Hebrew Pedagogy

Hebrew, the Living Breath of Jewish Existence: The Teaching and Learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew

העברית היא נשמת אפו של קיום היהודי

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CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF HEBREW WORDS, PHRASES, JEWISH AND OTHER TERMS

There are numerous ways to transliterate Hebrew. For example, some words include an 'h' after words that end in an 'a', for example, *talmidah, challah, Torah*, etc. I have chosen **not** to end such words with an 'h', such as with *Chanuka*. *Chanuka* is a prime example of the many different ways a Hebrew word can be transliterated: *Chanukkah*, *Chanuka*, *Hanukka*, *Hanukkah*, *Hanuka*, *Chanukah,* and so on. The only word where I have kept the 'h' is in *Torah* as this is the most accepted and universal way to transliterate this word.

Hebrew	Meaning
אפרסק *Afarsek*	Peach
אני אוהבת שוקולד *Ani ohevet shokolad*	I like/love chocolate (f)
אפיקורוס *Apikoros*	A Jew who denies the truth of the rabbinic tradition. The designation *apikoros* first occurs in rabbinic literature in the *Mishna*. The term is derived from the Greek philosopher Epicurus and the Epicurean movement. The rabbis were either unaware of or ignored the Greek origin of the word, and took it to be connected with the *Aramaic* word *hefker* (abandoned).
Aramaic	An ancient language of the Semitic family group, which includes Hebrew and Arabic, among others. Aramaic became the lingua franca of the ancient Near East in about 900 BCE and remained widely used for more than 1500 years. It was the vernacular of the Jews in Israel from the 4th Century BCE. A number of important ancient Jewish texts are written in Aramaic, including various prayers, most of the *Gemara*, and small portions of the Hebrew Bible.
ארצות הברית *Artzot habrit*	United States of America
בית מדרש *Beit midrash*	Lit. 'House of Study'. A place where Jews gather to study the *Talmud* and other religious writings. It is to be distinguished from a synagogue, though a *beit midrash* can be used as a synagogue or vice versa.
בסדר *Beseder*	Okay, fine, alright (lit. 'in order')
ברכת המזון *Birkat hamazon*	The Grace after Meals.
בוקר טוב *Boker tov*	Good morning
ברית *Brit*	Covenant
ברית מילה *Brit mila*	Lit. 'Covenant of Circumcision'. Ceremony marking the circumcision of an eight-day-old Jewish boy.

בבקשה *B'vakasha*	Please/you're welcome
חיים *Chaim*	Life
חלה *Challa*	Special plaited bread eaten on *Shabbat* and other Jewish festivals.
חלום *Chalom*	Dream
חלון *Chalon*	Window
חנוכה *Chanuka*	Lit. 'Dedication'. Eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. Also known as the Festival of Lights. Variously spelled Chanukkah, Hanukka, Hanukkah, Hanuka, Chanukah, etc.
חנוכת הבית *Chanukat habayit*	Lit 'Dedication of the home'. Ceremony to dedicate a new home by affixing *mezuzot* to the doorposts. A housewarming.
חנוכיה *Chanukia*	Special eight-branched candelabrum used for *Chanuka.*
Chassidic/Chassidism (pl)	From the Hebrew word *chassidut* (lit. loving kindness). The movement within Judaism founded by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760), stressing service of God through the mystical in addition to the legalistic dimension of Judaism, the power of joy, love of God and one's fellow, emotional involvement in prayer, finding Godliness in every aspect of one's existence, and the elevation of the material universe.
חברותה *Chavruta*	Lit. 'friendship, fellowship'. An *Aramaic* word used for a traditional approach to learning in which pairs of students work together to read and understand a given text (usually Bible, *Talmud*, or their commentaries).
חדר *Cheder*	Lit. 'room'. Traditionally, a school in which young boys began their study of Jewish texts and the Hebrew language before going on to *yeshiva.* Currently used for schools that run outside regular school hours and give Jewish children who attend non-Jewish schools a basic knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish practice.
חילול השם *Chilul Hashem*	Lit. 'Desecration of the (Divine) Name'. Blasphemy, disgracing God's name. Used for any action that reflects disbelief in God, or that casts a negative light on Jews or Jewish teachings.

חינוך *Chinuch*	Education	
איפה אני גר *Eifo ani gar*	Where I live (m)	
ארץ… *Eretz…*	Land of…	
עץ *Etz*	Tree	
גדול *Gadol*	Big	
גן *Gan*	Park	
גן שעשועים *Gan sha'ashuim*	Playground	
גמרה *Gemara*	The part of the *Talmud* which contains rabbinical commentaries and analysis of the *Mishna*.	
הגדה *Haggada*	Special book read during the Passover *seder* (a celebratory meal that marks the beginning of the Passover holiday).	
הכל בסדר *Hakol beseder*	Everything's fine (lit. 'everything's in order')	
המגיד *Ha-Maggid*	Lit. 'The Preacher'. Hebrew weekly published between 1856 and 1903. Its establishment marked the beginning of the modern Hebrew press.	
המאסף *Ha-Me'assef*	Lit. 'The Collector'. First Hebrew-language organ of the *Haskala.*	
השכלה *Haskala*	Jewish Enlightenment. An intellectual movement in Europe lasting from the 1770s to the 1880s.	
עברי *Ivri*	Lit. 'Hebrew'. An Israelite, or more colloquially, a Jew.	
עברית *Ivrit*	The Hebrew word for the Hebrew language, and the common nomenclature for modern Hebrew among British Jews.	
עברית בקליק *Ivrit b'klik*	On-line Hebrew programme.	
קבלת שבת *Kabbalat Shabbat*	Ceremony to welcome the *Shabbat.*	
קיבוץ/קיבוצים *Kibbutz/kibbutzim* (pl)	A communal settlement in Israel. The first *kibbutzim* were established in the beginning of the 20th century in what was then Palestine.	
קידוש *Kiddush*	Lit. 'Sanctification'. A prayer recited over a cup of wine in the home or synagogue to consecrate *Shabbat* or a holiday. The custom of reciting *Kiddush* derives from the biblical commandment to "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy" ("*Zachor et yom haShabbat l'kadsho*").	

כל העולם כולו גשר צר מאוד *Kol ha'olam kulo gesher tsar me'od*	"The whole world is a narrow bridge", a *Chassidic* song based on words by Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav.
כשר *Kosher/kasher*	Lit. 'fit, appropriate'. Any food or food combination suitable for consumption under Jewish law. The system of *kashrut* (the body of Jewish law dealing with foods and their preparation) has its roots in the Hebrew Bible but was developed in full by the rabbis of late antiquity.
לחנך *Lechanech*	To educate
ללמוד *Lilmod*	To learn
לא *Lo*	No
לומד/לומדת/לומדים/לומדות *Lomed/lomedet/ lomdim/lomdot*	He/she learns, they learn (m and f)
מה לא בסדר *Ma lo beseder?*	What's wrong? (lit. 'What's not in order')
מה טובו *Ma tovu*	Opening prayer of the morning liturgy.
מצוין *Metzuyan*	Excellent
מזוזה/מזוזות *Mezuza/mezuzot* (pl)	Lit. 'doorpost'. A small casing containing the words of the *Sh'ma,* written by a *sofer,* and placed upon the doorposts of a house. The *Sh'ma*, from a passage in the Book of Deuteronomy, commands Jews to place a *mezuza* on the doorpost of their homes.
מדרש/מדרשים *Midrash/midrashim* (pl)	Early Jewish interpretation of or commentary on a Biblical text, clarifying or expounding a point of law or developing or illustrating a moral principle.
משלוח מנות *Mishloach manot*	Food gifts, a custom for the festival of *Purim.*
משנה *Mishna*	The first section of the *Talmud*, collection of early oral interpretations of the scriptures as compiled about 200 BCE. It is the original written version of the Oral Law.

מצוה/מצוות *Mitzva/mitzvot* (pl)	Lit. 'commandment'. In the Bible, *mitzva* is one of several terms used for the precepts and commandments enjoined by God upon the Jewish people. Today used colloquially for any sort of good deed. Often spelled *mitzvah*.
'Mitzvah Day'	A day of social action that takes place in the UK each November. It was established in 2005 and became a registered charity in 2008. It is now a well-anticipated focal point in British Jewry's annual calendar.
נכון *Nachon*	Correct
נר תמיד *Ner tamid*	Lit. 'Everlasting/Eternal Light'. A lamp that hangs above the ark in all synagogues. Once the *ner tamid* was an oil lamp which stood outside the Temple in Jerusalem. Today, most are fuelled by gas or use electric light bulbs.
נשמה *Neshama*	Soul/breath
אוהב/אוהבת *Ohev/ohevet*	I like/love (m and f)
עולם *Olam*	World
פסח *Pesach*	Festival of Passover. The first of the three major Jewish festivals with both historical and agricultural significance (the others are *Shavuot* and *Sukkot*). *Pesach* is both a spring harvest festival and a commemoration of the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt as told in the Biblical book of Exodus. Celebrated by reading the *haggada* and eating *matza* (unleavened bread).
פיקוח *Pikuach*	Lit. 'supervision'. An organisation set up in 1996 by the Board of Deputies of British Jews to monitor and record Jewish and Judaic benchmarks in Jewish day schools. The statutory basis under which denominational inspection is carried out is under Section 13 of the 1992 Education (Schools) Act.
פרקי אבות *Pirkei avot*	Sayings/ethics of the Fathers. A tractate of the *Mishna* dealing with ethics and interpersonal relationships.
פורים *Purim*	One of the most joyous holidays in the Jewish calendar. Purim commemorates a time when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from extermination. The story of *Purim* is told in the Biblical Book of Esther. Purim traditions include wearing masks and costumes and distributing *mishloach manot*.
שכל *Sekhel*	Reason, intellect

שבת *Shabbat*	The Jewish Sabbath.
שבת שלום *Shabbat Shalom*	Lit. 'Peaceful *Shabbat*'. A traditional *Shabbat* greeting.
שלום *Shalom*	Peace, hello, goodbye
שלום ילדים, מה נשמע? *Shalom yeladim, ma shlomchem?*	Hello children, how are you?
שבועות *Shavuot*	The Festival of Weeks, second of the three major Jewish festivals with both historical and agricultural significance (the others are *Pesach* and *Sukkot*). Agriculturally, it commemorates the time when the first fruits were harvested and brought to the Temple. Historically, it celebrates the giving of the *Torah* at Mount Sinai.
שמעון בר כוכבא *Shimon Bar-Kochba*	Leader of the Jewish revolt against Rome between 132 and 135 CE. Letters written in his name between 132 and 134 CE were found in the Judean desert between 1952 and 1961.
שלמה המלך *Shlomo hamelech*	King Solomon
שרש/שרשים *Shoresh/shorashim*	Root/roots
שמע *Sh'ma*	Lit. 'Hear'. A prayer that proclaims the unity of God and the duty placed on Jews to love God "with all your heart, and all your soul and all your might".
סידור/סידורים *Siddur/siddurim* (pl)	Prayer book/s.
סידרה *Sidra*	Portion of the *Torah* read on a given *Shabbat*.
ספרי תורה *Sifrei Torah*	Lit. 'Books of the Torah'. *Torah* scrolls.
סליחה *Slicha*	Excuse me, sorry
סופר *Sofer*	A *Torah* scribe. The full term is *Sofer* ST"M, where ST"M is an acronym for **S**efer Torah (*Torah* scroll), **T**efillin (phylacteries) and **M**ezuza.
תכלית *Tachlis/tachlit* (Hebrew)	*Yiddish* form of the Hebrew *tachlit* (lit. 'purpose, object'), meaning colloquially to stop talking in generalities but rather get down to the heart of the issue.

תלמיד/תלמידה *Talmid/talmida*	Male/female pupil
תלמוד *Talmud*	The Oral Law, which is a legal commentary on the *Torah*, explaining how its commandments are to be carried out. It is made up of the *Mishna* and the *Gemara*. The Oral Law is in contradistinction with the Written Law (*Torah* or *Tanach*).
תנ״ך *Tanach*	The Hebrew Bible with its three main sections: the *Torah* (the Five Books of Moses), the *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and the *K'tuvim* (Writings). Sometimes referred to as the Written Law or Written *Torah*. The *Tanach* largely corresponds to the Christian Old Testament.
תשובה *Teshuva*	Lit. 'return'. Repentance.
תפילה *T'filla*	Prayer
תודה *Toda*	Thank you
תודה רבה מכל הלב *Toda raba m'kol halev*	Thank you so much from all the heart
תורה *Torah*	In its strict sense, the *Torah* comprises the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. More loosely used in reference to the entire Hebrew Bible (the body of scripture known to non-Jews as the Old Testament and to Jews as the *Tanach* or Written *Torah*), or in its broadest sense, to the whole body of Jewish law and teachings.
טוב/טוב מאוד *Tov/tov me'od*	Good/very good
טוב תודה *Tov toda*	Good thanks
ט״ו בשבט *Tu Bishvat*	Festival of the trees. A minor holiday, normally occurring in January or February, which marks the start of the spring fruit-bearing cycle.
אולפן *Ulpan*	Intensive Hebrew learning course.
ואהבת *V'ahavta*	*"And you shall love".* The opening of a section in the *Sh'ma* prayer.
ואהבת לרעך כמוך *V'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha*	*"And you shall love your neighbour as yourself."*
ים המלח *Yam hamelach*	Lit. 'Sea of Salt'. The Dead Sea.

ירושלים *Yerushalayim*	Jerusalem
ישיבה/ישיבות *Yeshiva/yeshivot* (pl)	Any of numerous Jewish academies of *Talmudic* learning, whose biblical and legal exegesis and application of Scripture have defined and regulated Jewish religious life for centuries.
Yiddish	At one time the international language of Ashkenazi Jews (the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe and their descendants). A hybrid of Hebrew and medieval German, Yiddish takes about three-quarters of its vocabulary from German, but borrows words liberally from Hebrew and many other languages from the many lands where Ashkenazi Jews have lived. It has a grammatical structure all its own, and is written in an alphabet based on Hebrew characters.
יופי *Yofi*	Lovely
יום העצמאות *Yom ha'atsmaut*	Israel's Independence Day.
יום כיפור *Yom Kippur*	The Day of Atonement, considered the most important day of the Jewish calendar.

ABSTRACT

Most Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom underperform in the teaching and learning of Hebrew. Indeed, prominent figures in the UK Jewish establishment have singled out the teaching of *Ivrit* (Modern Hebrew) in Jewish day schools as in need of improvement. Former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks argues that whilst children are undoubtedly better educated Jewishly now than in the past, many challenges remain.

I contend that the physical separation between the Jewish Studies and the Hebrew departments in Jewish day schools does a disservice to both by shutting the door to crucial teaching and learning opportunities of Hebrew. I recommend that Jewish day schools should be working towards breaking down these 'barriers'. In the present research, I address this issue from the perspective of my own interest, namely Hebrew pedagogy. My research investigates the extent to which creating connections between Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools.

I employ an Action Research methodology within the context of a case study using elements of Appreciative Inquiry and written through the lens of Autoethnography. From a theoretical perspective, I draw on research regarding second and foreign language acquisition and suggest that *Ivrit* cannot be separated from its religious, cultural and historic framework. That is, while Hebrew is taught in the United Kingdom as a Modern Foreign Language, I propose that we are in fact teaching a *cultural language*. This term more aptly describes a modern living language bound up in a particular religion, culture and time, as is *Ivrit*. Using the Hebrew root letters as the route to link Biblical and Modern Hebrew, my research demonstrates that this integration can enhance the teaching and learning of both. My case study shows that schools and teachers who choose to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew can successfully embrace educational change, a process which will require them to confront their belief systems as well as accepting new teaching approaches and materials.

The Hebrew language has evolved, survived and thrived over the millennia and for me it is the essence of Jewish survival.

PROLOGUE

I first encountered Peshkin's article, '*In search of subjectivity - One's own'* (1988) in 2014. Reading this article altered the way I thought about research in a profound way. Peshkin gave me the permission and legitimacy to embrace my subjectivity in the process of conducting research.

As Peshkin points out, good scholars are aware that subjectivity is an invariable component of scholarly research. His innovative point is that we should not discount or disdain our own subjectivity, but should rather seek it out, identifying where our own experiences, values and beliefs infiltrate and impact the research process. When researchers observe themselves, states Peshkin, "they learn about the particular subset of personal qualities that contact with their research phenomenon has released" (p.17). These qualities have the "capacity to filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe, and misconstrue what transpires from the outset of a research project to its culmination in a written statement" (p.17). By being conscious of – and acknowledging to the reader – the qualities that arise from within us during the research process, where the "self and subject became joined" (p.17), we can both think and write more freely.

Peshkin's insight came during eleven months of fieldwork in an American high school, when he realised that it was crucial not only to be aware of his subjectivity when writing up his data, but also to recognise its "enabling and disabling potential while the data were still coming in, not after the fact". He identified six "subjective I's" during the course of his research. They were the *Ethnic-Maintenance I,* the *Community-Maintenance I*, the *E-Pluribus-Unum I*, the *Justice-Seeking I*, the *Pedagogical-Meliorist I* and the *Nonresearch Human I* (pp.18-20).

I experienced a powerful epiphany when reading Peshkin's article. I began to wonder how I could apply his insights to my own research, and I began to reflect on my own subjective I's. During this process I became aware of six personal qualities and states of being that I now realise have been with me all the time, but that I had lacked the wherewithal to acknowledge or express. I began to think about how these qualities had pervaded and influenced not only my work but also my life – and to appreciate the extent to which they were having an influence on my research.

Herewith, my own six *Subjective I's*:

1. **The Hebrew Enthusiast**
2. **The Hebrew Pedagogue**
3. **The Jewish Educator**
4. **The Empowerer and Nurturer**
5. **The Research Community Builder**
6. **The Perpetual Voyager**

These six *Subjective I's* have given me an effective framework through which to tell my story. This structure will become apparent over the following pages.

More precisely, this research project represents my own personal and professional journey. As such, I will be relating my story through the lens of autoethnography:

> "What is autoethnography?" you might ask. My brief answer: research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political. Autoethnographic forms feature concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection portrayed in dialogue, scenes, characterization, and plot. Thus, autoethnography claims the conventions of literary writing" (Ellis, 2004, p. xix).

Through this lens:

> *The Hebrew Enthusiast* symbolises my passion for and love of the Hebrew language.

> *The Hebrew Pedagogue* translates this passion into practice as a Hebrew teacher and consultant.

> *The Jewish Educator* signifies my personal and professional development in Jewish education over the past twenty-five years.

> *The Empowerer and Nurturer* guide the way I choose to operate within my role as Jewish educator, Hebrew pedagogue and researcher.

> *The Research Community Builder* is my aspiration to encourage communities of practice to embark on positive change in the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

> *The Perpetual Voyager* symbolises my desire to continue to grow and develop both personally and professionally.

Each chapter begins with a short autoethnographic piece that illuminates my life through these subjective I's.

I now invite you to journey with me.

CHAPTER ONE: THE HEBREW ENTHUSIAST

Pretoria, South Africa. The sun is streaming in through the open window and I can hear the hooting and braking of cars outside and the happy sounds of children laughing. I am sitting at an old wooden desk in my school uniform at cheder[1]. I don't go to a Jewish day school, so my parents send me to cheder three times a week so I can learn about Judaism and Hebrew. Even though I am growing up in an Orthodox Jewish environment, the Hebrew class is mixed; there are boys and girls from my day school who also spend three afternoons a week after school here with me at cheder classes.

Our teacher is an elderly, kind and gentle man who has the patience of a saint. He has an amazing ability to ignore all the stupid pranks we get up to. For example, we regularly smuggle non-kosher sweets into classes, and once my sister sat a whole lesson with her head in the sleeve of her sweater and he didn't say a word. I have on occasion passed hot chips from the local fish and chips shop to her through the window while she was in class. We have put drawing pins on his chair. We are horrible. Yet we learn. We are drilled in Hebrew decoding – sounding out the letters with the different vowels. We read short texts in Hebrew, prayers from the Sabbath service; we learn about the Jewish festivals – we learn.

1.1 Introduction

My research project investigates how the integrating of Biblical and Modern Hebrew, where appropriate and possible, can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools.

This chapter will give the reader a context for understanding my motivations and reasons for embarking on this research. The chapter is chronologically divided into three periods of time that span my life up to the present moment. These are my South African, Israel and England periods. The chapter will also introduce the reader to the relationship between the ancient and modern in Hebrew, and the separation that exists between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. It will then explore the impact of this separation on the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish days schools in the United Kingdom. The chapter ends by providing the reader with a brief insight into the forthcoming chapters.

1.2 South Africa (1964 – 1982)

The short vignette above brings the reader into the world in which I was growing up in the 1960s and 70s in South Africa. This was the time when I started my love affair with Hebrew. I was good at it; I picked it up easily and I enjoyed learning a new language. I was already learning English, Afrikaans and later French at school. I was one of the best students in my Hebrew class – I just got it! However, as I was a girl growing up in a

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[1]*Cheder* is the Hebrew word for room, but here it refers to what is commonly known as Hebrew school or Jewish supplementary school.

