ball to the ..... hole?
S3: Hole.
S1: Hole? And he shoot the ball to the hole. The grandson fell down the stairs to take the ball but it was very (laughter) it was very, "como é que é preocupado"?
S2: Worried.
S1: He was very worried with his grandson because it was very black in there, but when the grandpa was, going up stairs, he ... cra ... kicked his head.
S3: "Calma aí, calma aí"
S1: Let's speak again, okay. Let's try again. Number one
S3: One day, when, a boy was playing football with his grandfather, unhappily the boy, sho..., the boy shot the ball in a hole. His grandfather, down (S1: Yeah) down the stairs to, to get the ball. The boy was, was worried, with, with his grandfather, but, but when his grandfather was, was going up stairs, the boy kicked his head. The grandfather, é, the grandfather, ..., lost his head and ...
S1: "O que?"
S2: "O que?"
S3: "De um [unclear] and he .... (S1: Como que é mesmo?) ...
S1: He was very, very bad with ...
S3: he implied with ...
S1: "Como é que é ameaçar?" He was very bad ....
S3: He implied with the boy. The boy cried and his grandfather, é, ...
S1: "Ele percebeu que tinha [unclear].
S3: " É, é."
S1: Let's talk again. The story the last time. Beep.
S3: One day, when a boy was, was playing football with his grandfather, unfortunately the ball fall in a hole. He, he, the grandfather downstairs to get, to get the ball. The boy was, was very worried about his, his grandfather, but when his grandfather was going upstairs, the boy kicked his head, the grandfather replied, with, with the boy, but, and the boy started to cry and his grandfather, his grandfather ...
S2: and lived, they lived, é, happy forever. No, happy forever. They lived happy forever.
S3: "Calma aí, calma aí."
S1: He ...
S2: forgot the fact and played again with the boy.
S1: Forgot the fact and loved and, take care of the boy and, take care of the boy.

Presentation Stage

S3: One day, when a boy was playing football with his grandfather, well, unfortunately the ball fell on a hole. His grandfather down the stairs to, to get the ball.
S2: When he come back with the ball, the, the boy, shot, his head [S1: shoot], shot his, shoot his head and he hurt, hurt very well.

S1: The grandfather was very disappointed and the, and the boy was crying. So, the grandfather forgot the fact and they lived happy forever.

Protocol 20 – Task 2 – Group 6

Planning Stage

S2: While he was, no while he was preparing a picnic, a guy tried to stole his car. But when he start to drive the car, there was no steering wheel
S3: no steering wheel [unclear]
S2: Then a bee, ah, "Mariana, como é que é abelha?" Then a bee came into the picnic and
S1: He tried to kill the,
S2: he tried to eat the pie, but then when he took from inside the box, the suitcase, [unclear], then the bee started to run eh, [unclear] and
S3: And after that he fight with the bee at a knife.
S1: No, first he catch the bee with his hand and then, then the bee fly, then he get a knife and start fighting with the bee, like a, like a "esgrima" (laughter)
S2: One day, Mr. Bean was preparing a party in the park
S1: in the park.
S2: The he [unclear] he was preparing the picnic, he throwed the towel in the grass, he throwed the towel in the grass and put, and he placed the, eh, a
S3: on a bottle of orange juice and a, plate
S2: Yes, a plate, when,
S1: when he was going to take out a small pie,
S3: no, when, when
S1: while he was taking out a small pie, a bee started annoying him, then a burglar start to rob his car, but when he started the car, he burglar found that there was no steering wheel.
S2: No what?
S1: Steering wheel.
S2: Steering?
S1: Steering wheel. [unclear negotiation – 1 min]
S3: In the end, he fight with the bee.
S2: Then he catch the bee.
S1: No, then he pursued the bee.
S3: No, a bee was on the towel. [unclear negotiation – 2 mins]

Presentation Stage

S1: One day Mr. Bean was in the park, preparing his picnic. He throws his the towel in the grass and put a bottle of orange juice in it. Then he takes a small pie off a large box and put a cherry on the top. While he was eating the pie, a thief tried to stole him, his car. But the car has no, hasn't got a steering wheel because he had took it off. Then, a bee tried to land in the pie, but he protect the pie inside of his box. When he opened to get the pie, the bee was inside

the box and tired, started pushing him. When he catched the bee in his hand, the bee wasn't dead and he gets a knife and tried to kill the bee.