Modern Orthodox setting, there wasn't any real outlet for this knowledge. Every week, one of the boys was chosen to read a prayer on Friday night in the synagogue, for the Sabbath eve. I and the other girls were never picked. We were in continuous rehearsal mode never ever getting to be in the actual play. Looking back I realise that this had a tremendous impact on me; it made my connection to Hebrew even stronger although one could have expected the opposite to have happened, and it was one of the influencing factors for my decision to leave Modern Orthodox Judaism and become a Progressive Jew as an adult. A survey undertaken in 2013 in the US reported that fewer than half of Jews who were raised as Orthodox have remained Orthodox, with over twenty percent leaving the religion altogether.[2] The UK National Jewish Community Survey (2014, p.2, in JPR report, 2015)[3] shows that "about three-quarters of people raised in a strictly Orthodox family remain strictly Orthodox in adulthood, whereas only about half of people raised in a central Orthodox or Progressive Jewish family remain central Orthodox or Progressive in adulthood". These two surveys demonstrate that movement of people between Modern Orthodox Judaism and Progressive Judaism is fluid.

My Modern Orthodox upbringing gave me a good grounding in Biblical Hebrew and then later on when I was older, Modern Hebrew became a focal point when I made the decision to go live in Israel.

Hebrew has always been inextricably linked to my Jewish Identity. I belonged to a Zionist youth movement for most of my teenage years in South Africa. It was because of my involvement with this movement that I made the decision to move to Israel when I completed my matriculation. But it was much more than that; I grew up 'Jewishly' there, much more than at home or at *cheder*. I didn't receive any religious education in the conventional sense from this time, but I developed a sense of who I was, what my values were and why I had such a deep commitment to Israel and the Jewish people. With this close link with Israel, Hebrew was very much part of my daily diet. We spoke English sprinkled with many Hebrew words, we learnt all the Hebrew songs coming out of Israel at the time, we learned about the history of Zionism, the wars of Israel. It probably was one of the most profound experiences of my life. It shaped who I was. I was on a clear trajectory – to Israel.

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[2] Survey conducted by the Pew Research Center: http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/ (accessed 31 December 2015).
[3] JPR report, 2015.
http://www.jpr.org.uk/documents/JPR_2015.Strictly_Orthodox_rising.What_the_demography_of_British_Jews_tells_us_about_the_future_of_the_community.pdf (accessed 13 February 2016).

1.3 Israel (1982 – 1987)

After matriculating, I immigrated to Israel in 1982 to a *kibbutz* with a group of fellow South Africans from my Zionist youth movement. Hebrew became a tool for survival, for studying and for living. I studied Modern Hebrew first on the *Kibbutz*[4] *Ulpan*[5] and then at the University of Jerusalem where I graduated with a BA in Education and History of Art. This was also the time when I met my future English husband and we married in 1986 in Israel.

1.4 England (1987 – present)

I came to live in England, armed with two things – a BA and Hebrew. My first weekend job in London was to work in a Progressive Jewish supplementary school where I taught both Biblical and Modern Hebrew to young children. This is where I cut my teeth in teaching. I was initially struck by how little Hebrew children in this country knew; South African Jews generally had a much higher standard of Hebrew. This was due in part to the South African Jewish community being very Zionistic at that time and many Jews going to live in Israel. The fact that the South African Zionist Federation was founded in 1898, only one year after the launching of the World Zionist Conference in Switzerland is testament to these Zionist aspirations. In fact, the support for Zionism and for the State of Israel has always been "an outstanding feature of the South African Jewish community"[6]. Therefore, Hebrew was seen by many not just as a link to their Judaism, but also as a very practical tool, especially for those who were planning to go and live in Israel.

Another insight I gleaned during this time was that people living in London had great difficulty in pronouncing the five Hebrew guttural letters. As a South African, I learnt Afrikaans for many years which also uses guttural letters, so for me it was not a problem. I felt like a fish out of water for most of this initial period of teaching and more so, I was terribly frustrated with the standards of Hebrew and resistance of the children to learning Hebrew. However, throughout these past twenty-eight years, I have kept on with my

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[4]*Kibbutz*: Hebrew word for "communal settlement", established at the beginning of the 20th Century in what was then Palestine, and which later, in 1948, became the State of Israel. "This was a unique rural community; a society dedicated to mutual aid and social justice; a socioeconomic system based on the principle of joint ownership of property, equality and cooperation of production, consumption and education; the fulfilment of the idea 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs'; a home for those who have chosen it". https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/kibbutz.html
(accessed 8 April 2015).
There are 256 kibbutzim (plural of Kibbutz) still in existence in Israel today.
[5] *Ulpan*: intensive Hebrew learning course
[6] http://www.jewishsa.co.za/about-sajbd/sa-jewish-history/ (accessed 31 December 2015).

Hebrew teaching be it with young, older children or adults, in formal or informal settings. It has been my mainstay, my constant companion.

Not only did I teach Hebrew, but also through my early association with Leo Baeck College[7], I started studying the pedagogy of Hebrew, and I began to see Hebrew in the context of second language learning and then in the context of Modern Foreign Languages as part of the national curriculum. I began to realise that if one were to be a good Hebrew teacher it wasn't enough to just know Hebrew and to know how to teach, one also had to understand theories of language acquisition. Dori argued a decade ago, that Hebrew educators needed to take advantage of the wealth of material available on linguistic theory and pedagogy in order to articulate their goals for Hebrew language learning (1992, p. 264). It was also at this time that I was introduced to Dr Stephen Krashen. He changed my whole concept of language learning and to this day I still draw upon his teaching in my own teaching and training. I will turn to him fully in the next chapter.

Seven years ago, together with an Israeli colleague, I began a project of creating a Hebrew curriculum for the Jewish day schools and community schools. Four out of the seven units have been produced, with the fifth in production. This programme is now being used in approximately twenty different schools and communities in the UK, some European countries, the United States and even South Africa. The programme, albeit a secular, Modern Hebrew programme aimed to teach reading and writing, is predicated on Jewish values, commandments or teachings from the *Tanach* (Jewish Bible). In this way, it is never far from Jewish sources. It was very important for us to develop a programme that would always have an inroad to Jewish Studies, so that integration between the religious and secular world could meet where appropriate.

1.5 The Ancient and the Modern

This relationship between the ancient/holy and secular/modern in Hebrew has always held great fascination for me. As I was fortunate enough to study both, it was natural to me that if I were teaching Biblical Hebrew, I would relate some words or concepts to Modern Hebrew and vice versa as way of further explanation. I felt that learners would have a deeper understanding of what they were reading in Biblical Hebrew if they could relate it to something closer to home. So, for most of my years of teaching Hebrew, be it Biblical or

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[7] Leo Baeck College – This is the organisation in which I have been working for the past fourteen years. Previous to that I worked for the Centre for Jewish Education for seven years and in 2001, the Centre and the College merged.

Modern, I would always endeavour, where possible, to make links to both the Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

John Gould, Professor of Greek at Bristol University, was described in his obituary as "an exhilarating lecturer and teacher" who was "convinced that it was impossible to understand a language without understanding the way the people who spoke it understood their world". He taught "irregular principal parts alongside Greek culture, society and literature and urged his students not to let their appreciation of the ancient world be coloured by modern values and assumptions".[8] Gould understood the significance of linking the ancient with the modern in order to develop within his learners a much richer understanding of the Greek language.

Regarding the teaching of Hebrew, it was clear that not many teachers taught this way; they were either Jewish Studies teachers and taught the Biblical or Classical Hebrew relating to the liturgy and the festivals or they were Israeli teachers who taught Modern Hebrew and who were, more often than not, secular and had very little knowledge of Jewish studies. So a separation between the two existed. However, this separation did not just come about due to the lack of knowledge of the other; one has to go far back into the history of the Jewish people to really understand it. It developed because of religious, historical, political influences that existed in many different contexts and periods in the history of the Jews and Judaism.

1.6 Never the Twain Shall Meet[9]

The passage below from Potok's novel *The Chosen* relates the story of the tensions that exist between two Jewish communities in New York in the mid 1940's and beautifully illustrates the struggle between the holy and the secular:

> "I was an *apikoros*[10] to Danny Saunders, despite my belief in God and Torah,
> because I did not have side curls and was attending a parochial school where too
> many English subjects were offered and where Jewish subjects were taught in
> Hebrew instead of Yiddish, both unheard-of sins, the former because it took time
> away from the study of Torah, the latter because Hebrew was the Holy Tongue

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[8] Obituary: https://global-factiva-com.ezproxy.mdx.ac.uk/ga/default.aspx (accessed 30 August 2014).
[9] This saying is part of the refrain of "The Ballad of East and West," a poem by Rudyard Kipling.
http://www.dictionary.com/browse/east-is-east--and-west-is-west--and-never-the-twain-shall-meet (accessed; 23 May 2016).
[10] *Apikoros:* one who negates the rabbinic tradition. The designation *apikoros* first occurs in rabbinic literature in the *Mishnah.* http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0002_0_01180.html. (accessed 13 February 2016).

and to use it in ordinary classroom discourse was a desecration of God's name" (Potok, 1966, p. 30).

Understanding the struggle for modernity, the breaking away from the old to establish a new, modern Jewish reality and the resultant chasm between the two are crucial. In particular relation to Hebrew, the separation between the holy and secular saw its zenith in the twentieth century and, in my opinion, has impacted and continues to impact greatly on the teaching and learning of Hebrew today.

One such moment in the struggle for modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is the rise of Jewish nationalism (Zionism) and the desire for the Jewish people to have a land of their own. This struggle brought about a great deal of tension between the Orthodox Jews and the secular Jews:

> "Zionism began as a self-conscious rejection of Orthodox Judaism and its passivity. For much of the nineteenth century, writers revising the Hebrew language as a literary medium had savagely criticized the life of traditional Jews… Because of their ideology, the Zionists wanted to secularize Jewish life. Classical Zionism was strongly anti-religious and anti-clerical. In addition …, most Zionists equated modernity with the death of God and the end of religion. The Zionists set about secularizing Judaism. The "holy tongue", Hebrew became the language of everyday speech." (Borowitz, pages 82 -83).

1.7 Impact of the Separation on the Teaching and Learning of Hebrew

The separation between the holy language of the Bible and the secular language of modern day Israel is still prevalent in many Jewish day schools. In most Jewish day schools, there is a physical separation in that there is a Jewish Studies department and an *Ivrit*[11] department. Each department usually has its own staff but there are occasions where one teacher teaches in both departments. The departments do not talk to each other, let alone collaborate on lesson planning. As the Jewish Studies teachers do not know what the *Ivrit* teachers are teaching and vice–versa, this division impacts on the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

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[11] *Ivrit* – the Hebrew word for *Hebrew* and common nomenclature for *Modern Hebrew.*

What follows is how a child might be experiencing this division:

I am eight years old. I am in an Ivrit lesson in my Jewish primary school with teacher Leah. I've been a student at Hope Jewish Primary since reception class. I'm a boisterous, inquisitive and chatty child. My teacher says to me in Ivrit: "At tamid medaberet!" (You are always talking!). I grasp the gist of the sentence but don't understand the word tamid*. In my usual confident way, I ask Leah what this means. She is incredulous. "Rachel, I'm surprised you don't know what this means, it means always". "At **tamid** medaberet."*

Later that day I am in a Jewish Studies lesson, with my teacher Mr. Davids, and the topic of the lesson is the Synagogue. We are learning about the different aspects of a synagogue – its purpose, structure, history, and components. The discussion moves on to the various religious objects that can be found in a synagogue. One such object is the ner tamid*, the everlasting light that is suspended over the ark which contains the Sifrei Torah, the Torah scrolls – the focal point in all synagogues.*

Being an inquisitive and questioning child, my brain is working overtime. Hadn't I just learnt in my Ivrit class that tamid means always? What's that got to do with the ner tamid – the everlasting light? Is this the same word, and what does it mean here? Luckily for me, and the class, I ask my teacher if the word tamid that I learnt with Leah is the same word used here. Surprised by my understanding, Mr. Davids answers, "Yes, both words are connected and have a similar meaning. The ner tamid actually means eternal light – everlasting, continuous, never-ending, undying". He goes on to explain that in ancient times, the ner tamid would have been an oil lamp, and it would have been somebody's job to make sure it was always alight. Today, this has been replaced by a light bulb, usually encased in a beautiful fitting. This light is always kept on. Mr. Davids explains that the eternal light was associated with the menorah, the seven-branched lamp stand which stood in front of the Temple in Jerusalem, as well as with the continuously-burning incense altar which stood in front of the ark, as described in the First Book of Kings (chapter 6). He also says that the sages interpreted the ner tamid as a symbol of God's eternal presence.[12]

Mr. Davids gets so involved in explaining the ner tamid, its function and its historical significance, that he forgets to answer my original question. He never actually makes the link explicit, for me and my class, between the uses of the word tamid in the Biblical and modern contexts. I am left suspended, not fully understanding the connection between always and everlasting and why the same Hebrew word is used in both contexts, and why there are many words for tamid in English.

I have used Rachel, the typical child, as a device to illustrate to the reader what a learner studying these two subjects may experience when coming across the same Hebrew word which is used in two different contexts. The learner is left confused because the teacher has failed to make the link between the two usages of the same word clear. This scenario gives an insight into the separation that exists between the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* department in Jewish day schools. Despite the fact that these are the two areas of a Jewish day school's curriculum that gives it its Jewish nature and ethos, they operate in isolation. From a religious perspective, there is no reason for this separation to continue;

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[12] *Ner tamid*: https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/ner_tamid.html (accessed 31 December 2015).

linking the holy language with the secular language is not *chilul hashem*[13], it does not diminish the importance or relevance of Hebrew as the language of the Bible and Jewish religious law. From a pedagogic perspective, this separation perpetuates a cycle of missed teaching and learning opportunities.

I have noticed that over the past five years there has been a shift in attitude toward the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew; there is now more awareness of how this integration can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew. This awareness has come about, in the main, through my work in the Jewish educational field: presentations I have given at various Jewish educational conferences, meetings I have held with Heads of Jewish Studies and through my teaching.

1.8 Précis of Chapters Two to Seven

Chapter Two, *The Hebrew Pedagogue* will set out the terms of reference and objectives of my research. It will provide the reader with a critical exploration of the evolution and development of the Hebrew language over the millennia. I draw upon the work of historians and academics such as Sàenz-Badillos, Carmi, Hoffman, Schiff, Rosén, Kaye and Brettler.

Chapter Three, *The Jewish Educator* will help the reader navigate through the at times complex world of research methodology. I will describe and justify my chosen research approach and data collection techniques, using Jonker et al.'s *Research Pyramid* as a starting point. The chapter will articulate my ontological and epistemological stance with regard to the Hebrew language.

Chapter Four, *The Empowerer and Nurturer* will give the reader an overview of the main activities that I undertook in a Jewish primary school during the research project. I will highlight the ebbs and flows, pushes and pulls and turning points that determined the research path.

Chapter Five, *The Research Community Builder* will bring the reader into the world of the teachers and the learners. I will present the reader with an analytic narrative of the data obtained during the research process and the findings that emerged.

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[13] *Chilul Hashem*: 'blasphemy', literally meaning 'desecration of the (Divine) Name', disgracing God's name; an action that might be looked down upon. http://www.jewish-languages.org/jewish-english-lexicon/words/1343 (accessed 31 December 2015).

Chapter Six, *The Perpetual Voyager* will give the reader an overall summary of the project and the conclusions that have been drawn from the findings. I also offer five recommendations that have emerged from the research. I also give a critical reflection of the research as well as a personal and professional reflection of the journey I have undertaken.

Chapter Seven provides an opportunity for the reader to simply delight in the beauty of the Hebrew language.

CHAPTER TWO: THE HEBREW PEDAGOGUE

It is cold in the classroom. We are in the month of October and the days are drawing in early. Before me are thirteen young adults who are currently studying to become Jewish Studies teachers in Jewish day schools. I have been asked to deliver a term's course on integrating Modern Hebrew within Jewish Studies lessons. I have always naturally brought in the connections between the two, but this is the first time I have specifically been asked to create a 12-week course that will give students the tools to do this, and more importantly to instil in them an appreciation of why the integration between Modern and Biblical Hebrew is so important to their and their learners' understanding of Hebrew.

For the first session, I decide to focus on one of the most central prayers in the Jewish liturgy – the 'Sh'ma' (lit. 'Hear'). The prayer proclaims the unity of God and the duty placed on Jews to love God "with all your heart, and all your soul and all your might"[14]. These students will be very familiar with the prayer, as they have recited it all their lives, both privately at home and publicly in assemblies and synagogue.

I decide to concentrate on the word v'ahavta*, meaning "you shall love…". I ask my students to identify the three Hebrew root letters of this word. Most do this without any problem and give them to me. I then ask them to create more words from these three letters, and many are able to offer suggestions, such as the noun 'love', 'he loves/likes' and 'she loves/likes'. I then put a sentence together in Modern Hebrew – 'he loves chocolate'. And another, 'I don't like popcorn'. Soon the student teachers begin to realise that the same three Hebrew roots are used in Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew. By adding different prefixes, infixes and suffixes to these letters, different words are formed. They also begin to realise that the same word in Hebrew can have slightly different meanings in English when used in different contexts, as here (love and like).*

And so the learning begins.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by giving the reader an insight into the status of Hebrew teaching and learning in the UK and the research that has been undertaken over the past four years. It will then discuss the educational change process that I embarked upon using Fullan's educational change theory as a framework. As Hebrew is the central protagonist in my story, the chapter focuses on the evolution of the Hebrew language over the millennia. It provides the reader with a critical exploration of its development over time and a reservoir of knowledge emanating from the academic world and my own epistemology. This exploration has informed my thinking, has identified the gaps in my knowledge and most of all, has challenged my strongly held beliefs and understandings. I have relied considerably, but not exclusively, on the work of Sàenz-Badillos (1993), as will be noted, as I found it to be the most comprehensive history of the Hebrew language. I have also cited the works of other historians and academics such as Carmi, Hoffman, Schiff, Rosén, Kaye, Rabin and Brettler. I also provide an interlude by delving briefly into the world of the Greek language in which I draw upon some of the similarities and differences between

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[14] From: *Forms of Prayer,* Movement for Reform Judaism, 2008, p.212-213.

Greek and Hebrew[15]. The chapter closes with a summary of all the different subjects that have been explored.

2.2 Current State of Hebrew Teaching and Learning in Jewish Day Schools in the UK

The level of Hebrew teaching in most Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom has been singled out for improvement. In the preface of the *Pikuach*[16] report (Miller, 2012), the former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks writes:

"[…] There is no doubt that our children are better educated Jewishly now than in the past […]". However, he continues, "[…] challenges remain […]. Taken as a whole we still underperform in the teaching of *Ivrit*[17]". It is documented in the report, that the teaching of reading and writing Biblical Hebrew (p.4) and *Ivrit* (p.20) was one of the areas highlighted for action in the 2007 report as well as in both the 2000 and 2003 reports.

During the past four years however, some of these issues have been addressed. For example, the Jewish Curriculum Partnership (JCP)[18] works with thirty-seven Jewish day schools in its *Ivrit* programme in "developing and sharing curriculum frameworks, teaching methods and resources. […] the positive impact of the JCP is beginning to be felt..." (Miller, p.4).

Furthermore, since the 2012 *Pikuach* report, the JCP commissioned research in the same year to explore approaches to Hebrew reading[19]. Observations and face-to-face interviews amongst Head teachers, teachers and pupils were conducted and questionnaires were sent out to parents in six Jewish day schools, in Early Years, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two classrooms. Some of the main findings were that the lack of Hebrew literacy around the classroom environment led to a lack of understanding about the purpose of learning to read Hebrew. Moreover, most teachers observed were unqualified, namely, they did not have qualified teacher status. The report continued to claim that ninety five percent of the children answered that they would have liked to understand what they were reading. The report's main recommendations were that children should know the meaning of identified key words, that there should be overall

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[15] My brief examination of the Greek language makes for an interesting comparison with the Hebrew language as both languages have classical and modern components. Each language has, however, gone down very different paths.
[16] *Pikuach:* Hebrew term meaning *supervision*. An organisation called *Pikuach* was set up in 1996 by the Board of Deputies of British Jews (or BOD) to monitor and record Jewish and Judaic benchmarks in Jewish day schools.
[17] *Ivrit*: the Hebrew word for *Hebrew* and common nomenclature for *Modern Hebrew*.
[18] *JCP:* organization that works in the majority of the mainstream Jewish primary and secondary schools in Hebrew curriculum and teacher development in the UK.
[19] Research: see http://prezi.com/37 audimmfm3bfqoc/hebrew-literacy-research-project

meaning of text and context and the link between Modern Hebrew and Hebrew (Biblical) reading should be explored. It further notes, "in schools that teach *Ivrit* there are often wasted opportunities to combine teaching methods used both in Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* lessons" (p.5).

I have yet to discover any research undertaken that brings Biblical and Modern Hebrew together in a pedagogic environment in order to impact positively on the teaching and learning of the language. There is an abundance of literature on Hebrew, both Biblical and Modern, their history and development, and Hebrew language development, but nothing that deals specifically with my research area of amalgamating the two.

As I argued in Chapter One I am convinced that one contributing factor for the underperformance in Hebrew attainment is due to the separation made between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. This separation permeates the very core of the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools to the detriment of progress and achievement. Important pedagogic opportunities to enrich and deepen the learners' understanding of Hebrew and impact positively on their general Hebrew competence are being missed. Not only does this separation impact on the learners but on the teachers as well. Integrating these two areas will bring about collaborative planning across the departments which will increase the teachers', and thus the learners', knowledge and confidence in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

My research specifically focuses on creating links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew for both teacher and learner. This inquiry has been framed as a case study in a Jewish primary school where I undertook an action research project with two Year Three classes. My pedagogic intervention incorporated devising a framework for both the *Ivrit* and Jewish Studies teachers to use in order to make these links explicit. Another very important goal of this study was to encourage and support the teachers to plan collaboratively in order to encourage this integration.

My research project draws together three distinct areas: *Language Acquisition*, focusing on Hebrew pedagogy, *Curriculum Innovation* and *Educational Change*. The two former areas will be covered in depth in Chapter Four when I discuss the project activity. I would like, at this point, to discuss the theoretical framework for the educational change process that I embarked upon.

2.3 Educational Change

According to Fullan (1991), implementing educational change or innovation involves 'change in practice' (p.37). This is multidimensional process and there are "at least three components or dimensions at stake in implementing any new program or policy". These dimensions are the possible use of new or revised *materials* (such as, teaching resources), the possible use of new *teaching approaches* (such as, new teaching strategies or activities) and the possible alteration of *beliefs* (such as, pedagogical assumptions) (p.37). Fullan argues that changes in programme or material are the most visible aspect of change and the easiest to implement. Change in teaching approaches is more difficult, as the teacher needs to acquire new skills to suit the new material. However, changes in beliefs are even more difficult to achieve as they challenge the core values held by individuals regarding the purposes of education (p.42). Fullan argues that when these three aspects of change are operating together educational goals can be achieved (p.37).

From the teaching perspective, I would argue that my research methods and techniques (which are explored in detail in the following chapter) should illuminate whether Fullan's three dimensions of change have taken place during my research and to what extent.

My research project will examine the following:

1. From the **programmatic/material** perspective:
   The ability of the teachers to translate the theoretical framework I devised into practical lessons, as well as their ability to modify and change it as and when necessary.

2. From the **teaching approaches** perspective:
   The ability of the teachers to teach the root letters of key Hebrew vocabulary as the key skill and inroad for pupil understanding. Whether both the Jewish Studies and Hebrew teachers are bringing in the links more naturally in their lessons. Whether Modern Hebrew is integrated more generally into the life of the school.

3. From the **changes in beliefs** perspective:
   Whether the teachers understand and appreciate why integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew. Whether they have internalised this integration as a positive step in enhancing the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

From the learner's perspective, the research methods and techniques will determine if and to what extent the pedagogic intervention has impacted upon their:

Skills:
1. Ability to identify root letters of key Hebrew words.
2. Ability to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew with teacher intervention and then naturally without teacher intervention.
3. Ability to recognise and identify recurring Hebrew words and phrases that appear in different contexts.

Attitudes:
1. The extent to which they have a positive attitude to learning Hebrew.
2. The extent to which they feel a sense of achievement when they are able to identify root letters and apply knowledge from one context to another.

Understandings:
1. The extent to which they know that the Hebrew they learn in Jewish Studies lessons and the Hebrew they learn in Ivrit lessons have many similarities and are the same language.
2. The extent to which they know that the vast majority of words (verbs and nouns) in the Hebrew language come from a three-consonant root word that contains the essence of the word's meaning, thus enabling them to become independent learners.
3. The extent to which they know that these same root letters appear in both the Hebrew they learn in Jewish Studies lessons and in Ivrit lessons and that these root letters have the same or similar meaning.
4. The extent to which they know that their Jewish Studies and Ivrit teachers are working and planning together to help them achieve and understand this.

2.4   The Hebrew Language and Its Evolution

"Hebrew is a Semitic[20] dialect or language which developed in the north western part of the Near East between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea during the latter half of the second millennium BCE" according to Sàenz-Badillos (1993, p.1).

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[20] Term first introduced by G.W.Leibniz in the eighteenth century. Today there are about 70 different languages or dialects that are considered Semitic (see Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.3).

The long history of the Hebrew language has persisted as a written language for more than 3,000 years whilst as a spoken language "it has had to survive in many different situations, following the complicated historical course of the Jewish people". The Jewish people have spent "more than half its existence in a bilingual setting, adapting to a wide range of cultural and linguistic environments". The consequences of this constant adaptation have, undoubtedly, left its marks and influence on the Hebrew language (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.50).

Despite this history, Hebrew has existed throughout and the language has remained largely the same over the years having undergone changes to its vocabulary but generally its "morphological, phonological or even syntactic structure" has remained intact. This is even true of Modern Hebrew that also has had "a fascinating process of revival" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.50). Not only has the basic structures, morphological system, and verbal morphology of the language been preserved, without major changes over the centuries, it is also "possible to claim that the vocabulary of the Bible has been the basis for all later periods, despite the numerous innovations of each era" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.50).

Sàenz-Badillos (1993, p.51) divides the history of the Hebrew language into four different periods, which correspond to four very different "linguistic corpuses" – Biblical Hebrew, Rabbinic Hebrew, Mediaeval Hebrew and Modern "or Israeli" Hebrew.

2.4.1 Biblical Hebrew

The beginning date of the creation of the world according to the traditional Hebrew calendar is 3761 BCE, with the creation of Adam and Eve in 3760[21]. The current Hebrew date is 5776. The earliest Hebrew texts that have surfaced date from the end of the second millennium BCE (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.52). An example of such a text is the "Gezer Calendar", a piece of inscribed limestone, found in modern-day Israel, which dates back to the early tenth century BCE. It is considered to be the earliest surviving example of a Hebrew-like dialect. What is interesting is that it appears not to contain vowels and as such, the 10th century BCE has been established as the likely date "before which Hebrew did not use vowel symbols" (Hoffman, 2004, p.31).

Biblical Hebrew (BH) was used as a literary language and until the Babylonian exile[22], it existed alongside living, spoken, dialects (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.52). Brettler (2002, p.2)

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[21] See http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/timeline.html (accessed 8 January 2016).
[22] *Babylonian exile:* the forced detention of Jews in Babylonia (ancient cultural region occupying southeastern Mesopotamia between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (modern southern Iraq from around Baghdad to the

adds, stating that the very term BH implies that there was a single, unified language, but actually, there were several dialects which merged into the Hebrew Bible and which can be distinguished mainly chronologically, geographically, and according to the genre. BH is not considered to be "a language in the full sense of the word but merely a 'fragment of language', […] actually used by the Israelites prior to the Babylonian exile". The approximate "8,000 lexical items preserved in the books of the Bible would not have been enough to meet the needs of a living language" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.53).

The period of the Babylonian exile marks the point when the language disappeared from everyday use and became confined to literary and liturgical purposes (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.52). This is the language that is in the prose sections of the *Pentateuch* (five books of Moses) and in the *Prophets* and the *Writings* before the exile as *Classical Biblical Hebrew* or *Biblical Hebrew* proper. The language of most of the books of the Bible written after the exile is termed *Late Biblical Hebrew* (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.113).

Hoffman writes that the oldest copy of the Hebrew Bible as we know it today is only approximately 1000 years old, leaving a gap of nearly two thousand years. It was between 600 CE and 800 CE that several groups of people, known as the Masoretes, tried to "record and annotate the 'authentic' version of the Bible in Hebrew". Some of these attempts were successful as the version produced by one of these groups from Tiberius, in Israel, is considered to be the authentic version in religious circles. However, most people assume that this version, due to its religious endorsement and because it is the Hebrew Bible that is published today and is what we consider as the Hebrew Bible, it is completely religiously accurate and completely historically accurate. Hoffman argues that it is not. The Hebrew that was originally used to write the Bible, namely BH, is not the same as the Hebrew used in the Hebrew Bible of today. The question of how closely the Masoretic Hebrew matched that of the earlier Hebrew arises. In brief, the original Hebrew, as has been already argued, did not contain vowels, but only had the hints of three vowels, known as *vowel letters* or in Latin as *matres lectiones*– *yud*, *hey* and *vav*. The Masoretes, some two thousand years later, started adding "diacritic marks to the original Hebrew to indicate sound information that the original Hebrew did not" (Hoffman, 2004, p.50). This insertion helped to distinguish certain words from one another that had the same consonants, and therefore helped with the correct pronunciation. Another addition

Persian Gulf) http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/47586/Babylonia (accessed 25 August 2014) following the latter's conquest of the kingdom of Judah in 598/7 and 587/6 BC. The exile formally ended in 538 BC, when the Persian conqueror of Babylonia, Cyrus the Great, gave the Jews permission to return to Palestine. Historians agree that several deportations took place (each the result of uprisings in Palestine), that not all Jews were forced to leave their homeland, that returning Jews left Babylonia at various times, and that some Jews chose to remain in Babylonia—thus constituting the first of numerous Jewish communities living permanently in the Diaspora. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/47693/Babylonian-Exile (accessed 25 August 2014).

was to address the problem of letters representing more than one sound. They did this by adding a dot to the upper left of one of these letters to denote a *s* sound as opposed to a *sh* sound. The Masoretes not only wanted to ensure people pronounced words correctly, they also wanted the people to understand what they were reading. So they devised a punctuation system that would inform the reader which words were to be grouped together. In addition to these two major changes in pronunciation and punctuation, the Masoretes also created "an intricate musical system for singing the text in liturgical settings" (Hoffman, 2004, p.51). It is assumed that the Masoretes' goals in making these changes were "some combination of preserving the text of antiquity and standardizing the text of their day" (Hoffman, 2004, p.69).

Hoffman maintains that Hebrew, in the form of *Late Biblical Hebrew,* "remained a literary and religious language […] lasting at least into the Second Century CE" (2004, p.165). In terms of spoken Hebrew, it is unclear whether it ceased to be spoken shortly after the exile or if indeed, as other scholars claim, it was a commonly spoken language until the 2nd century CE.

2.4.2   Rabbinic Hebrew

This is the term used to refer to Hebrew as it existed after the Late Biblical Hebrew era (Hoffman, 2004, p.172). This period ranges roughly from 70 CE when the Second Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans to 500 CE with the completion of the Babylonian *Talmud*[23]. It was during this time that the rabbis lived who made up the "post-Biblical religious authorities" and who "helped form what would become today's normative Judaism" (Hoffman, 2004, p.173). There has been a great deal of disagreement about the nature and character of *Rabbinic Hebrew* (RH), with some scholars considering it to be "a completely different language from the Hebrew of the Bible" and others, such as Geiger, viewing it as a 'Hebraized Aramaic'" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.162). Despite these differing scholarly views, the origins of RH have in the main been agreed upon. RH has always basically been a literary idiom and that it ceased "being used as a living vernacular around the end of the second century CE, surviving for several centuries, however, alongside Aramaic as a literary language" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p. 202). The Copper Scroll, one of

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[23] *Talmud*: source from which the code of Jewish law is derived. It is made up of the *Mishna* and the *Gemara*. The *Mishna* is the original written version of the oral law and the *Gemara* is the record of the rabbinic discussions following this writing down. www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/**judaism**/texts/**talmud**.shtml (accessed 8 January 2016).

the Dead Sea Scrolls[24] and the *Bar-Kochba* letters[25] are amongst some of the oldest examples of written RH from this period (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.166).

Furthermore, we learn that the majority of prayers in Jewish liturgy were composed by the rabbis in Rabbinic Hebrew, which often incorporated significant Biblical quotations as well as the "formulaic language of blessings" also being Rabbinic (Hoffman, 2004, p.173). Hoffman explains that the second biggest body of RH derives from the *Mishna*[26] and that many of the prayers that made their way into Jewish liturgy also appear in the *Mishna*. Some parts of another important set of writings, called *midrash*[27], were also written in RH (Hoffman, 2004, p.174). It is interesting to note the influence of the Greek language on RH which can be seen in the "hundreds of loan words" that RH incorporated. Many technical Greek words were included into RH because certain concepts did not exist in BH. One such example are the Greek words *katigoros* and *paraklit,* which are used still today in Modern Hebrew to denote *prosecutor* and *defense lawyer* respectively, but which were first used in RH (Hoffman, 2004, p.179).

Hoffman argues that RH was a "vibrant, changing language based on Biblical Hebrew" and that these changes confirm an important fact about it: many of the changes, particularly changes to spelling, would not have taken place if people were not speaking the language, proving that RH not only was a literary language, but a spoken one as well (Hoffman, 2004, p.180).

2.4.3   Mediaeval Hebrew

It is usual to name the stage of Hebrew that follows the RH era as Mediaeval Hebrew (MH) (Hoffman, 2004, p.180). The dating of this next period in the evolution of the Hebrew language is not that simple to establish: "Sometime during the sixth to seventh centuries […], there was a first movement towards the revitalization of Hebrew which may be considered as making the beginnings of MH, even though the language remained deeply rooted in the past". Hebrew at this time was mainly a literary language, although the language did not disappear entirely from day to day use. Jews across the world tended to

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[24] The *Dead Sea Scrolls:* ancient Hebrew scrolls that were accidentally discovered in 1947 by a Bedouin boy in Israel's Judean Desert. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/deadsea.html (accessed 2 September 2015).
[25] *Shimon Bar-Kokhba:* leader of the Jewish revolt against Rome between 132 and 135 C.E. Letters written in his name between 132 and 134 C.E., were found in the Judean desert between 1952 and 1961. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Kokhba.html (accessed 2 September 2015).
[26] *Mishna:* first section of the *Talmud*, being a collection of early oral interpretations of the scriptures as compiled about AD 200. http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Mishnah (accessed 12 February 2016).
[27] *Midrash*: early Jewish interpretation of or commentary on a Biblical text, clarifying or expounding a point of law or developing or illustrating a moral principle. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/midrash (accessed 8 January 2016).

adopt the host country's language for every day communication, but "they continued to pray and read the Bible in Hebrew" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.202). There are also testimonies of various mediaeval travellers that show that "the use of the language in conversation had not ceased completely, as there were some communities, […], that used Hebrew in everyday life". There are many different types of documents from this period all written in Hebrew, as well as Hebrew inscriptions on gravestones which all go to prove that Hebrew was alive and well (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.203).

Sàenz-Badillos' scholarship points to MH still being used, albeit limitedly, as a spoken language whereas Hoffman, uses the term "non-Spoken Hebrew" (Hoffman, 2004, p.181) to denote this period which followed RH and preceded Modern Hebrew. This lack of agreement among principal scholars of Hebrew demonstrates that the understanding of the development of the Hebrew language can never be absolutely precise.

Notwithstanding, the tenth century ushers in a new phase in the revival of the Hebrew as a literary language. Hebrew soon reached the western limits of the Islamic world in particular, Andalusia, where Jews in this area began to develop vigour for poetry and prose. (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.203). Carmi (1981, p.13) argues that Hebrew poetry has been written almost without any interruption from Biblical times to the present day. The reason why it is believed that Hebrew poetry has developed intermittently is because of its peculiar fate and nature, namely, its chronological span and geographical distribution (Carmi, 1981, p.13). Up to the tenth century the ancestry of Hebrew poetry is fairly clear: all the *paytanim* (liturgical poets) thrived in Palestine during the classical period and at the end of the ninth century Hebrew poetry makes its debut on European soil, specifically in southern Italy (Andalusia). In Spain, Hebrew poetry spans some five hundred years. This era has been divided into two periods: the Muslim period (*c.* 950-1150) and the Christian period (*c.*1150-1492) (Carmi, 1981, p.24). During the 'golden age' period (*c.* 1020-1150) figures such as Samuel Hanagid, Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses ibn Ezra and Judah Halevi came to prominence. Secular Hebrew poetry emerged "at the courts of Jewish grandees who served as courtiers to Muslim rulers", first in the caliphate of Cordoba and then after the dissolution of the caliphate, in smaller Muslim principalities (Carmi, 1981, p.25). Carmi talks of this "aristocratic birth set its mark not only on the subjects of the poetry, but also on its style and character". Such creativity ranged from songs of self-praise, wine songs, love songs, meditative poems. The poetry was "urban and elegant, and it delighted in ornate metaphors" (Carmi, 1981, p.25). The attraction of Arabic verse became another shaping force and also the desire at this time to revive Biblical Hebrew. Carmi explains that the "revival of Biblical vocabulary and images was stimulated by strong national sentiments and reflected a current rivalry with the host culture" (Carmi, 1981, p.26).

MH was never considered to be a language in the full sense of the term. It was rather "a revival of linguistic usages and traditions, developed according to each writer's judgement, depending on his particular social and cultural background" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.204). The study of MH began only a few decades ago and as such "we are still in the initial phase of a new discipline, where we lack as yet the necessary detailed studies of MH writers and works to develop a complete picture of the various linguistic forms which are included under the general name of MH" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.207).

This brief historical overview of the Hebrew language shows that Hebrew is diglossic in nature. Kaye (1993) explains that diglossia is the "phenomenon where two varieties of a single language exist simultaneously, one for informal colloquial use and one for formal literary use" (p.105), and that "such a phenomenon has been studied for spoken Arabic vs classical Arabic, Haitian Creole vs standard French" (p.105). Ferguson (1959) explains that in "many speech communities two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions" (p.232).

Kaye refers to Rendsburg who, in his doctoral thesis, tries to establish such a "bifurcation for ancient Hebrew – a written dialect used for literary works and formal language and a spoken dialect used for everyday communication". Kaye argues that contrasting the two as written versus spoken is "slightly inaccurate since in certain settings the formal language is used for speaking while in others the colloquial language may be used for writing". Whilst Kaye may not agree wholly with Rendsburg's classifications, it is clear that diglossia exists in one form or another in ancient Hebrew (p.105).

It is interesting to note that the discussion concerning diglossia in the context of the Greek language has also developed over the years. Dendrinos (2007, p.54) discusses that a great deal of language planning activity in Greece had revolved around the question of *Diglossia*. A problem she says that was "bequeathed to the Greek nation during the years of the Hellenistic Koine (the Common Greek language)" and that:

> "around the debate concerning a national language that would wake the national consciousness and the desire for liberation... The traditionalists argued for the resurrection of the classical Greek, uncontaminated by 'impure' admixtures with which it had been 'polluted' during its contacts"... Others advocated a less utopian approach characterized by two tendencies, both of which recognized the priority of the language people actually spoke".

She explains that the liberal population wanted to promote the spoken and popular language as the only way for mass education, "spiritual cultivation and national uprising". The converse was true for the conservatives who wanted the spoken language but 'cleansed', rejecting all the Turkish loan words and by correcting the "phonology, morphology and syntax of the spoken language through the grafting onto it classicizing forms" (p.54).

2.4.4   Modern Hebrew

It is now time to fast forward through several centuries to the development of Modern Hebrew. Some experts argue that, "a new phase of the language had already begun in the sixteenth century" with earliest manifestations of a Hebrew play and the first Yiddish-Hebrew dictionary (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.267). This phase continued in the eighteenth century with first examples of Hebrew newspapers and quarterly reviews of *Ha-Me'assef*[28], and the first regular weekly, *Ha-Maggid*[29], which began publication in Russia in 1856.

This Jewish enlightenment in the second half of the eighteenth century made a significant impact on the Hebrew language. The 'enlightened' ones, "viewed Rabbinic Hebrew with disdain", and lamented "the sorry state of Hebrew in the diaspora" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.267). They blamed the influence of "Arabic in mediaeval philosophy and the use of the 'corrupt' Yiddish language together with the inadequacies of Hebrew itself in comparison with other languages" for its demise. This movement tried to "restore Hebrew as a living language", attempting to "purify the language and to promote correct usage". They also wanted to increase "its powers of expression" and saw nothing wrong in using "modern terms from German and other western languages" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, pp.267-268).

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[28] *Ha Me'assef:* (Hebrew meaning "the collector"), first Hebrew organ of the *Haskala*. Founded in 1783 in Koenigsberg by pupils of Moses Mendelssohn, *Hame'assef* was devoted to the education of youth, the increased use of the Hebrew language, and raising the general cultural level of the people. Although the organ was planned as a monthly, it actually appeared as a quarterly whose numbers were collected into annual volumes. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0008_0_08300.html (accessed 25 August 2014).
* *Haskala*: or Jewish Enlightenment, was an intellectual movement in Europe that lasted from approximately the 1770s to the 1880s. The *Haskala* was inspired by the European Enlightenment but had a Jewish character. Literally, *Haskala* comes from the Hebrew word *sekhel*, meaning "reason" or intellect" and the movement was based on rationality. It encouraged Jews to study secular subjects, to learn both the European and Hebrew languages, and to enter fields such as agriculture, crafts, the arts and science. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Haskalah.html (accessed 25 August 2014).
[29] *Ha-Maggid:* Hebrew weekly, published between 1856 and 1903. *Ha-Maggid* (The Preacher) was the first Hebrew weekly newspaper, and in many respects its establishment marked the beginning of the modern Hebrew press. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Magid_Ha- (accessed 25 August 2014).