Protocol 21 – Task 2 – Group 7

Planning Stage

S3: One day, in a day of summer, a man wanted to have a picnic and he started to remove a lot of things of his, "professora, como é que eu posso dizer pacote, ou bolsa ou coisa que leva coisa pequena?" [T: bag] He started to remove a lot of things off his bag.
S2: Suddenly, a man, suddenly a man started to try, to try to, to, suddenly, suddenly, a man started to try to robbing his car. But, the, ...
S1: But we will start again and I will tell the final. Ahm, éh, the, a lot of, a lot of flies invaded, éh, wanted to, to catch the food of the, of the Mr. Bean, but [laughter] sorry, sorry, I will start to tell the final again. Sorry. Ahm, a lot of flies invade your, a lot of flies want to invade, to ate, to ate the, the cake, what he, there was in his hand. After that, he tried to, "como é esconder?"
S3: Hide
S1: He tried to hide the, the cake. But when he opened again, the flies é, "como é que é começaram?"
S3: He start.
S1: Started again to, started again to, ...
S2: No, to not forget the ....
S3: In a day of summer, a weird man was walking in the park with his bag to choose a perfect place for his picnic, picnic, picnic, [laughter] Now, it's the middle. Sorry, but the middle is naked, so we say the final.
S2: A lot of flies wanted to, ehm, to eat, his, eat ..., [pause for negotiation in Portuguese – checking order of events.]
S1: Okay, one day, the man, was in the park, to, to ate a delicious picnic, when he was arming the picnic, when he was arming the picnic, he, he, bring, brought, brought, he brought, ehm, cakes and sweets, a lot of things, ehm, drinks to ate in the picnic. When he started to put the cakes, the cakes in the [laughter], in the, he ate a lot flies, started to, to eat, started to, looking for his food
S3: Excuse me, let's try again. In a day of summer, a weird man was walking in the park with his bag to choose a perfect place for, for a, his picnic.
S2: When he, when he found the picnic, he started to organise the pic, started to organise. A man, suddenly, started to rob his car. [laughter] When the man entered in his car he noted it didn't have, didn't have a wheel. Then, then, the thief ran out the car and, the thief ran out ... [silent pause]
S1: Sorry, but, eh, sorry, David, David, where you stop? Which part? Ah! When he [pause]

Presentation Stage

S3: In a day of summer, a weird man was walking in the park with his bag to choose a perfect place for his picnic.
S2: When he, he found the perfect place, he started to organise it. But suddenly, a man started to rob, to rob his car. But, when the man entered in his, his car, the car don't have a steering wheel, so, the thief ran out.

S1: When he was preparing to eat the cake, a lot of flies appeared and he tried to kill they. He put, eh, the cake in the bag. When he, bring back, eh ..., the..., eh, the flies come back and he ..., he don't get the cake.

Protocol 22 – Task 2 – Group 8

Planning Stage

S1: [unclear mumble & organising themselves] Ehm, the man
S2: the man was doing a picnic in a park
S1: in a park
S2: [unclear negotiation] A man was doing a picnic
S1: a picnic and he was steering the things in the lawn
S2: the "jardim", uhm,
S3: The garden
S4: The garden
S1: the garden and he was reading a book
S2: [Unclear]
S1: No, when he, ..., was reading the book, [S2: Ah, é] the man tried to, to rob
S2: to rob
S1: the car, his car,
S3: But he didn't put, but his car didn't have ...
S2: the "volante" [laughter] and when he was eating the fly went
S3: the fly come out and tried to
S1: and tried to [pause] [laughter]
S4: "Vamos começar tudo de novo?"
S1: "Vamos."
S2: "Como é começar de novo?"
S1: Start again. The man was [in unison with all 4] doing a picnic in the garden park,
S3: he was, "como que é pegar"?
S1: organise his things in the,
S4: food and drink
S3: for the picnic in the garden
S1: and a man tried to,
S2: No, one man tried to rob the car but he had, but didn't have wheel
S1: wheel, because he taken the wheel.
S3: Ah, when he reached inside to eat
S1: the cake,
S3: the cake, the fly, came the fly and tried to catch his cake.
S1: He tried to kill the fly,
S2: but he didn't kill [laughter].
S1: He's walking like a crazy man, trying to kill the fly and the fly was disturbing the man and doing "zzzzzzzzzzzzz".
S2: "Ah tá". Finished.

Presentation Stage

S1: One day the man was doing a picnic in the park, é, he was organise the foods in the garden. A man tried to rob,
S2: A man tried to rob his car, but, but he, he didn't have a wheel. When, when the man, organised, [S1: sit], ah, the man sit in the, in the chair and read a book and eat the cake.
S3: So, came a fly and tried to eat, to ate his cake and tried to stung the man, but, and, but he tried to kill the fly, but he didn't kill and the fly was disturbing him. Finished.

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