A similar story was evolving in Greece. Despite the fact that Modern Greek was seen as a continuation of classical Greek, the language lacked a vocabulary that could respond to "the social development in a European context" (Dendrinos, 2007, p. 55). Greek began to borrow immensely from older phases of the Greek language and from other European languages, such as French and English, which had based their own vocabularies on Greek linguistic material (Dendrinos, 2007, p.54). However, the similarity with Hebrew comes to an end because unlike with Hebrew where we still have this *diglossia* alive and well and existing today, the story with the Greek language changed. Dendrinos explains that the *diglossic* issue officially came to an end after almost two thousand years. Modern Greek or *popular* Greek was voted as the official language in 1976 (Dendrinos, 2007, pp.56 - 57). Despite this decision, there have been in the years since many attempts by academics and others to try and revive Classical Greek. The 'linguistic poverty' of the youth viewed by Greek religious fundamentalism (Dendrinos, 2007, p.57), created the myth that the reintroduction of the teaching of Classical Greek in schools would enable Greek youth to "acquire a rich vocabulary and thus develop a better knowledge of Greek" (Christidis 1999b, cited in Dendrinos, 2007, p.57). In fact, in 1993, the Greek education minister, Souflias, decided, "to reinstate the teaching of ancient Greek in secondary schools". Educationists criticized this move saying that "its reintroduction will only confuse school children grammatically and linguistically… we should spend more time concentrating on modern Greek, which is itself a difficult language to master" (Doukas, 1993 cited in Smith, 1993).

Rabin argues that Hebrew was not a dead language but rather it changed "its position from that of the 'upper' language in a diglossia to that of a national, Western-style all-purpose language, and it had to fit itself for that new role" (Rabin, p.48). There is a similarity with Standard Greek, which combines aspects of both high (*Katharevousa*) and low (*Dimotiki*) variety of Greek (Gavrilidou, p.47). However, the main difference between the two is that with Greek, the modern has replaced the ancient, whereas with Hebrew, Biblical and Modern Hebrew continues to co-exist.

Returning to the Hebrew context, there were some who regarded Rabbinic Hebrew as "a legitimate component of the new language". The majority, however, including many writers, poets, dramatists and novelists during this period in the 1850s decided on a pure form of Biblical Hebrew which helped to lay the foundations of Modern Hebrew (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.268). The use of BH for modern means was not without its challenges; these writers often made grammatical mistakes and they frequently had to resort to stilted paraphrasing in order not to stray too far from the limited vocabulary of BH when conveying contemporary situations (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.268). Clearly BH was not

providing enough of a fertile field for the modern language and they began to look at post-biblical sources as well as Yiddish. The main proponents at this time, Alkalai, Schlesinger and Pines et al, "made successful contributions to the task of ensuring that Hebrew would once more possess the character of a spoken language" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.269). Sàenz-Badillos writes that it is "possible to claim that the vocabulary of the Bible has been the basis for all later periods, despite the numerous innovations of each era" (p.50).

2.4.4.1 The Politicisation of Hebrew

"We will be able to create a new language which is completely old" (Ben-Yehuda, 1886, in Hoffman, 2004, p.187).

A new era in the revival of Hebrew came about with the publication in 1879 of an article written by Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, a Lithuanian Jew, entitled 'A burning question'. Ben-Yehuda saw the "use of Hebrew as a spoken language" as "one of the most important aspects of the new plan for settlement in Palestine". Ben-Yehuda lived in Jerusalem from 1881 with his young family and he "forged ahead with his objective of changing Hebrew into a language suitable for daily use and struggled to give new life to the language" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.269). One of his greatest endeavours was to "develop an appropriate vocabulary" incorporating "material from ancient and mediaeval literature and created new words eventually to be included in his monumental *Thesaurus*" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.269). One of the reasons why Ben-Yehuda was able to turn his dream into a reality was due to the fact that there was not a national language in the region and the desire of the "successive waves of immigrants from central and eastern Europe to renew Jewish culture". There were other personalities who played their part in this revival and amongst this group were teachers who took up the cause to teach Hebrew in Hebrew (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.270).

Rabin (1983, p.47) argues however, that when Ben-Yehuda went to Palestine in 1881 and insisted on speaking nothing but Hebrew, this was not the revival of spoken Hebrew, but rather it just proved that it was possible to speak Hebrew. Indeed, Ben-Yehuda himself stated shortly after, that reviving Hebrew was a political act; it was "accomplished through the creation of a small, […] body of immigrants into Palestine, […], who had some concept of political Zionism" (Rabin, 1983, p.47). The revival of Hebrew was then speeded up by creating Hebrew language schools where everything was taught in Hebrew and which, thus bestowed upon it "the social status of a national language" (Rabin, 1983, p. 47).

This first stage of revival lasted up to 1918, which included giving consideration "to a number of problems in phonology […], orthography […], morphology and syntax […]". The most important development during this time, was the "creation of new words, the basic task of Ben-Yehuda and the *Va'ad ha-Lashon* (the Language Committee), which began to operate in 1890" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.270). Ben-Yehuda's thesaurus explained the methods he used to adapt the language to everyday needs. Ben-Yehuda borrowed words from Arabic, from the *Mishnah* and *Talmud* and *Midrashim* – basically he adopted any "potentially useful Hebrew and Aramaic expressions, and even Greek and Latin loanwords". Many thousands of these new words fell into disuse, as many language users did not accept them (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.271). Ben-Yehuda "combed the immense Hebrew literature of three thousand years in order to dig up words that could be employed for the thousands of modern concepts that had to be expressed and for the everyday needs not covered by the Bible and by the books normally studied" (Rabin, 1983, p.47). Rabin argues that the modern spoken and written Hebrew "is and remains a natural continuation of the language as it was spoken and written for over 1400 years and written for another 1700". He argues that the revival of the Hebrew language was part of the political process of Zionism and that it was restored to a "sphere of usage which it had possessed and temporarily lost" (Rabin, 1983, p.48).

A new stage in the development of the language was reached in the period of the British Mandate in Palestine (1918-1948). In 1922, when most of the Hebrew speakers at the time spoke Hebrew only as a second language (Hoffman, 2004, p.192), Hebrew was acknowledged as one of the country's official languages, alongside Arabic and English. This development brought about a marked increase in the number of Hebrew speakers as well as the establishment of various cultural institutions, including the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. All these advancements helped increase the technical vocabulary of the new language (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.271).

2.4.4.2   The Birth of the State of Israel

Hebrew became the country's principal language after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. In 1953 the *Academy of the Hebrew Language* replaced the *Language Committee* and its task was to look after the interests of the language and increase "its powers of expression without sacrificing purity" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.272). Nowadays, Modern Hebrew is "usually referred to as 'Israeli Hebrew' and has "often been accompanied by controversy" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.272). He explains that Modern Hebrew has been trying over the years to forge its own identity and character and there is an on-going tension between "academic prescription and popular usage" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993,

p.272). The tension also exists on its origins and whether it should be based more on Biblical Hebrew or Rabbinic Hebrew: "[t]he most important controversy about the nature of Israeli Hebrew began in 1930, when the issue of the co-existence of Biblical Hebrew and Rabbinic Hebrew underwent scholarly review". Following this assessment of BH and RH, an academic, J. Klausner, wrote the first ever grammar of Modern Hebrew, which he presented entirely from a Rabbinic Hebrew perspective. Others went for "a greater variety of possible means of expression" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.273). In 1955, H.B Rosén "argued strongly for the acceptance of contemporary linguistic usage, including recent colloquialisms and the vocabulary of young native-born Israelis…" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.275). Over the past forty years, Modern Hebrew "has become accepted as a proper object of independent linguistic inquiry" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p.276). The question Sàenz-Badillos poses in the light of the evolution of Modern Hebrew is whether it has ceased to be a Semitic language. He answers this in saying that even though "the aspects of Modern Hebrew that have been most affected by such influences are syntax and vocabulary…. it needs to be emphasized that the means of expression inherited by Israeli Hebrew, as well as the basic nucleus of its morphology and syntax, are clearly Semitic in origin" (Sàenz-Badillos, 1993, p. 277).

2.4.4.3   Israeli Linguists

On the *New English Review blog*, Berdichevsky (2011) states that a debate has been taking place for decades among Israeli linguists dealing with the most fundamental aspects of the rebirth of the Hebrew language. He claims that those 'revisionists' call the language spoken today in Israel *Relexified Indo-European* and prefer the term *Israeli*. Indeed, Rosén, Professor of General and Indo-European linguistics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is an example of one such linguist who wrote the *Textbook of Israeli Hebrew* (1962). The aim of the book is to enable students to read "moderately difficult Israeli Hebrew, to write and to converse in acceptable current Hebrew, and to understand less complex passages of Classical Hebrew (1962, v).

One such modern 'revisionist', the linguist Professor Zuckermann argues that Modern Hebrew should be renamed 'Israeli'. In doing so, he has "drawn the wrath of established scholars who see him as a politicized threat to a pillar of the Jewish state" (Reuters 2006). Zuckermann asserts:

> " Israeli, somewhat misleadingly a.k.a. 'Modern Hebrew' is a fascinating and multifaceted 120 year-old Semito-European hybrid language…Its grammar is based not only on a 'sleeping beauty' – or 'walking dead' – Hebrew, but simultaneously also on Yiddish, the revivalists' (…) mother tongue, as well as on a

plethora of other languages spoken by the founders of Israeli, e.g. Polish, Russian, German, Ladino and Arabic".

He also insists that "Israelis not only do not understand the Bible, but much worse: they misunderstand it without even realizing it! By and large, Israeli speakers are the worst students in *advanced* studies of the Bible" (Zuckermann 2009).

Brettler (2002), addresses two types of students – those "who have read or studied some of the Bible in Hebrew but have not studied formal biblical grammar, and those who have learned at least one year of modern Israeli Hebrew and are now interested in studying the Bible in its original Hebrew" (2002, preface). Perhaps this study could help those Israelis who Zuckerman refers to as the "worst students in *advanced* studies of the Bible".

Berdichevsky asserts that despite these arguments raging amongst linguists, "almost all Israelis would agree that they feel a direct historical continuity with the Land and Language of Israel and … that the Land of Israel 'speaks' Hebrew" as evidenced by the "countless inscriptions uncovered throughout its length and breadth on parchment, stone, clay, papyrus and wood written over a period of more than three thousand five hundred years" (*New English Review blog,* 2011).

Wexler points out that whilst there is total agreement amongst Hebrew revivalists, linguists and native speakers that pre-revival Hebrew is a Semitic language, there is "some disagreement about the genetic classification of Modern Hebrew" (1990, p.9). There are two schools of thought: the first is that Modern Hebrew is a Semitic language and the second is that it is not, but rather it can be defined as "an unspecified 'pan' or 'Eastern European' language or specifically as a dialect of Yiddish" (p.9). Wexler cites different linguists and academics, amongst them, Rabin and Rosén, who all suggest that Modern Hebrew is "genetically Semitic, though typologically 'European'" (Wexler, pp.10-11). On the other hand however, there are those who view Modern Hebrew as a Slavic language. Wexler believes Kacnelson was "on the right track when he suggested that Modern Hebrew was a 'branch' of Yiddish" (p.36). However, Wexler writes that there are many linguists today who are reluctant to admit the influence Yiddish has played on Modern Hebrew. For example, Rosén defines Russian as "the language with the greatest impact on Modern Hebrew" and he defines "alleged Yiddish features in Modern Hebrew as 'Hebrew' in origin" (p.34).

Notwithstanding these differences in opinions regarding the provenance of Modern Hebrew or Israeli Hebrew, one thing is for certain: Hebrew is one of the official languages

of Israel, together with Arabic and English. Hebrew is used in all walks of life in Israel; in education, in health, in the army, in the media, in social networking, in literature, in the government, in the arts and culture, and so on. Furthermore, "because of Israel's central role in Judaism around the world, Modern Hebrew is studied and used widely outside of Israel as well, replacing Yiddish as the international Jewish language" (Hoffman, 2004, p.202).

2.5 Summary

We have come full circle.

I began this chapter by giving the reader an insight into the status of Hebrew teaching and learning in the UK and the research that has been undertaken over the past four years. Then, using Fullan's educational change theory as a framework, I discussed the rationale for the educational change process I embarked upon in this research project.

The chapter then took the reader on a Hebrew journey spanning some three thousand years. I provided the reader with insights into the development and evolution of the Hebrew language by delving into four main periods that demarcate significant junctures in the Jewish narrative.

We first visited the Hebrew of the Bible. We learnt about the linguistic limitations of Biblical Hebrew of the second millennium BCE and the subsequent advancements made by the Masoretes in making Biblical Hebrew what we have come to know today – the language of the Jewish Bible.

Next we visited the rabbinic period. Although there has been strong disagreement on the exact nature and origins of Rabbinic Hebrew, we witnessed the tremendous contributions the rabbis of the period made to Jewish liturgy, through its prayers and blessings, which were composed in Rabbinic Hebrew. This was also the era of the creation of the *Talmud*, incorporating *Mishna* and *Gemara*, and *Midrash*.

The next period on our travels brought us to the mediaeval times. We came to understand that Mediaeval Hebrew was not a language in the full sense of the term, but rather it was a combination of various linguistic usages and traditions that the writers of the day developed according to their own ideas of the language and according to their own social and cultural backgrounds. We also delved briefly into the Hebrew poetry of the period and

we witnessed the revival of Biblical vocabulary as a way to counter the rivalry that was surfacing between Hebrew and Arabic, the language of the host country.

Our final stop brought us to Modern Hebrew. We witnessed the rebirth of the Hebrew language first through the efforts of Eliezer Ben–Yehuda at the end of the nineteenth century, then with Hebrew becoming one of the official languages of the State of Israel. We learnt that Modern Hebrew was based heavily on Biblical Hebrew, but it also borrowed from Rabbinic Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Latin and Yiddish as well as from other European languages such as Polish, Russian and German. We then came to present day Hebrew, the language that is spoken in the Modern State of Israel. It is a language that is still changing and adapting to the needs of its diverse population.

We also took a slight detour when we examined the diglossic nature of Hebrew and compared it to Greek. With regards to Hebrew it is clear that diglossia existed in one form or another in ancient Hebrew and it still exists today; there is the one layer of the language that is used for religious purposes, namely Biblical Hebrew, and then there is Modern/Israeli Hebrew that is the spoken and ever-evolving language for those living in Israel, and Jews and Israelis living in the diaspora. With regards to Greek, we learnt that the *diglossic* issue officially came to an end after almost two thousand years. Modern Greek or *popular* Greek was voted as the official language in 1976.

This story is that of a language that has evolved, survived and thrived during the many turbulent times of the Jewish narrative. The fact that Hebrew is still in existence today is testament to its endurance and resilience. For me it is the essence of Jewish survival.

CHAPTER THREE: THE JEWISH EDUCATOR

The heat, and the smell of perspiration, hit me immediately as I step into the classroom. I suppose this is to be expected when twelve ten-year old children have been learning in a small room for the last hour and nobody has thought to open a window.

Today I will be observing Julie, who is currently on one of our training courses for non-teachers working in a cheder. *Julie, a nurse by profession, has been teaching for only a year. She teaches for three hours a week on Sunday mornings, and is responsible for teaching all aspects of Judaism, including the Jewish festivals and lifecycle events, Jewish prayer and Hebrew. Julie is the mum of one of the children who attends the supplementary school. She wants to give something back to her synagogue, and this is her way of doing it.*

I am here to observe her teaching Hebrew and to assess whether she is fulfilling the requirements set down in the course. My eyes stray to the walls; there are a few displays of children's work, but no evidence of Hebrew anywhere. Julie is teaching the topic of Shabbat (the Jewish Sabbath) using a particular Hebrew programme. She fumbles about looking for her teaching resources and, after what seems like an age, finally produces what she was looking for. As she goes through the Hebrew vocabulary associated with Shabbat, I keep wondering when she will make a connection to the actual Shabbat and make it real for the children. I am concerned that she is using more English to teach Hebrew than Hebrew itself. Also, there doesn't seem to have been any real lesson planning. The pace of the lesson is stilted and the transitions between activities seem haphazard.

I tell myself that I must not be so critical and that I need to give Julie credit for her lovely personality, the rapport she has developed with the children and the fact that she is a diligent teacher and is committed to her community.

3.1 Introduction

I begin this chapter by exploring Jonker et al.'s *research pyramid* (2010, p.23) which has "four 'action' levels: paradigms, methodology, methods and techniques" (see Fig.1, below). The authors consider the pyramid as "a (logical) chain of interconnected events ranging from the rather abstract (on the paradigm level) to the very concrete (on the technical level)" (p. 23). Their pyramid has been instrumental in explaining and rationalising the methodologies and methods I chose for my research project and could not be more different from Julie's unstructured lesson as described above. I will be applying the pyramid's four 'action' levels to my research. First, I will discuss the notion of the research paradigm where I will present the ontological and epistemological premises that underpin and inform my work. Second, I will discuss the concept of methodology and the hybrid methodology that I have chosen to direct my research. Third, in combining the third and fourth action levels, I will give a detailed account of the research methods and techniques I employ to generate the data. This account will include a discussion on the triangulation of the data sources that support the validity and reliability of my work. I will then critically examine my positionality vis a vis the research and the ethical issues I need to consider in undertaking this type of research. I then discuss my chosen method of data

analysis - Thematic Analysis - and the rationale for my choosing it. I end with a brief conclusion which provides the reader with an overview of the salient points discussed in this chapter.
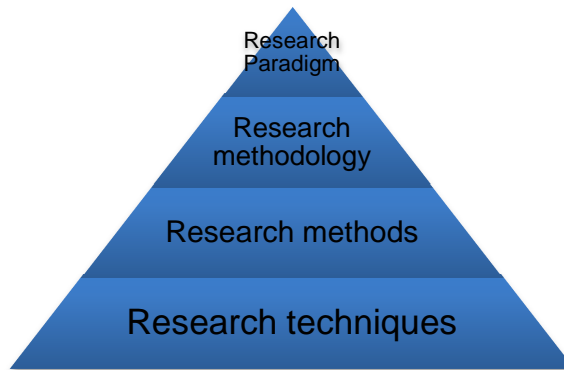
Fig.1.

3.2 Research Paradigm

According to Jonker et al. (2010) the research paradigm is how the researcher views reality or as they call it, the researcher's 'basic approach' (p.25).

Mackenzie et al. argue that a researcher cannot begin to make choices regarding methodology, methods, literature or research design without first "nominating a paradigm" (2006, p193-205). Paradigm has also been defined as the "philosophical intent or motivation for undertaking a study" (Cohen and Manion, 1994, cited in Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Furthermore, Costley et al. (2011, p.83) explain paradigm as a "deep-rooted set of perspectives that includes an ontological and an epistemological position and a set of values for operating in the world".

It is crucial therefore that the reader has an understanding of the factors that have motivated me to undertake this research. To this end, I will critically explore both the ontological and epistemological bases of my work.

In Chapter One, I gave the reader a brief insight into the world in which I was growing up in South Africa. I grew up in a very Jewish home, but not in the religious sense but rather in terms of my Jewish identity, which manifested itself in a love for Israel and the many Jewish cultural traditions. My parents chose not to send my two siblings and me to a Jewish day school as they strongly believed that it was important for us to have an 'all-

round' education and to learn to respect other religions and cultures. They did not want us to grow up in a 'Jewish bubble'. In fact, many Jewish parents also chose not to send their children to the one and only Jewish day school in Pretoria. As a result, I had many Jewish friends at school, but also friends from different backgrounds, religions and cultures (albeit an exclusively white environment as I was growing up during the heart of the apartheid era).

As a result of not going to a Jewish day school, my parents sent us to *cheder* three times a week after school, where we were to be given a religious education. During this time, the three of us brought aspects of Judaism back into the home; my mother started lighting the *Shabbat* candles and we began to celebrate all the festivals on a more regular basis. I have a very vivid memory of us going on a Friday night to an open air 'drive-in' to watch a film and before it started we made *Kiddush* on the bonnet of our car. We also started going to synagogue more regularly. I described in Chapter One that for a girl growing up in an Orthodox environment there were various Jewish traditions that I could not perform as they were the domains of the boys[30]. It was during this period that I grew to love the Hebrew language and became quite proficient in reading and comprehension, but I did not have a public outlet for my talents.

It was during my teenage years when I belonged to a Zionist youth movement that the values of democracy, justice and fairness, and my commitment to Israel and the Jewish people were consolidated. Hebrew then took on a different importance for me as a practical tool for communication.

The two experiences of *cheder* and youth movement provided me with the conditions to develop a strong Jewish identity. This was an identity that was bound up in a rich cultural and historical identity, a social justice identity bound up within Jewish values and the beginnings of a Jewish feminine identity. When I left South Africa for Israel, I was a young modern Jewish woman living within the traditions of Judaism, with my non-religious world very much intertwined with my Jewish world.

For me the ancient and the modern layers of the Hebrew language have always been inseparable, both informing and enriching the other. The Hebrew language with its three thousand years of existence has evolved and developed over the millennia and has

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[30] In Orthodox Judaism, "the religious roles ascribed to men and women are sharply defined, separated into public male and private female spheres. Men are required to pray daily and spend long hours studying. In contrast, "the spiritual lives of women are focused on the *mitzvot* (commandments) relating to the home" and they are not obligated "to observe many of the time-bound *mitzvot* that are required of men". http://www.mishpacha.org/gender.shtml (accessed 13 May 2016).

provided a constant and living link to the religion, history and culture of the Jewish people. As Hebrew became the lingua franca for "Jews speaking a babble of tongues" (Glinert, 1992, p.7) at the turn of the last century when they came to live in Palestine so has Hebrew become a unifying force for Jews today living outside of Israel, in the diaspora.

From a pedagogic perspective, the teaching and learning of Hebrew remain a challenge in the Jewish day school sector in the UK and steps must be taken to improve its failings. When I first came to the UK and discovered that Biblical and Modern Hebrew were taught separately it seemed very strange and unnatural. For this reason, I believe that one way to improve the state of Hebrew teaching and learning in the UK is to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew, where possible and appropriate, in order to enhance the experience for both teacher and learner.

My 'philosophical intent or motivation' for undertaking this research project is about making a unique contribution in the field of Hebrew pedagogy through enhancing the teaching and learning of Hebrew in the diaspora through innovative curriculum design that integrates Biblical and Modern Hebrew. It is also about exposing practitioners invested in the Hebrew language teaching and learning field to a new narrative and fresh possibilities. Moreover, it is concerned with empowering and working in partnership with them.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Hebrew teaching in the UK Jewish day school sector is singled out for improvement as stated in the 2012 *Pikuach* report: "Taken as a whole we still underperform in the teaching of *Ivrit*" (Sacks, cited in Miller, 2012, iii). Monitoring improvement since the *Pikuach* report of 2007, Miller writes, "very few of our schools have made little or no improvement since their previous *Pikuach* inspection" and "areas for improvement in 2007 have been or are in the process of being addressed". However, she contends, "disappointingly, some of the same issues recur – Hebrew reading and *Ivrit*" (p.20).

My research project aims to address some of these on-going challenges.

One of the research paradigms that resonate with my positioning is that of the *pragmatic* paradigm. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) maintain that, "*pragmatism* is not committed to any one system of philosophy or reality". They cite Creswell who contends that "pragmatist researchers focus on the 'what' and 'how' of the research problem… The pragmatic paradigm places 'the research problem' as central and applies all approaches to understanding the problem". (Creswell, 2003, p.11, cited in Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). My research focuses on the *what*, namely, it aims to enhance the teaching and

learning of Hebrew and the *how* by initiating a pedagogic intervention. As will be revealed, I have utilised a variety of research approaches and methods in my research project in order to address my central concern.

3.3 Methodology

This then brings me to discuss my chosen methodology. Jonker et al (2010, p.31) define methodology "first and foremost associated with conducting research". Coming from the Greek word *meta* (after), *hodos* (way) and *logos* (science)[31], it can be explained as the science of following a particular way or path. Jonker et al sum this up simply: "methodology implies: the way (or route) the researcher will need to take in order to achieve a certain result (knowledge, insight, design, intervention, solution)".

My chosen methodology is not a single methodology but rather a combination or hybrid of different research approaches. Over the course of my studies, as is to be expected, my academic world has been opened to many different and exciting research possibilities resulting in my research having evolved and developed with newfound knowledge and insights. Indeed, Costley et al (2011, p.81) argue that a researcher undertaking a work–based research project is unlikely to "simply take a textbook methodological approach and apply it" to a project. They assert that a methodology is likely to grow out of the researcher's position within a particular work setting, his/her professional and organisational context as well as taking practical and ethical constraints and the purpose and aims of the project into account.

Therefore, my particular methodological approach can be summarised as follows:

I have conducted an *Action Research* project, within the context of a *Case Study*, in a culture of *Appreciative Inquiry* and through the lens of *Autoethnography*.

I will now deconstruct each of these approaches and demonstrate how they apply to my research project.

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[31] http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/methodology (accessed 6 October 2015).

3.3.1   Action Research

Action Research (AR) has "become widely used as a methodology for practitioner and collaborative research as it provides a straightforward way of taking a researching approach to practice or change" (Costley et al, 2011, p.88).

It has been defined as a "form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, p.5). Kemmis et al maintain that the "approach is only action research when it is *collaborative*, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved through the *critically examined action* of individual group members".

This view is corroborated by Hitchcock and Hughes (2003, p.27): the "principal features of an action research approach are *change* (action) or *collaboration* between researchers and researched". Furthermore, they contend that those involved in AR are concerned with improving a situation "through active intervention and in collaboration with the parties involved", thus giving AR a "very particular character". They maintain that the end result of the research is not simply a contribution to knowledge, but "practitioner-relevant information". As such, AR has a "different audience and is likely to be presented differently to other kinds of research". Because the ownership of knowledge and control over research are important questions for action researchers, AR is said to constitute a "paradigm in its own right" (Kemmis and Henry, 1984 and Kincheloe, 1991, cited in Hitchcock and Hughes (2003, p.27). It is also the case that Dick (1993) refers to AR as a research paradigm in one instance and then as a methodology in the other, in the same document.

Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) maintain, "the idea underlying the approach is that of 'action research'. The linking of the terms 'action' and 'research' highlights the essential feature of the approach: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching and learning". Resulting in improving what takes place in the classroom and school as well as better articulating and justifying "the educational rationale for what goes on". To perorate, AR is "a way of working which links theory and practice into the one whole: ideas-in-action" (p.6).

According to McNiff, AR "is never static" and that the term itself "implies a continual process, a search. It is a process which shows how one person's ideas develop and may be used by another to move his own ideas forward" (1988, p.21).

Kurt Lewin, one of the founding figures of AR maintained that research "which produced nothing but books is inadequate" (Lewin, 1948, cited in Cohen et al, 2000, p.226). McNiff relates that Lewin, who was a social psychologist, wanted to study social issues himself and to also give people a tool to study their own relationships. He felt that the best way to help "move people forward was to engage them in their own enquiries into their own lives". His ideas were based on "democratic collaboration and participation" as McNiff underscores; "we are all parties in the human endeavour" (McNiff, 1988, p.22). Cohen et al. (2000) are alert to the historic injustices that Lewin was attempting to redress: his work was "deliberately intended to change the life chances of disadvantaged groups in terms of housing, employment, prejudice, socialization, and training". Despite critics of AR, such as Hodgkinson in the 1950s, who likened AR to "easy hobby games for little engineers", AR in its combination of *action* and *research* has "attracted researchers, teachers and the academic and educational community alike" (2000, p.226).

Lewin described AR as a spiral of steps, with each step comprising four stages - planning, acting, observing and reflecting and which can then move onto another step comprising re-planning (in light of knowledge, feedback and insight gained), acting, observing and reflecting and so on. All steps can be extended even further as more insight and knowledge are gained (McNiff, pp. 22-23).

Fig.2 illustrates Lewin's AR in action

Fig 2
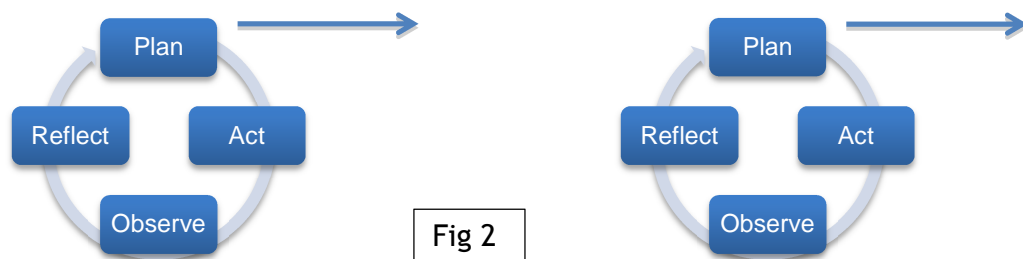
Steinzaltz describes five stages of *teshuva* (repentance) for *Yom Kippur* (in Reform Synagogue of Great Britain Forms of prayer, 1985, pp.736-738). They are: *The potential for 'something else', a constant 'going towards', more than 'yearning for God', 'correcting' the past and transforming evil*. This provides an interesting Jewish analogy to Lewin's AR cycle where both Lewin and Steinzaltz discuss action, movement, reflection and change.

McNiff claims that Lewin didn't intend for his ideas to be used specifically in educational settings: his work, however, had an impact on education in the US after first being used to investigate social issues. However, "after a decade of growth, the movement fell into decline, where there was a separation of research and action, of theory and practice" (p.24). Kemmis (1981, p.272, cited in Kemmis and McTaggart 2008) demonstrates that due to the prevailing positivistic research ideology prevalent in the US at the time led to a "temporary decline in its development there". The centre of activity moved to Britain. McNiff tells us that the influence of Lawrence Stenhouse was pivotal for action research finding a home in Britain. It was he who viewed the teacher as a researcher, with his main message being that teachers were the best judges of their own practice and as such they "should regard themselves as researchers". As a consequence, this development would lead to an improvement in education (p.25).

Cohen et al, cite Noffke and Zeichner (1987) who "make several claims for action research with teachers, *viz.* that it:
- Brings about changes in their definitions of their professional skills and roles;
- Increases their feelings of self-worth and confidence;
- Increases their awareness of classroom issues;
- Improves their dispositions towards reflection;
- Changes their values and beliefs;
- Improves the congruence between practical theories and practices;
- Broadens their views on teaching, schooling and society" (p.228).

 " A significant feature here is that Action Research lays claim to the professional development of teachers" (Cohen et al, 1987, p. 228). Herr and Anderson also discuss the success of AR in the field of education as providing a route for individuals to develop professionally as well as a collaborative route for professional and institutional change (2005, p.17).

Kemmis and McTaggart (1992, cited in Cohen, et al, 2000, p.229) provide a summary of the key principles of AR. The ones that stand out for me in particular and which I enacted and implemented during the AR project are listed below. It should be noted that even before I embarked on the actual AR part of my project, I shared many of these key points with the teachers from the primary school with whom I was going to work. I tried to operate as openly and collaboratively as possible with the teachers throughout the process. I elaborate on this aspect of the research in chapters four and five.

AR:

- Is an approach to *improving education* by *changing* it and learning from the consequences of changes
- Is *participatory*: it is research through which people work towards the improvement of *their own practices*
- Develops through *the self-reflective spiral:* a spiral of cycles of *planning, acting, observing, reflecting*…and then re-planning, further implementation, observing and reflecting
- Is *collaborative*: it involves those responsible for action in improving it
- Establishes *self-critical communities* of people participating and collaborating in all phases of the research process… it aims to build communities of people committed to *enlightening* themselves about the relationship between circumstance, action and consequence in their own situation, and *emancipating* themselves from the institutional and personal constraints which limit their power to live their own legitimate educational and social values
- Involves keeping a *personal journal* in which we record our progress and our own reflections about two parallel sets of learning: our learnings about the practices we are studying… and our learnings about the process (the practice) of studying them
- Is a *political process* because it involves us in making changes that will affect others
- *Starts small*, by working through changes which even a single person (myself) can try, and works towards extensive changes
- Starts with *small group* of collaborators at the start, but widens the community of participating action researches so that it gradually includes more and more of those involved and affected by the practices in question

Cohen et al (2000) also discuss the concepts of *reflection* and *reflexivity* in AR. AR demands researchers and practitioners to be reflective – to reflect-in-action, to reflect-on action and to engage in critical reflection. However, AR also demands of its researchers and participants to be reflexive. They state that what is being required in terms of reflexivity is that there is a "self-conscious awareness of the effects that the participants-as-practitioners-and-researchers are having on the research process, how their values, attitudes, perceptions, opinions, actions, feelings etc. are feeding into the situation being studied ". They add that the *participants-as-practitioners-and-researchers* need to "apply to themselves the same critical scrutiny that they are applying to the other and to the research" (2000, p.239).

At this point, I would like to reflect upon the process of writing this chapter so far. Initially I struggled with the distinction between research paradigm and research methodology, specifically in relation to AR. This difficulty has not been helped by the vast amount of literature that I have read which seems to either place AR as an umbrella research paradigm or as a research methodology. To compound matters, academics, such as Dick (1993), use these terms interchangeably in one article. For example he writes in his introduction to AR that it is not his intention to "argue against other research paradigms" and then a few paragraphs later he tells us, "as the name suggests, action research is a methodology which has the dual aims of action and research". Despite this inconsistent use of terminology, I am content with the notion that my research falls within a pragmatic paradigm, as the very nature of my research is change oriented and it is about the 'what' and 'how' of research. I have come to understand that AR is a form of a pragmatic research paradigm and that the different types of AR, such as 'technical' action research, 'practical' action research, and 'emancipatory' action research are different branches of the same tree. Each has its own agenda and specific focus, be it to "render an existing situation more efficient and effective' or to "promote teachers' professionalism by drawing on their informed judgement" or "to develop in participants their understandings of illegitimate structural and interpersonal constraints that are preventing the exercise of their autonomy and freedom" respectively (Cohen et al, 2000, p.231).

The particular form of AR in which I have chosen to conduct my research and which forms part of my research methodology is participatory AR (PAR). Many of the attributes of PAR have been previously highlighted in Kemmis and McTaggart's summary of the key principles of AR above.

Fox et al (2007) enter the discussion regarding the nature of PAR and in particular, the role of the researcher. They point out in PAR the researcher "moves from the role of being the expert in research to that of a process facilitator. The researcher is no longer centre stage deciding on how the research should be carried out. Instead their role is to help participants with the process of research" (p.53). They also argue that one of the main requirements for the researcher, as process facilitator is to establish a culture of trust within the group. With this type of research, the main purpose of the inquiry is exploratory rather than experimental and therefore the design of the project needs to be socially constructed. They add that the types of data collection include such methods as "participant observation, interview and the analysis of documentary evidence". They continue, "data are more likely to be validly collected if research participants agree on why it is being collected in this way". They make the point, certainly to my research, that PAR supports both qualitative and quantitative data as well as self-reflection. They cite

McTaggart, (1994) who substantiates their points by stating "data are validated by a process of triangulation, participant confirmation and by testing the coherence of arguments". Fox et al (2007) argue that the data are also validated by "the participants' willingness not only to disseminate information but also to change practice. In this way, for the most pragmatic reasons, it is recognized that the better the collaboration, the more likely people will implement the changes that come out of the research" (p.53).

Furthermore, it is argued that PAR is the investigation of real, actual and concrete practices taking place in specific contexts and not theoretical and abstract practices. (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2008).

Finally, I identify wholeheartedly with Herr and Anderson who state that AR is "often chosen by doctoral students because they are passionate about their topic, their setting, and coparticipants" (2005, xvii).

This brings me now to discuss the context in which I conducted my research, a Jewish primary school.

3.3.2 Case Study

I had not originally planned to conduct a case study; rather I was hoping to conduct the research in two or three primary schools. However, due to my concerns of gaining access to more schools coupled with the realization of the amount of time I would need to spend in each school to produce a worthy piece of research, I was advised to conduct a case study with the primary school in which I had been granted access.

A case study can be described as a "specific instance that is frequently designed to illustrate a more general principle" or as "the study of an instance in action" (Nisbet and Watt, 1984, and Adelman et al, 1980, cited in Cohen et al, 2000, p.181). Case study is a "research design that entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case", but can also be extended to "include the study of just two or three cases for comparative purposes" (Bryman and Bell, 2003, p.53, cited in Jonker et al, 2010, p.139).

Costley et al argue that case study is not a methodology in itself, but rather it is an approach that can "draw on a variety of methods […] to assemble a single case or small number of cases". They contend that the purpose is to "investigate and present an example in a way that is of use beyond its face value". In other words, it has the potential for wider application or to "illustrate problems in policy or practice" thus giving it wider value and interest (2010, p.89).

Cohen et al explain that this *single instance* is of a 'bounded system', such as a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. A case study provides a "unique example of real people in real situations" enabling the reader to understand the ideas presented more clearly rather than being given "abstract theories or principles" (Cohen et al, p.181).

According to Creswell, case study involves the researcher exploring "a single entity or phenomenon bounded by time and activity and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time" (1994, cited in Jonker et al, 2010, p.138).
Bell writes that the "great strength of the case study method is that it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify, or attempt to identify, the various interactive processes at work". The majority of cases studies "are carried out as free-standing exercises", where the researcher identifies an 'instance', which could be "the introduction of a new syllabus, … or any innovation or stage of development in an institution – and observes, questions, studies" (1999, p.11).

It is also noted "action research most frequently uses qualitative methodologies and techniques, the most notable of which is the case study" (Hitchcock et al, 1995, p.29).

All these definitions and descriptions of case study apply to the case study that I have undertaken: I have worked within a particular school community with individual teachers, personnel and children over a two year period of time and have employed a range of qualitative research methods and techniques to capture data (details of these are discussed further on in this chapter).

My rationale for choosing to conduct my action research project within the context of a single case study was to ensure that the innovative curriculum approach to the teaching and learning of Hebrew I was introducing would be given the time and space it would need to develop. I believed that by conducting the research in more schools would not be doing justice to any school. It was important for me to put all my energies into one school in order to give the project its best chance of success. I was confident that the nature of the curriculum would allow for it to be replicated in different Jewish educational settings, as the framework can be adapted to other contexts. When undertaking the field research, my decision to conduct a single case study was justified as it was possible to give the school a concentrated period of my time and energy, which would not have been possible had I undertaken research in more than one setting.

Critics of the case study method, specifically in the cases where there is a single researcher who is gathering all the data, argue that because the researcher "selects the area for study and decides which material to present in the final report" and the fact that it is difficult to "cross-check information", there is a "danger of distortion". They also point to the fact "that generalization is not always possible, and question the value of the study of single events" (Bell, 1999, p.11).

The critique of not being able to cross-check information is valid and there is the danger that in my analysis I will only be presenting a one-sided argument or presenting only the successful elements of the process. I believe that due to the fact that I have triangulated my research methods, my findings and hence, my analysis will stand up to inspection and will be valid and reliable. I discuss triangulation in more detail further on.

Regarding, generalizability, Bassey prefers to use the term 'relatability'. He believes that "an important criterion for judging the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his decision making to that described in the case study". He argues that the "relatability of a case study is more important than its generalisabiity". If case studies are "carried out systematically and critically, if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are relatable, and if by publication of the findings they extend the boundaries of existing knowledge, then they are valid forms of educational research" (Bassey, 1981, cited in Bell, 1999, pp. 11-12).

Bassey very much corroborates the intended output of my research: the programme that I have designed will enable teachers in other Jewish day school to *relate* decision making in light of what transpired in this particular case study. As previously mentioned, I have created a framework and a methodology that can easily be adapted and applied to different contexts. The aspects of which will be discussed in the next chapter where I describe the project activity in fine detail.

This discussion can now be focused on Appreciative Inquiry.

3.3.3   Appreciative Inquiry

I have been working with the teachers and the school community spanning four academic years. In the first year I spent a great deal of time with the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* teachers, as well as with the Headteacher and deputy Headteacher, in creating the right environment for the AR project to take place. It was important during this period that the

teachers did not feel in any way threatened by me or by the process they had agreed to undergo with me. I was asking of these teachers to embark upon a journey of personal and professional change and it was crucial that not only did they understand *what* the process involved but also more importantly they understood *why* I was hoping to make this change and therefore could invest in it and believe in it. I was asking them to reconsider how they taught Jewish Studies and Hebrew and to adjust their worldviews and beliefs, in effect, their own teaching paradigms. Moreover, the teachers themselves would be part of a learning process and thus, I needed to ensure that a conducive environment was created so that meaningful learning and development could take place. Jarvis et al contends (2003, p.43) that learning, like knowledge itself, is "socially constructed". This means that the different contexts of learning, such as the "social, historical and cultural" combined with the learner's "setting" within these, will determine the "content, style and methods of learning". Additionally, Jarvis argues that all these factors determine "the meaning and significance of knowledge and learning for individuals according to their location in society". I was conscious of the fact that each participant in my research study was unique and would bring 'themselves' to the table. In other words, they would bring their individual knowledge, understandings and belief systems, as well as feelings of dissonance, inadequacy and vulnerability.

In parallel with the learning process that the teachers would be undergoing, they would also have to be inducted into a new way of teaching, as I would be creating an innovative approach to the teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew. In essence, I was asking them to take a 'leap of faith' with me. I knew that without their understanding of the reasons behind the change, this project would not succeed. I also emphasised that the teachers were in fact very much part of the process in terms of their input, ideas and suggestions.

During this process, I was very mindful not to criticise what and how they had been teaching up until this point. My intention was to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew, not to disregard what they were doing or put something else in place. It would be complimentary to what they were already doing. This was the spirit in which I would approach this work.

In order to frame the culture and atmosphere in which I wished to operate, I examined *Appreciative Inquiry (AI)* to determine whether any elements of this approach was a possible fit for how I conducted this particular part of the project.

It is important to declare that I did not know anything of AI when I first began the process of working with the teachers and the school in 2013/14. It was only during a university project workshop that I enquired what I should consider the starting point of the Action Research part of the project, namely, the pedagogical intervention that I was to initiate in 2014/15. I was unsure whether I should include the previous year when I had worked with the teachers and school community as described above as part of the AR. I was encouraged to research AI as a possible approach that could help to frame this initial part of the research.

I did not consciously conduct an AI project, but I am now aware that I embodied many of the guiding principles of AI. In particular, two statements regarding AI resonate with me: the first is that AI recognises that every organisation has something it does well and by using this as the starting point, positive change can be created. Second, AI seeks to find the best in people, the organisation and the world (Cooperrider et al, 2008, p.3). AI, therefore is a process for positive change, which can be applied to many different types of contexts and for many different purposes, such as leadership development, culture transformation or strategic planning (p.101).

The school has been judged overall as 'good' in both its most recent OFSTED and *Pikuach* inspections[32]. This is a school that is generally doing well, but there still is room for positive change. In terms of the school's provision in Jewish Studies and Hebrew, the report states what it needs to do in order to improve further: "Accelerate pupils' learning and progress in Jewish Studies" and "raise pupils' attainment in reading and writing Hebrew (*Ivrit*)".

Moreover, when I first asked the Headteacher whether she would be interested in having her school participate in my research, she immediately agreed saying that it was important for her teachers to be continually challenged and develop professionally in order to impact on pupils' learning. Therefore, I began the process in the knowledge that I had the full support of the Headteacher and her willingness to support the research as it developed. I also could approach the teachers in the spirit of acknowledging and appreciating the good work they were doing.

Even though I had no knowledge of AI, I naturally captured some of the elements of it in the pre-AR stage, particularly, in terms of its "4-D" cycle. These are *Discovery, Dream,*

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[32] http://www.cloretikva.redbridge.sch.uk/docs/ofsted2012.pdf and
http://www.cloretikva.redbridge.sch.uk/docs/Clore%20Tikvah%20Primary%20School%20-%2013%20&%2014%20Nov%202012.pdf (accessed 19 October 2015).

Design and Destiny (Cooperrider et al, 2008, p.5). In brief: *Discovery* asks 'what gives life?' and involves a process of *appreciation* of the best of what is. *Dream* asks 'what might be?' and involves a process of envisioning what the world is calling for. *Design* asks 'how can it be?' and involves a process of co-construction to determine the ideal, and *Destiny* asks 'what will be?' and through empowering, adjusting and improvising, sustainability is achieved. The aim of AI is to "generate new knowledge of a collectively desired future. It carries forth the vision in ways that successfully translate images into possibilities, intentions into reality, and beliefs into practice" (Cooperrider et al, 2008, p.5). Reflecting back on that time, and which is borne out in my initial meeting I convened with the teachers, Headteacher and deputy Headteacher, I made it very clear that I wanted to work collaboratively with them, that I did not have all the answers and that together we would create something that could enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in the school. I will discuss this more in detail in the following chapter when I critically reflect on the project activity.

Whilst AI and AR both have a cyclic structure and are concerned with change and improvement, the two are quite different in their focus and emphasis. Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987, p.130) were keen for AI to be a viewed as a "conceptual reconfiguration of AR" and argued for a "multidimensional view of action-research which seeks to both generate theory and develop organizations". According to Cooperrider et al, AI wanted to move away from the basic notion of problem solving of identifying the key problems or deficiencies, analysing the causes, analysing solutions and developing an action plan to rather viewing an organisation as a 'solution to be embraced' rather than a 'problem to be solved' (2008, p.5). Notwithstanding these differences, there is a synergy that exists between AR and AI and they function very well alongside each other. An example is given of an AR and AI research project, where the researcher has drawn from these "two distinct research approaches to justify a whole approach that suits the kind of research that has been undertaken". It is often the case that work-based projects use a multi-methodology approach (Costley et al, 2011, p. 144).

Grant and Humphries (2006) call for an evaluation of AI. There is not a plethora of critique of AI and when it is found, a common response is that AI is "too Pollyanna-ish" or it focuses too much on "warm, fuzzy group hugs" (Fitzgerald et al, 2001, cited in Grant and Humphries, 2006, p. 404). Grant et al propose that critical theory can provide a "useful framework" to evaluate AI. They argue that it may seem a contradiction to use CT as a way to evaluate AI due to the commonly understood basis of CT being committed to exposing "domestication and exploitation". However, there is another less known and overlooked element of CT and that is to "work towards emancipatory transformation". By

coupling this element of CT with AI, a new way of viewing both can be achieved, where each can provide alternative perspectives to the other. Grant et al have formulated a new approach called Critical Appreciative Processes (CAPs). This article has illustrated that two seemingly contradictory stances can find a common ground in order to work together to enhance each other rather than to detract from one another.

To summarise thus far, the pedagogic intervention was conducted within the structure of AR, but I naturally gravitated towards the spirit of AI for the initial work that I conducted with the teachers, as I have demonstrated above. It must be noted that throughout the years that I spent with the teachers, Headteacher and pupils, I was mindful of embracing and enhancing the positive in a culture of collegiality and collaboration.

As I highlighted in the prologue, I was very much influenced by the work of Peshkin (1988). He argues that whilst undergoing a research process, the researcher's own subjectivity is ever present and instead of just acknowledging it, they need to be "meaningfully attentive" to it. By so doing this will enable them to "be aware of how their subjectivity may be shaping their inquiry and its outcomes" (p.17).

Peshkin's work and experience gave me the opportunity to examine my own subjectivity and I identified six *subjective I's*: *The Hebrew Enthusiast*, *The Hebrew Pedagogue, The Jewish Educator*, *The Empowerer and Nurturer*, *The Research Community Builder* and *The Perpetual Voyager*.

Together with these personal qualities and states of being, I am telling my story through the lens of autoethnography, the fourth research approach of my methodological hybrid.

3.3.4   Autoethnography

This is "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)" (Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005, cited in Ellis, C. et al, 2010 p.1). Hence this approach facilitates a process whereby a researcher can critically analyse a particular context through his or her eyes. "A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product" (Ellis et al, p.1).

Autoethnography "acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming

they don't exist" (Ellis et al, p.2). Scholars saw autoethnography as a positive response to those who had a more fixed idea about what research is and how research should be undertaken. They wanted to produce "meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, cited in Ellis et al, 2010, p.2). "Autoethnography is a reflexive means by which the researcher-practitioner consciously embeds himself or herself amidst theory and practice, and by way of intimate autobiographic account, explicates a phenomenon under investigation or intervention" (McIlveen, 2008, p.1).

Autoethnography is "gaining momentum within the creative and performing arts as a research tool, partly because of the opportunity it provides for writers, artists, performers and others to reflect critically upon their personal and professional creative experience" (Pace, 2012, p.1).

The use of autoethnography as a methodology provided me with a very effective way to authentically convey my story and to rationalise the motivations for undertaking this research. In my investigation, I have used a number of elements of autoethnography. At the beginning of each chapter I have provided the reader with a vignette of a different reflective moment in my personal and professional life. The commentary provides a loose chronology taking the reader through my life's journey spanning five decades and three continents. Moreover, it gives an insight into my various personas as a Jew, Jewish educator, Hebrew pedagogue and researcher.

Furthermore, Ellis et al. (2010) argue that the approach that autoethnography takes is to describe and analyse the personal in order to understand the cultural. It was through this personal lens that helped me to critically analyse the impact of the research on the teachers, the children and the school community.

Autoethnography is not without its critics. Walford (2009, pp.276-277) discusses the nature of the truth that is being recalled and whether autobiographically based stories can be anything other than a "constructed fiction". Ellis and Bochner (2000, p.475 in Walford, 2009) respond to this criticism by arguing that all stories distort the past and that, "stories rearrange, redescribe, invent, omit and revise". Furthermore they argue that a story does not simply "mirror the facts of one's own life; it does not seek to recover already constituted meanings". Walford's reaction to this defence is to say that if people want to write fiction, "they should call it fiction and not call it ethnography or any other form of research".

I do not agree with Walford. In my case, my use of elements of autoethnography is a justifiable element of my hybrid methodology; it has enabled me as researcher to tell my story and to give the reader an insight into the rationale for conducting this research in an engaging and accessible manner. I rather more agree with Denzin (2012, p.86) who argues that autoethnography brings the past and future into the present and allows researchers "to push against the present, to engage pedagogies of hope".

Whilst Peshkin, Ellis and others argue that researchers need to embrace their subjectivity when engaging in research, Ellis, McIlveen and Pace are situated squarely within the autoethnographic approach whereas Peshkin is not. He advocates that researchers undertake a "formal, systematic monitoring of self" in order to keep the lines of their subjectivity "open – and straight" to avoid running the risk of "presenting a study that has become blatantly autobiographical" (Peshkin, 1988, p.20). Peshkin's eleven-month fieldwork in a high school was conducted under the aegis of ethnography, suggesting he did not make 'the leap' into autoethnography but rather kept his subjective (autobiographical) and the ethnographic elements functioning in parallel.

Moreover, McIlveen argues that "rather than a self-absorbed rendering, an autoethnography should produce a narrative that is authentic and thus enable the reader to deeply grasp the experience and interpretation of this one interesting case" (2008, p.4). He asserts that the "defining feature of autoethnography is that it entails the scientist or practitioner performing narrative analysis pertaining to himself or herself as intimately related to a particular phenomenon". Whilst autoethnography requires the researcher-practitioner to write about his/herself, "it is not the same as autobiography in the literary sense. It is not simply the telling of a life—not that doing such would be simple. It is a specific form of critical enquiry that is embedded in theory and practice" (2008, p.3). Furthermore, McIlveen asserts that another use of autoethnography is to analyse a "researcher's experience of participating in research" (p.5).

As my research project is a record of the culmination of my personal and professional journey thus far, I am satisfied that the use of autoethnography as the lens through which I will be recounting this story is appropriate and effective.

I would now like to pause to summarise before continuing to discuss my chosen research methods.

I wrote at the beginning of this chapter that my chosen methodology was not a single approach but rather a hybrid of four different approaches. I summarised my particular methodological approach as follows:

I have conducted an *Action Research* project, within the context of a *Case study*, in a culture of *Appreciative Inquiry* and through the lens of *Autoethnography*.

I then critically analysed each of these approaches and applied them to my research project. I am satisfied that I have provided the reader with a clear rationale as to my choice of these four approaches and strongly believe that my methodology is both appropriate and effective for the particular type of research I have undertaken.

I now would like to move onto the third and fourth 'action' levels of Jonker et al.'s research pyramid (2010, p.23).

3.4 Research Methods and Research Techniques

Jonker et al refer to the research methods as "specific steps of action that need to be executed in a certain (stringent) order" (2010, p.25). These steps can also be considered as "actions, phases or step-wise approaches" (2010, p.33). Jonker et al compare the methods chosen to that of a railway timetable "with arrival and departure times for all stations". In other words, once the train has left, "it will pass all the stations in a fixed order". They do concede however, that whilst stations will not change places, research methodologies are "often not constructed quite as rigidly", but they argue that the more concrete the "methodology, the better the result" (2010, p.33).

It must be noted at this juncture that Jonker et al alert the reader to the fact that many sources confusingly refer to methods and methodologies interchangeably. However, notwithstanding this mixing up of terminology, it is clear that methodology "indicates the main path to the destination" and methods are the specific steps in getting to the destination (Jonker et al, 2010, p.33).

Within a specific methodology "further elaboration of the methods" takes place, namely, the researcher needs to select the research techniques or 'instruments' or 'tools' (Jonker et al, pp. 34). Cohen et al explain methods as a "range of approaches used in educational research to gather data" or "techniques and procedures used in the process of data-gathering" (Cohen et al, 2000, p.44). Jonker et al assert that the researcher will select a technique or techniques depending on his or her research goals with the expectation of achieving the desired results (p.34): "The user of the technique has formed an idea of the effect that the technique will have if it is used". In other words, the researcher wants to ensure that rationality between the chosen research technique and the research goals and objectives exist (Jonker et al, p. 35). Costley et al corroborate this: "the methods

chosen to collect data and information from the field should be methodologically coherent, practically and ethically feasible, and capable of providing the type of information" the researcher needs (Costley et al, 2011, p.92).

I employed four main types of research methods and techniques during the 2014/15 academic year and all were conducted in a specific order, as contended by Jonker et al earlier. These were: classroom observations, focus groups, feedback interviews/conversations and reflection sheets. Therefore, by the end of the 2014/15 academic year, I had conducted the following:

1. A lesson observation of each of the three teachers participating in the research in each term (I observed a fourth lesson in the third term), totalling ten.
2. Focus group discussions with children from each class following each class observation, totalling ten.
3. Numerous feedback discussions and interviews with the Jewish Studies and Modern Hebrew teachers following each observation. Sometimes these were conducted as individual conversations, in pairs or all three together.
4. A number of conversations and discussions with the Headteacher, Heads of Jewish Studies and Modern Hebrew.

Additionally, the teachers also completed reflection sheets for every lesson I observed, also totalling ten.

As the pedagogic intervention that I initiated functioned within the framework of AR, it was imperative that I was generating data from a variety of sources in order to get an in-depth understanding of how the project was developing. This was crucial so that any changes or modifications that needed to be made could be done on the basis of real evidence and in real time.

3.4.1 Triangulation

Triangulation, in its original form as conceived by Denzin in the 1970s, referred to the use of "multiple forms of qualitative methods" and not "the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods" (Denzin, 2012, p.82). He argues that using multiple methods, or triangulation, is an attempt to "secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question" (2012, p.82). Flick (2007, in Denzin, 2012, p.82) suggests that triangulation is not a tool or strategy of validation, but rather an alternative to validation. Denzin offers six types of triangulation: time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation, theoretical triangulation, investigator triangulation and methodological triangulation. The latter type is relevant to my particular study. There are two forms of this

triangulation type – namely, using the "same method on different occasions", or in my case, using "different methods on the same object of study" (1970, in Cohen et al. 2000, p.113). Within educational research, methodological triangulation is used most often, and Cohen et al. (2000, p.115) argue it has possibly the most to offer. Therefore, each of the four methods that I employed were *triangulating* or validating my data and by using, involving and combining these different data sources, I would be able to "reflect upon several facts simultaneously" (Jonker et al, 2010, p. 160).

This now brings me to discuss how I ensured that my research project would stand up to questions of validity and reliability.

3.4.2   Validity and Reliability

I minimised threats to validity at all stages of the research process, namely at the design, data gathering, analysis and data reporting stages of the research. I found Cohen et al.'s guidance particularly useful (2000, pp. 115 – 116) in ensuring that my research was conducted in such a way to reduce this threat as much as possible. I highlight the main areas in each stage below.

At the design stage, I ensured that I had allocated an appropriate period of time within which to conduct the research. The time that I spent at the school took place over the period of four academic years, with the Action Research component of the research, taking place over an academic year. The project proceeded at a good pace allowing for a suitable amount of time for each phase before moving onto the next stage of the research.

My methodological approach, which encompasses an *Action Research* project conducted within the context of a *Case Study, in a culture of Appreciative Inquiry* and through the lens of *Autoethnography*, enabled me to initiate and undertake an educational change process designed to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in a Jewish primary school.

As discussed above, I selected four appropriate research methods and techniques for gathering the data required by my research. Each source on its own would have generated interesting data, but not compelling evidence. Therefore, bringing these four instruments together ensured that the evidence was robust and valid. My chosen research methods and techniques generated data from both the teacher and the learner perspectives.

At the data gathering stage for both the teachers and learners, I minimised the *Hawthorne* and 'reactivity' effect, by spending a good amount of time in the classrooms acclimatising myself to the setting and allowing the teachers and children to acclimatise to my presence before beginning the observations. This was necessary in order to reduce the effect of the actors behaving differently when I observed them 'for real'.

Within the focus groups, I asked all the children the same questions and in the same format each time we met thus ensuring that they were conducted in a standardised fashion. I was also mindful of the fact that young children's concentration span could be limited and thus ensured that I provided a variety of different activities during the focus groups. I also tried to make sure that the focus group sessions took place in a quiet location, free of distraction. There were the odd times when we experienced some interruptions and on one particular occasion, we needed to relocate to another space.

When conducting the feedback conversations with the teachers, I ensured that my demeanour was appropriate for the situation. I strived to find a balance between the formal and informal in order to create a relaxed, yet purposeful environment.

The teacher reflection sheets asked the same questions for each observation and this consistency enabled me to plot the teachers' progress and development over the course of the Action Research phase of the project.

At the data analysis stage, I minimised the threat to validity by ensuring that I followed a particular process. I used Braun et al.'s (2006, pp. 18-23) step-by-step guide on how to undertake Thematic Analysis.

First, I immersed myself fully in the data. I read and re-read the notes I made from the lesson observations. I familiarised myself with all the transcriptions of the focus groups and teacher conversations and checked them for accuracy, and I read and re-read the teacher reflection sheets. Whilst doing this I made markings, a list of ideas and generated brief notes of potential codings. I was reminded that the coding continues to develop and to be defined throughout the entire analytic process (Braun et al, 2006, p.17).

Second, I produced a set of initial codes from the data, which Braun et al. (2006, p.18) describe as identifying a "feature of the data […] that appears interesting to the analyst". The product of this phase was a long list of codes that were matched up with data extracts. I chose to generate the codes manually by writing notes in the margins, using

sticky notes and highlighter pens, preferring not to use a software programme for this phase.

Third, I analysed the codes and considered how they combined to form an overarching theme and I began to devise a set of "candidate" themes (Braun et al, pp.19 & 20).

Fourth, I refined the candidate themes identified in the previous phase. Braun et al suggest that some of the themes identified may not really be themes as there is not enough data to support them or the data is too varied. Other themes may collapse into each other or others may be broken down into separate themes. The process involved in this phase was to ensure that the data within the themes gelled together meaningfully and that there were "clear and identifiable distinctions" between them. At the end of this phase I had a "fairly good idea" of what my different themes were and how they fit together, and the "overall story they tell about the data" (Braun et al, 2006, pp.20 & 21).

Fifth, I went about defining and refining the themes in order to identify the 'essence' of what each theme and the themes overall are all about and "determine what aspect of the data each theme captures" (Braun et al., 2006, pp.22 & 23). By the end of this phase I had a clear picture of what was a theme and what was not. This was also the time to give the themes working titles that I was to use in the final analysis.

At the data reporting stage, I minimised the threat to invalidity by the following: I reported not only on the positive outcomes of the research, but also on the negative and challenging aspects. In Chapter Five, I informed the reader of the parameters of the data set that was to be analysed: namely, from the teaching perspective which included the classroom observations, the teacher refection sheets and feedback conversations and from the learning perspective which included the observations and the focus groups. Furthermore, my findings were substantiated by the data and I provided evidence for the reader.

I would now like to move onto discussing the reliability of my research. The notion of reliability concerns how well the researcher has conducted his or her research and if other researchers were to investigate the same questions would they come up with similar results (Blaxter et al, 2001, p. 221). In other words, to what extent could my research findings "be replicated, or reproduced, by another inquirer"? (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.100 in Jonker et al., 2010, p.156). This question can also be directed to the same researcher, such as myself, and whether I would also come up with similar findings on different occasions. I was acutely aware that due to the four different approaches I was

incorporating in my research, it was necessary that my research be conducted in an accurate, precise and consistent manner. The Action Research cyclical framework provided me with a clear structure within which to work. Each AR cycle, as described in Chapter Four, incorporated the same components over the three terms and was conducted in a consistent manner. My attention to detail and design ensured that I was able to conduct the research in such a way that my findings would be reliable.

I believe that my research findings stand up to questions of trustworthiness and transferability. I have been careful to triangulate my different data sources and I have also taken care to minimise the threat to the validity of the research as described above. Furthermore, as the research was conducted in a consistent, accurate and precise manner, I was able to gauge the development of the participants over a considerable period of time and the efficacy of the intervention.

I will now examine each research method in detail.

3.4.3   Classroom Observations

Wragg asserts that with AR, there are "two principal kinds of action research and classroom observation can have a part to play in both" (1999, p.118). He describes the first type as *rational-reactive*, where the researcher examines what is taking place in the classroom, "usually with a specific focus on something known to be a problem or in need of improvement", and then formulates an intervention to "react to or remediate" what has been found. The second type to which Wragg refers is the *intuitive-proactive*. Here, the researchers "know or think they know, what needs to be done, so they implement an intervention programme first, and then visit classrooms to see how well it is progressing" (Wragg, 1999, p.118). With regard to my particular research project, I fall into the second type in which observations I conducted were a means to assess how well my intervention was doing.

Cohen et al argue that observations are an attractive form of data collection "as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations", rather than at second hand" (2000, p.305). Observations "enable the researcher to understand the context […], to be open-ended and inductive" and to see things that might have otherwise been missed (2000, p.305). Walliman asserts that observation is a "method of recording conditions, events and activities through the non-inquisitorial involvement of the researcher" (2005, p.287). Observations allow the researcher to "discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations" (Cohen et al, 2000, p.305).

Cohen et al believe that there is a certain 'freshness' to observations, as observed incidents are less predictable than other forms of data collection (2000, p.305).

Patton (1990, in Cohen et al, 2000, p.305) suggests that there are different forms of observations that a researcher can use, which range from the unstructured to the structured. "The *highly structured* observation will know in advance what it is looking for […] and will have its observation categories worked out in advance". Moving along the continuum, the *semi-structured* observation "will have an agenda of issues in a far less pre-determined or systematic manner". Whereas an *unstructured* observation will "be far less clear on what it is looking for and will therefore have to go into a situation and observe what is taking place before deciding on its significance for the research". I would consider that the form of observation that I undertook was mainly that of a *semi-structured* observation. I certainly had an 'agenda of issues' that I was going to observe, but this was not just going to be a tick box exercise. The focus of my observations, as previously discussed, was the teaching and learning emanating from pedagogic intervention I had initiated.

Besides observing these specific areas, I was also interested in observing the following: 1. The classroom environment, its set up and whether it was conducive to teaching and

Learning. 2. The make-up of the classroom members. 3. The different types of interaction taking place in the classroom between the different members. These four areas were very much along the lines of what Morrison maintains. He writes that the researcher is able to gather data on different settings: the *physical* – how the physical environment is organised, the *human* – the characteristics and make-up of the people being observed, the *interactional* - the types of interaction that takes place and the *programme* – the organisation of the resources and curricula and pedagogic styles (1993, in Cohen et al, 2000, p.305). All four *settings* will give me an overall and holistic view of the teaching and learning taking place and to ignore any would not be doing justice to my observations and indeed my research.

I would now like to discuss the role I took as observer. Cohen et al cite Gold who offers a "well-known classification of researcher roles in observation" as a continuum. He talks of the *complete participant* at the one end of the spectrum, moving to the *participant-as-observer* to the *observer-as-participant* in the centre, to the *complete observer* at the other end (1958, in Cohen et al, 2000, p.305). They explain such a process as the researcher moving from complete participation to complete detachment, with the two inner roles

striving "to balance involvement with detachment, closeness with distance, familiarity with strangeness".

The observer role I took for the most part was that of *observer participant*. "This role requires the researchers to reveal their identities in the setting, but the extent to which the researcher actively engages with the members of the setting is *limited*" (Hesse-Biber et al, 2006, p.249). This role allowed me to observe for the most part, but I was also able to ask the children questions, view and comment on their work and also answer the occasional question posed by the teachers. However, as time progressed, I occasionally took on a more participant-observer role, where I found myself 'being taught' by the teacher and was very caught up in the different activities. There was a second eye that was functioning throughout the observations and that was my subjective I's, the lens through which I was observing – the Hebrew enthusiast, the Jewish educator and the Hebrew pedagogue were most prominent during this time. I would find myself saying to myself, "hey, that's not how I would do that!" or "don't give out the papers yet, wait until you've shown them what to do" or "make the link more explicit, they haven't got it yet!". Sometimes, the subjective I's got the better of me and I would go over to the teacher and whisper that she might want to repeat that last sentence or give another example to reinforce a skill.

Cohen et al argue that whilst observations provide an excellent opportunity to gain insights into different contexts and situations, there are questions relating to their validity

and reliability in terms of how the researcher views and analyses the data. Therefore, they suggest, "additional methods of gathering data might be employed, to provide corroboration and triangulation, in short, to ensure that reliable inferences are derived from reliable data" (2000, p.315).

I made notes of all the observations in real time. Please refer to Appendix A of two examples of observations that I undertook, one is of a JS lesson and one an *Ivrit* lesson. I have included the teachers' lesson plans alongside my observational notes taken in real time.

3.4.4   Focus Groups

As my pedagogic intervention focuses on the teaching and learning of Hebrew, it was very important that I dedicated significant time to the learners' experience during the AR project. Besides observing the learners in the classroom situation as part of the observations I conducted, I wanted to chart the experience of a group of children over the duration of the project. I would be receiving views from the teachers on how they felt the

learners were progressing, but I wanted to have first-hand experience. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, I wanted to understand the impact of the AR project on the learners in three specific areas: skills, attitudes and understandings. Therefore, I formed three focus groups comprising of five or six children from the classes that I was observing, totalling ten encounters. This extra layer of data generation would be contributing to my project's overall validity and robustness.

Morgan et al (2002, p.6) conducted focus groups with children aged 7–11 years in the UK to elicit their views and experiences of living with asthma, and their perceptions of asthma treatments. They write that there "has been a considerable expansion of the use of focus groups as a method of data collection in social science research over the last decade, both to inform surveys and as a method of data collection in their own right" (2002, p. 6). However, all "assume adult participants and that 'researching children's lives remains at an exploratory stage'" (Mauthner, 1997, in Morgan et al, 2002, p.7). Moreover, they argue that this still "holds true both generally and in relation to focus groups" (Morgan et al, 2002, p.7). Indeed, Morgan and Krueger state, "social science and evaluation research are still at a stage at which most of our knowledge about focus groups comes from personal experience rather than systematic investigation" (1993, in Vaughn et al., 1996, p.2). Whilst it has been a popular form of research in the marketing and business sectors for the past thirty years, it also has been used in the fields of communication, health, education, and psychology (Vaughn et al., 1996, p.2).

Focus groups are viewed as a method that can enrich and complement a research study. They are often "best for giving insights of an exploratory or preliminary kind" (Krueger, 1994, in Wellington, 2000, p.125) and can then "be used to shape future research, such as qualitative in-depth interviews or quantitative surveys (Hesse-Biber et al, 2006, p. 195). Focus groups can also be a "stand-alone, self-contained way of collecting data for a research project" (Wellington, 2000, p.124).

Focus groups are a form of group interview, where "the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher" (Morgan, 1988, in Cohen et al, 2000, p.288). A focus group is a "small group made up of perhaps six to ten individuals with certain common features or characteristics, with whom a discussion can be focused onto a given issue or topic" (Wellington, 2000, p.124). Wellington argues that a focus group is more than a group interview due to the specific dynamics that it creates. The "synergy of the group" and the "interaction of its members" […] are "brought together in a suitable environment" and "can stimulate or 'spark each other off'" (Wellington, 2000, pp.124 -125). Focus groups are used "when a program of some kind needs to be

evaluated in order to help measure its success, strengths, and weaknesses, and also to help qualitatively *explain* the nature of what is and is not working". Furthermore, focus groups are found to be "a profound experience for both the researcher and the research participants that generate a unique form of data" (Hesse-Biber et al, 2006, p.197).

Hesse-Biber et al argue that focus groups are very different from in-depth interviews because data are produced in a group made up of the researcher and participants. Moreover, the dynamics is such that the interface between the different members of the group produces 'happenings' that can never be replicated. It is a one-off occurrence that even if the researcher follows the same protocols and asks the same questions, the "interaction and conversation within any given group will not be reproduced". These forms of communication "are an important source of data and can be a significant part of the knowledge-building process – particularly in qualitative research". However, whilst these conversations are dynamic and unpredictable, they are still taking place within a contrived setting and the conversations are not naturally occurring, but "always arranged for the purpose of the research" (Hesse-Biber et al, 2006, pp.198-199). This was especially true of the focus groups that I conducted in that these conversations were only taking place within the confines of the focus group and which were operating in line with the structure that I had created.

Hess asserts that the focus group interview has "distinct advantages over the individual interview". These include: *synergism* - a wider array of data emerges through group interaction, *snowballing* - one respondent's comments sets off a chain reaction of more comments, *stimulation* - the group discussion creates excitement about a topic, *security* – the group provides a comfort and encourages frank responses and *spontaneity* – because participants are not expected to answer every question, their responses are more spontaneous and genuine. (Hess, 1968, in Vaughn et al, 1996, p. 14).

As my focus groups were confined to young children, aged between seven and eight, I was mindful that I needed to proceed with care in terms of the ethical issues that are raised when conducting research with young children (this is discussed in more detail further on in this chapter). Moreover, I needed to carefully consider the technical aspects inherent in conducting focus groups, but especially with young children (these are explained in detail in the following chapter).

In the section above on *Validity* and *Reliability*, I discussed briefly how I ensured that the *Hawthorne effect* was mitigated when I observed the teachers and learners. This was accomplished to some degree by having spent some considerable time in the lessons

prior to the actual observations. This time was important so that we could all become acclimatised to each other's presence. I became a familiar and friendly face during the lessons which helped when I conducted the focus groups. I believe however, that the *Hawthorne* effect and reactivity cannot be totally overcome as the dynamics change when an intervention takes place, but I endeavoured to mitigate such effects so that my findings would be as valid and reliable as possible.

There were certain other measures that I undertook to minimise these effects when conducting each focus group. At the start of every encounter, I reminded the learners that there were no wrong answers to the questions I was going to ask. Furthermore, I explained that I would not be marking their answers and that their teachers, parents and fellow students would not know how they each had individually had answered the questions. I also reminded them that they did not have to agree with what their friends were saying, unless of course they did. I emphasised that I wanted to know what each and every one of them thought and felt, and ensured that children who wanted to speak was given the opportunity. In other words, I wanted the participants to feel as comfortable as possible and endeavoured to create a relaxed and natural atmosphere as possible. It is difficult to know to what extent the *Hawthorne* effect was minimised but I feel I had put in place sufficient measures to counter these as much as possible. It is interesting to note that some of the children who took part in the focus group from Gila's class were at times unruly and I did need to quieten them down on a few occasions. One could argue that the children were very comfortable with me and that the *Hawthorne* effect had less impact on this particular group or, conversely, they were not well behaved specifically because of their participation in the research.

3.4.5 Interviews
The third form of research method I employed within the AR framework was that of interview. I include within this term, *feedback conversations* and *discussions-as-interviews*.

Interviewing is considered to be the most commonly used method in qualitative research (Mason, 2002, p.62). An interview is an "interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest". It "sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data" (Kvale, 1996, p.14 in Cohen et al, 2000, p.267). Furthermore, interviews "enable participants – be they interviewers or interviewees – to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (Cohen et al, 2000, p.267).

Mason asserts that the term 'qualitative' interviewing is usually "intended to refer to-in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing". She rejects the term 'unstructured' as she believes that no research interview can completely lack some form of structure. She argues that qualitative or semi-structured interviewing has its own character and that all such interviews have a core set of common features (p. 62). To sum up, these types of interviews generally are:

1. *Dialogical* in nature - they involve one-to-one interactions, larger group interviews or focus groups and can take place either face-to-face, over the telephone or via the Internet.
2. Relatively *informal* in style – can be viewed as a conversation or discussion or as Burgess (1984, in Mason, 2002, p.62) terms it, 'conversations with a purpose'.
3. *Thematic*, *topic-centred*, *biographic* or *narrative* in approach – the researcher has a number of topics, themes or issues he or she wants to cover or a set of starting points for discussion. The researcher is unlikely to have a "complete and sequenced script of questions", making the qualitative interview more fluid and flexible.
4. Operating from the perspective of knowledge being *situated* and *contextual* – the researcher's role is to "ensure that the relevant contexts are brought into focus so that situated knowledge can be produced". In other words, "meanings and understandings are created in an interaction, […] a co-production, involving researcher and interviewees" (Mason, 2002, pp.62-63) .

According to Hesse-Biber et al, "in-depth interview uses individuals as the point of departure for the research process and assumes that individuals have unique and important knowledge about the social world that is ascertainable through verbal communication". They believe that in-depth interviews are a particular type of conversation where *active asking and listening* takes place between the researcher and the interviewee (2006, p.119).

I conducted a range of in-depth interviews during the period of the AR project in the 2014-15 academic year as well as during the academic year prior to that when I first starting my relationship with the school. These interviews comprised all of the features of which Mason talks above: All were conducted face-to-face, some were one-to-one conversations, and others were in smaller or bigger groups. They were all informal in style and did not have the "formal question and answer format" (Mason, 2002, p.63). Rather, as Mason describes, I began each conversation with a little introduction saying which areas I wanted the interviewees to talk about and what areas I was interested in hearing about.

Sometimes, I would prepare a list of the general topics that I wanted us to talk about and I would interject with more questions as and when necessary. This gave the conversation the necessary fluidity and flexibility as Mason describes. It was very much the case that through dialoguing and interaction we were able to *construct* or *reconstruct* knowledge rather than *excavating* it (Mason 2002, in Mason 2002, p.63).

Therefore, the purposes of these conversations were manifold: they were an opportunity for me as researcher to begin the conversation about my research and to explain how the research would develop. They allowed the participants time to ask questions and seek clarifications. Later on, the conversations became the space for the teachers to feedback on their lessons, to talk about the teaching and learning aspects, to think about how the research was impacting upon them on a personal and professional level, the challenges the research was exposing and the difficulties and stresses they were experiencing due to the research. The conversations were also an opportunity for me to feedback to the teachers about their lessons; how I felt they could be modified for the following observation or how they could do things slightly differently to reduce the amount of time the lessons were taking to prepare or to produce different results. The conversations also included future thinking and the ways in which the school community could continue with the interventions into the next academic year. All conversations were digitally recorded, with permission, and transcribed.

These conservations were crucial as they gave me an insight into how the participants were feeling about the process, something that would not necessarily have been evident from the observations. It gave them the opportunity to reflect upon these matters through sharing information and experiences. From a research perspective, these conversations were providing me with another layer of data and insight. Together with the other three sources of data, I was able to form a very good picture of the state of play as it was unfolding in real time. This then enabled me to make any necessary changes to how the AR process was proceeding.

This now brings me to my final research method and technique that I employed during my research project.

3.4.6   Teacher Reflection Sheets

As this was an AR project, reflection on practice is an integral part of the process. AR is a "form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as

well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out" (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, in Cohen et al, 2000, p.227). Moreover, as I was conducting a PAR project, the teachers were ostensibly my co-researchers, and as such it was not only incumbent upon me to engage in reflective practice, it was also incumbent upon them.

Osterman et al regard reflective practice as an effective strategy to develop one's professionalism in that it can provide a way to nurture and develop learning, modify behaviour and improve performance. Moreover, by dealing with problems rather than with the symptoms, people, through self-reflection, can undergo meaningful and sustainable change. Ultimately, engaging in reflective practice will impact upon learning and meaningful educational change, but only if educators can change the way they do things themselves (Osterman et al, 2004, p.1).

I was very conscious that in reality, the teachers were not able to be in full reflective mode due to the many pressures and constraints of their day-to-day work. Notwithstanding, I wanted to encourage them to be reflective as much as possible and created a way in which they could reflect on their practice whilst they were participating in the research project. Therefore, I requested that they complete teacher refection sheets. I wanted to give them the opportunity to record their feelings, thoughts and actions without having to answer specific questions. For this reason, I kept the teacher reflection sheet very simple and open-ended. I helped their thinking process by asking them to reflect upon matters before, during and after each observation. I also gave them space to write whatever else they wished. It was also important that this was an individual exercise so that the data generated from these could be viewed as the teacher's own, rather than having been influenced by others when participating in group feedback conversations. I specifically did not refer to these as *reflection or learning journals* or ask the teachers to complete journals, as I did not want the teachers to view it as or engage in an overly onerous and complicated task.   Moon explains that a learning journal is "essentially a vehicle for reflection" and that for some people "being reflective can represent a deeply seated orientation to their lives", whilst for others the process "would seem to come only when the conditions in their environment are conducive to reflecting, perhaps when there is an incentive to reflect, or some guidance or a particular accentuation of the conditions". She adds that a learning journal can highlight those right conditions, by providing some guidance and encouragement, helpful questions or exercises and the "expectation that journal-writing can have a worthwhile consequence, whether during or at the end of the process, or as a result of both (2006, p.1).

Despite all my efforts to encourage the teachers to complete their reflections sheets in real time, the majority was completed only after the observations had taken place, so it was more reflection *on* practice rather than reflection *in* practice. Simply put, Schön explains the notion of *reflection-in-action* as thinking "about doing something while doing it" (1983, p. 54). I am sure that the teachers who participated in the research project did *think in action*, in other words, as they were teaching, they were reflecting there and then on how the lesson was proceeding and made any necessary adjustments. However, it was wholly unrealistic of me to expect the teachers to have recorded this in writing as the lesson was unfolding, so *reflection on action* was probably a more realistic form of reflection in these circumstances.

The use of these reflection sheets yielded some very rich data, which I will be analysing in detail later on.

To summarise this section thus far: I have presented the reader with a comprehensive discussion and rationale of the four research methods and techniques I chose to generate data for my AR project. The observations, focus groups, conversation interviews and teacher reflection sheets constitute an extremely rich and varied amount of material that will enable me to significantly understand the extent to which this AR project has been successful.

3.5 My Positionality and Ethical Considerations

My research represents thus far the pinnacle of my professional and personal development as a Jewish educator and Hebrew pedagogue. I am the initiator of the pedagogic intervention and the primary change agent. Part of my work as Director of Jewish Education at the Leo Baeck College is dedicated to Hebrew language development. This work has evolved over the twenty-one years that I have been employed by the College and includes teaching, curriculum development, consultancy and teacher training. These activities have taken place in different settings including synagogue communities and Jewish day schools and amongst different age groups.

The nature of a work-based project situates the researcher in the centre of his or her own field of practice. My research project took place in one community of practice, namely, a Jewish primary school with which I have had a long association through my work as a Hebrew consultant. Therefore, I came to the school with a good deal of familiarity and knowledge of the school.

The term insider-researcher refers to those conducting research within his or her "own work practice" (Costley et al, 2011, p.1). As I was not conducting research within my day-to-day working environment, namely the College, the question arises to what extent could I or should I be considered an insider-researcher. It is clear that I have been operating on two levels. The first level is that of an outsider-researcher. I approached the Headteacher of the school enquiring whether she would be interested in allowing her school to participate in my research. As the school does not employ me, I would be considered an outsider-researcher. Conversely, I am an insider-researcher as I have enjoyed a close relationship with the school spanning many years, during which time I have become very familiar with the ethos of the school, its Headteacher and many of its teachers. Perhaps most important of all is the fact that the teachers who took part in the research with me share a common professional area of interest – Hebrew. As there are many important areas of commonality, including the enhancement of teaching and learning of Hebrew, between the school and myself, I would consider myself more as an insider-researcher than outsider-researcher.

In order to avoid role ambiguities, I was very mindful that I needed to reformulate the relationship I had with the school and situate myself now as researcher rather than as consultant. I broached this potential tension within my role in my first meeting with the Headteacher, deputy Headteacher and teachers when I made it clear that I was now coming to undertake a research project at the school with their participation and I was not coming in as a consultant or as an inspector.

I was also keenly aware of my *Subjective I's* impacting upon the research and becoming dominant and I was concerned that it would influence they way I was observing. For example, through the lens of my *Hebrew Pedagogue I,* I had very definite ideas of how I wanted the teachers to interpret the general framework that I developed for the lessons I was to observe. When one of the teachers strayed from the 'script', it made me question my own judgment and I also began to question her teaching. Reflecting upon this after the lesson, I realised that she might have had some very genuine reasons for making the changes. For example, she may have been nervous and was trying to 'own' the lesson by commencing the lesson from a familiar and comfortable starting point. Additionally, her changes may have been justified as they facilitated differentiation in the lesson by catering for pupils with a range of abilities and knowledge. This was a moment to acknowledge my subjective in the research process and to reflect on these matters.

Furthermore, I was very conscious of the ethical issues that could arise when conducting the research. One such issue was that I wanted to ensure that my needs as a researcher

were not more important than those of the participants. Cohen et al argue that researchers are required to "strike a balance between the demands placed on them as professional scientists in pursuit of truth, and their subjects' rights and values potentially threatened by the research (Cohen et al, 2000, p.49). One way was to do my utmost to fit in with the teachers' timetables and time constraints and arrange for observations and feedback conversations to take place at times convenient for them as much as possible. I was very fortunate that I was able to manage my work time and research time effectively in order for this to happen. Another example was the culture in which I wanted to conduct the research; I wished to celebrate their successes, not negate their work and develop a joint vision of how Hebrew could be enhanced. This was very much in line with the approach of *appreciative inquiry* that I discussed in the earlier section of this chapter.

I was also aware of the issues around power and politics that exist within a research environment. From a personal perspective, the motivation for conducting this research was part of my continuing personal and professional development in the field of Hebrew pedagogy, as well as making an important contribution to the on-going research in Jewish educational issues worldwide. I was particularly aware of the authority I held as a researcher and it was very important for me to not abuse this power. Costley et al argue that as a researcher "you are trusted not to use this authority to manipulate and exploit the trustee" (2011, p.57). I needed to foster a culture of trust where professionalism, openness and collaboration existed on all sides.

Working with children raises additional issues with regards to ethical conduct. As the learners who took part in my project were very young, once general permission by the Headteacher was granted, I then needed to seek permission from the children's parents. (Refer to Appendix B for a sample of the letter).

Besides having to go through the technical aspects of gaining consent from parents, there is a more fundamental issue at stake, which involves the rights of children. Morgan et al write that research undertaken in "children's health and social care has traditionally been on those responsible for children, based on assumptions regarding adults' greater knowledge of 'what is best'". However, they argue that in recent years there has been an "increased emphasis on the rights of children themselves", which is enshrined in Article 12 of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This states that: "children and young people have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them. This right extends from decisions affecting them as individuals, to decisions that affect them as a collectivity" (Morgan et al, 2002, p.6). "The 1989 Children's Act also set up a legal requirement in the UK to consult the wishes and feelings of children when assessing their

physical, emotional and educational needs" (Greig and Taylor, 1999, in Morgan et al, 2002, p.6).

Lewis and Lindsay argue that research with children "poses the same ethical questions that apply to other types of research". In other words, researchers should "respect their participants, in their interactions, in the tasks they set, and in their treatment of information which they acquire". Furthermore, researchers should be competent in the task and if not, they should seek the support of another skilled or knowledgeable researcher. Researchers' concerns should address "primarily the participants in their research, but also the wider scientific and professional community, and society as a whole. However, with regards to conducting research with children, they claim that there are specific concerns. These include "informed, valid consent, and ways of ensuring that this is attained", but also that the child is "meaningfully included in the decision making process" (Lewis et al, 2000, pp.19-20).

As my project had a direct impact on the learners' Hebrew education, it was imperative that their wishes, feelings and thoughts were consulted and as such their input and participation was a vital part of the overall research process.

3.6 Analysis

Dooley sees the goal of analysis as the organisation of "hundreds of pages of raw observational notes into a meaningful pattern". Furthermore he regards the essence of the task as an "interconnection of discrete observations within a small number of conceptual categories". He likens this process to that of a jigsaw puzzle where the researcher tries to fit and refit the pieces in a "variety of preliminary models until there are no or few pieces left over" and the end result is a fit that is both acceptable to the researcher and is logical in its outcome. Finally, the resulting jigsaw or the final report must be presented in a clear and convincing manner (1990, p. 288).

During the course of my research process, I captured a vast amount of qualitative data: lesson observations; focus groups with children; professional conversations and interviews; and the teachers who participated in the research project completed reflection sheets.

As I pointed out earlier on in this chapter, I chose Thematic Analysis (hereafter referred to TA) as my method of analysis. Some academics such Boyatzis (1998, cited in Braun et al, 2006, p.4) do not consider TA as a specific method but as a tool to use across different

methods. However, Braun et al consider it as a method in its own right (2006, p.4) for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (2006, p.6). They argue that TA is not bound to any one particular theoretical or epistemological approach and because of this freedom, it is a flexible and useful research tool, which "can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data" (2006, p.5). I am therefore confident that TA will indeed yield such an account of the data generated in my research.

3.7 Summary

I have used Jonker et al.'s (2010) *research pyramid* to frame this chapter. This structure has enabled me to navigate through an extremely complicated area of the research process. I am confident that my rationale for choosing a hybrid methodology and selecting each type of research method and technique has been sound and appropriate for the particular type of research I have undertaken. I also discussed the triangulation of the data sources that supported the validity and reliability of my work. I then introduced my chosen method of analysis, namely Thematic Analysis and gave the reader an insight into the process I underwent. Furthermore, I discussed various ethical issues that arise when conducting qualitative research and especially research that includes children as participants.

I now invite the reader to enter the world of the project itself.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE EMPOWERER AND NURTURER

I have given myself an hour.

I leave work early in order to get to Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School in time for my first meeting with the members of staff who will be participating in my research project. The meeting is taking place at noon during the school day. I am nervous, yet excited about the meeting and go through the agenda in my head whilst driving from North London to Redbridge. The North Circular is blocked as usual – when is it not? – and I begin to panic. Will I get there in time? Why didn't I leave earlier? I feel the panic rise up inside me and I begin to perspire. Just when I think I should phone the school to warn them I will be late, the traffic suddenly clears and I am able to make good progress. Luckily I find a parking place not too far away from the school and I manage to reach it with five minutes to spare. Enough time to allow me to sign the visitor's book, say hello to the school administrator, go to the loo and meet everyone in the meeting room.

The first thing I do is take out my digital recorder, switch it on and make sure it is recording. I ask whether anybody objects to being recorded. No objections. I take a few deep breaths and I start: "First of all, I want to say thank you so much for meeting with me. I do appreciate the time you have taken out of your busy schedules and I know you are doing a big favour for me."

And so my research journey begins…

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will begin by providing the reader with the sociocultural context of the teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the United Kingdom. It will then explore the notion of the development of new pedagogies and professional practice, both as separate yet overlapping research paths in the context of the project. Next Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School will be put centre stage as the Case Study of this research project. Following on from that the reader will then be immersed into a detailed account of the different phases that constitute the project activity. The chapter will end with a summary giving an overview of all the different areas explored.

4.2 The Sociocultural Context of the Teaching and Learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the United Kingdom

My research involves educational *change in practice* bringing about a specific pedagogic intervention in a Jewish primary school in the UK. My project has brought about an intervention whereby Biblical and Modern Hebrew has been integrated, where appropriate and possible, as a way to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools.

In order to contextualise the teaching and learning of Hebrew in the UK, it is important to remind the reader that in the vast majority of Jewish primary schools in the UK, Biblical Hebrew is taught under the auspices of the Jewish Studies department and Modern Hebrew is taught in the *Ivrit* department[33]. There is no one standard Jewish Studies curriculum which all Jewish schools follow; however, most curricula will follow the same or similar subjects albeit from a different perspective, depending on whether it is a Modern Orthodox school or pluralist school. Even within each type of school, there will be an array of teaching approaches and emphases. The subjects that will be taught in the JS curriculum would normally cover aspects from the *Torah*, the Jewish festivals, Jewish life cycles events, Jewish values and ethics, and Jewish prayer. The majority of these subjects are taught in English, but the Hebrew of the *Torah*, prayer books and Jewish ethics will be Biblical Hebrew. Biblical Hebrew is not a living spoken language but it is the medium through which children will learn all about these aspects of Judaism. In many Modern orthodox schools, the children will also be taught their Hebrew letters and vowels and will learn how to read Biblical Hebrew.

In contrast to this, *Ivrit* is a modern language, one of the languages spoken in Israel and by many Jewish people in the diaspora. There is no one particular *Ivrit* curriculum that all the Jewish day schools in the UK follow. There are numerous curricula on offer that have been written in the United States, Israel and the UK. Whichever Hebrew curriculum is used in these schools, it needs to incorporate the learning outcomes prescribed by the MFL framework. *Ivrit* is therefore subject to Ofsted inspections just like any other MFL being taught in day schools. The topics that are normally covered included in an *Ivrit* curriculum are, 'who am I?', 'my family', the weather, Hebrew months, numbers, 'where I live', age, birthdays, food and drink, school subjects and general activities. In those schools where the JS department does not teach letters and vowels, the *Ivrit* department will also teach the Hebrew alphabet, plus the reading and writing of modern texts. As the children get older they will also learn Modern Hebrew script. Hebrew oracy is also taught and children from an early age are able to construct and say simple sentences in *Ivrit*. Therefore, in most cases, the four skills of reading, writing, listening and oracy are taught.

In the Modern Orthodox and pluralist Jewish day schools, the JS and *Ivrit* departments operate mainly in isolation from one another. In respect of the Jewish Studies, this is the department that gives the school its Jewish ethos and nature. Most Jewish day schools are voluntary aided, which means that whilst the school receives funding from the government to teach the National curriculum, the school needs to approach its parent

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[33] In strictly Orthodox Jewish day schools, there will not be an *Ivrit* department as Modern Hebrew is still regarded as *chilul Hashem* and therefore it will not be taught or spoken.

body to pay towards the Jewish studies provision at the school. As these payments are voluntary it is often the case that the religious foundational body of these schools subsidises the shortfall. As I have already explained, the teaching and learning of *Ivrit* comes under the auspices of the Modern Languages Framework of the National Curriculum.

In as much as the separation between the JS and *Ivrit* departments within Jewish day schools in the UK has been brought about by the National Curriculum, I argued in Chapter One that this separation has been in existence for centuries and has developed because of the different religious, historical and political influences that existed in the different periods and contexts of the Jewish people.

My research project challenges this state of separateness. My pedagogic intervention is an attempt to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew by integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

4.3 The Development of New Pedagogies and Professional Practice

As I discussed in the Chapter Two, I have drawn upon Fullan's theory of educational change. My intervention comprises the three elements he deems are necessary to enable meaningful and sustained change to occur: The first being "the possible use of new or revised *materials"*, the second, "the possible use of new *teaching approaches*" and the third, "the possible alteration of *beliefs"* (Fullan, 1991, p.37).

In terms of my project, I incorporated all three elements: I introduced a new *framework* for linking Biblical and Modern Hebrew to the teachers; I inducted them in the different *teaching approaches* and *techniques* that the new framework demanded; and most importantly, I set about to change their *belief system* with regard to the teaching and learning of Hebrew. These three elements could be regarded as three separate and disconnected outcomes of my research. I managed, however, to successfully incorporate all three which contributed significantly to the success and sustainability of the intervention.

My starting point was to set about changing the teacher's belief systems with regard to the teaching and learning of Hebrew. I strongly believed then as I do now, that it was crucial for the teachers to understand the rationale for the intervention and to give them some concrete examples of the benefits of integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew before I began to design an actual framework. Consequently, a considerable amount of time was

spent with the teachers during Phase One of the research project in order to nurture openness and different possibilities. This element of the change was on-going and the teachers' belief systems continued to be challenged throughout the research project.

Once I felt that the teachers had undergone a substantial shift in their thinking regarding the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew I then set about to start working with the teachers on the actual framework, namely, the new Hebrew pedagogy. It was only towards the end of this process did I move onto the final element - that of professional practice, namely, the teaching approaches. Therefore, although the new Hebrew pedagogy and the teaching approaches developed initially as separate entities and at different phases during the research process, they were inextricably bound together. In order for the intervention be put into motion, I needed to induct the teachers into the practical steps of converting a theoretical pedagogy into a concrete and living practice. The new framework demanded of the teachers to teach in a different way, such as allowing the children to listen to a text without first seeing it and to start to make links between their 'worlds' and the other (Biblical or Modern Hebrew). As the Action Research phase progressed these two elements continued to inform each other. For instance, changes were made to the framework, in light of professional practice, such as the need for a variety of tasks to better accommodate children with differing abilities.

Fullan's (1991) work on educational change has therefore formed the basis of the theoretical framework for the pedagogic intervention I conducted. The mechanism for the pedagogic intervention is *Action Research*, which I discussed in detail in the previous chapter and which took place in the academic year 2014/15.

It was important that before I was able to initiate this change, I needed to spend a considerable amount of time meeting with the Head teacher, deputy Head, Hebrew and Jewish studies teachers. These meetings were necessary to communicate my research intentions and to foster an open, collaborative and productive environment. I have taken elements from *Appreciative Inquiry* to frame this period of time. I have also discussed my use of *AI* in the previous chapter.

Before I take the reader on my research journey, I would first like to put Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School centre stage.

4.4 The Case Study: Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School (CTJPS)

CTJPS opened its doors in 1999. It is a two formed entry Voluntary Aided School[34] in the London Borough of Redbridge. It has approximately 450 children on its roll, including a nursery. The school has a "pluralist outlook" that encompasses its admissions policy and its ethos (Clore Tikva, 2015).

The government contributes to all areas of the National Curriculum; however, as CT is a faith school, the costs pertaining to the Jewish nature of the school, namely, the Jewish Studies programme, including the Jewish Studies (JS) staff, are raised through voluntary contributions of the parent body. The school has a religious foundational sponsoring body which is responsible for providing and maintaining the Jewish educational programme. The sponsoring body also contributes to any capital funding costs as well as to its security costs.

As discussed in the previous chapter, CTJPS has been judged overall as 'good' in both its most recent OFSTED and *Pikuach* inspections. The last Ofsted inspection was held in 2007 and inspectors emphasized:

> Under the excellent leadership of the Headteacher and deputy head a strong team has been forged that is totally committed to meeting the academic and personal needs of the whole child. This is seen not only in pupils' good achievement and the above average standards they reach, but also in their outstanding personal development and wellbeing.

4.5 Project Activity

During the time that I was involved with the school, I conducted over seventy-five separate activities. Appendix C gives a visual representation of these activities that took place over the period of four academic years: 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. These periods of time can be further categorized into five distinct research phases: Phase One is the *Appreciative Inquiry* period, namely, *AI*. Phase Two is the framework design period,

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[34] VA: Voluntary aided schools are usually called religious schools or faith schools. In a voluntary aided school:-
- the land and buildings are normally owned by a charity, often a religious organisation such as a church, but the governing body is responsible for running the school
- the school is funded partly by the local education authority, partly by the governing body and partly by the charity
- the governing body employs the staff
- the local education authority provides support services
- the pupils have to follow the national curriculum
- the admissions policy is determined and administered by the governors in consultation with the local education authority and other relevant schools in the area.
  https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/education/school-education/types-of-school/ (accessed 19 November 2015).

which I have named *UbD* as I used *Understanding by Design*[35] as my curriculum design approach. Phase Three is the *Pilot* period, Phase Four is the *AR* period and Phase Five is the *Post-AR* period.

I will now give an overview of the main activities that I undertook during each phase of the research project. I will highlight the ebbs and flows, pushes and pulls and turning points that determined the research path. This overview will be complemented by the examination of various academics, writers and practitioners as well as moments of personal critical reflection.

4.5.1   Phase One: *AI* (2012/13)

My research journey began on 15 January 2013 when I emailed the Headteacher of CTJPS to enquire whether she would be interested in her school participating in my research project. It was gratifying that she telephoned me on the same day that she received my email. This demonstrated her willingness for her school to be involved in an innovative and possibly revolutionary project regarding the teaching and learning of Hebrew. The outcome of this initial contact was arranging a date for the first meeting where the principal stakeholders would attend.

The first meeting took place on 4 April 2013 and was attended by the Headteacher, the deputy Headteacher, Hannah, the *Ivrit* coordinator (IC), who is also an *Ivrit* teacher, Suzy, the Jewish Studies teacher and Gila, another *Ivrit* teacher. Simone, the Jewish Studies coordinator (JSC) was at this time on maternity leave[36]. (Refer to Appendix D for a copy of the meeting agenda).

The purpose of this first meeting was to create an open, warm and flexible dialogue among all actors and to ensure a commitment from everyone participating in the research. It was also the opportunity to present myself in the role of researcher and to describe my area of research. I explained that I would be undertaking an AR project and illustrated, with the help of a hand out, how AR works. The meeting also provided time to clarify my expectations as well as manage theirs. I was clear about what I was asking of them in terms of their time and what extra work it would involve. I also raised issues relating to ethical considerations, such as maintaining confidentiality. The meeting provided the space for everyone to ask questions, raise concerns and seek clarifications. The issue of

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[35] *UbD*: attributed to work of Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J. (2005).
[36] All names have been changed to preserve confidentiality

which year groups I would be researching was raised. It was felt at this stage that I should concentrate on Years Three (7-8 year olds) and Four (8-9 year olds). The reasoning behind this was as Suzy was the JS teacher in these two year groups, it made sense for the research to include these ages.

I had originally intended to conduct my research with two or three schools. As I explained in the previous chapter, it became clear that this was not a realistic option. First, I was concerned that I would not be given access to other schools, as my tentative enquiries were not proving positive. Second, I realised that engaging with more than one school would be extremely time consuming and I would be unable to devote enough time to each to do my project justice. I shared these concerns with the leader of the *Projects* module and was advised to conduct a case study in the school in which I had already been given access. I explained to the team that I wanted to use CTJPS as a case study and gave my reasons. This was enthusiastically received. In fact, they all felt that it would be mutually beneficial for me to focus on only one school, their school. This decision was justified and the result was that I was able to spend a concentrated period of time in this one school, making for a very rich and worthwhile study.

I set two dates to observe some *Ivrit* and JS lessons in Years Three and Four. I wanted to have first-hand knowledge of what was being taught in these different lessons and to obtain an idea of the potential Hebrew pedagogic opportunities that could arise. We also set the date for the next meeting when I would feedback to the group of what I had observed.

I was overwhelmed by the goodwill of all those present to work and learn with me. I strived to create an open and informal manner, which I believe helped to create a warm and easy-going learning and research environment. I was hoping to instil an atmosphere where the "form of interaction between individuals and groups […] determines the learning process" (Jarvis et al, 2003, p.51). I did not shy away from my needs, my hopes and expectations, and these emotions were underscored by my desire to work in partnership. I also shared my passion for Hebrew, my commitment to improving how it was being taught and learnt, without negating what the teachers had been doing up until then.

I observed three lessons in April (two half Year Four *Ivrit* lessons taught by Gila and the IC, Hannah and one Year Three JS lesson taught by Suzy) and three lessons in May (one Year Four JS lesson taught by Suzy and two half Year Three *Ivrit* lessons). Hannah observed the JS lesson with me in April as it was mentioned at the meeting that it would be a good idea for the teachers to observe each other in order to understand what was

being taught. The purpose of these observations was to give me some understanding of what was being covered in the JS and *Ivrit* lessons and to look for opportunities to make easy links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. I also provided the teachers with immediate positive feedback following the lessons and shared with them opportunities for creating links. Tang and Chow (2007) argue that giving quality feedback is a key element in assessment processes that can enhance learning. Furthermore, "quality feedback can help the learner to identify the learning gap between his/her current level of achievement and a higher level of attainment and support him/her to close this learning gap" (Sadler 1989, cited in Tang et al, 2007, p.1069).

Following these observations I drew together a chart of Hebrew words and phrases emanating from the lessons that could easily be taught in both JS and *Ivrit* lessons. From my *Hebrew pedagogue* and *Jewish educator* perspective, I could easily see the potential links that could be made between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

One example: I was observing Hannah and the phrase *beseder* came up quite a few times in her lesson. *Beseder* in *Ivrit* means 'ok', 'fine', 'alright', 'in order' and is probably one of the most used phrases in Modern Hebrew as it is so all encompassing. For example, "How are you?" "*Beseder*" (fine/in order). "Would you like something to eat?" "*Lo todah, ani beseder*" (no thanks, I'm fine). "*Mah lo beseder?*" (what's not ok or what's wrong?), "*hakol beseder*" (everything's in order/fine).

This word derives from the three Hebrew root letters equivalent to the English letters **s**, **d**, **r** and the underlying meaning is "set in order, arrange". The connection to Biblical Hebrew is thus: The prayer book from which Jews read on the Sabbath, holidays and weekdays is called a **si*dd*ur**. The reader will note that the three letters that are in bold are the same three letters that I highlighted earlier. The reader will also note that other letters have been placed in between – *infixes*. These letters transform the three root letters into a noun. In other words, from something that has to do with *being in an order*, to an actual concrete object, a prayer book. I hear you ask what a *siddur* has to do with the concept of *being in an order*. It is simple: The *siddur* is "an arrangement of prayers in a certain order for the observance of *Shabbat*, holidays, and weekdays?" (Samuel, 1982, p.6). Another connection to Biblical Hebrew is the word **sidrah**[37]. Again, letters have been added to the three root letters, this time an *infix* and *suffixes*, once more creating a different noun. This new word relates to the set portion of the *Torah* read every week in the synagogue. The **se*d*er pesach** refers to the family Passover service taking place on the first and second

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[37] *Sidra:* portion of the *Torah* read on *Shabbat*.

evenings of the festival and which is conducted in a particular order relating the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt.

The above example illustrates the beauty of Hebrew, where "an ancient language can accommodate modern idioms" (Samuel, 1982, p.6) and vice-versa.

This was just one example of words or phrases being used in an *Ivrit* context without the teacher creating the links to the Biblical Hebrew context. It was not the case that they did not know these links, they simply had not considered them and the potential Hebrew pedagogic opportunities they could generate. Moreover, when I pointed these out to them they were surprised at how easy it was to make the links and how they had not seen these links for themselves. They were still operating very much within their specific *Ivrit* area and were unable to 'see' the other side. It was becoming apparent that the *Ivrit* teachers were very *Ivrit*-centric and perhaps were also lacking the skills and confidence to makes these links.

I had a very productive conversation with Suzy the JS teacher after I observed her lesson in May. Although she is not a native Hebrew speaker she has a very good working knowledge of *Ivrit*. It became evident that she brings in a good amount of *Ivrit* into her JS lessons and we discussed ways in which she would be able to include more. I introduced her to *peripheral* Hebrew, namely, the day-to-day classroom Hebrew she could use to greet, praise, instruct and discipline the children. I was conscious of not overwhelming Suzy and gave her easy and practical ways to bring simple *Ivrit* words and phrases into her JS lessons.

I used an example of a JS lesson that Suzy normally teaches and together we found a number of links to *Ivrit*. For example, a Jewish festival called *Shavuot*[38] takes place in the summer term. The literal meaning of the word *Shavuot* is 'weeks' as it takes place seven weeks after the festival of *Passover*. The three root letters of this word are equivalent to sh,v,a. By adding infixes and suffixes to these letters new words and meanings emerge, such as the word ***shavua*** (week)**, *sheva*** (seven), ***shvuayim*** (two weeks), ***shiv'a*** (seven day Jewish mourning period).   The first three words are used constantly in the *Ivrit* lessons and Suzy could make these connections in her JS lessons. By doing so, the learners would have a much more holistic

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[38] *Shavuot:* Jewish festival that commemorates the anniversary of the day the entire nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments from God. It is one of the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals. Agriculturally, it commemorates the harvest of the first fruits which were brought to the Temple as an offering http://lp.jnf.co.uk/shavuot2014/?gclid=COqY9PiVtckCFVFuGwodJasEyw (accessed 29 November 2015).

understanding of the language and realise that Hebrew is all around them and not only in one context. This would also help them to get skilled at deciphering the three root letters of words. This process enables learners to acquire transferable skills for different contexts and is an important way to assess knowledge and understanding.

Suzy has a natural affinity with the language, but lacks confidence. In fact one of the sub-themes that will emerge in the analysis in the following chapter will be concepts of confidence in the teaching arena. The second part of our meeting focused on what Suzy understood by the concept of Hebrew literacy and what would contribute to the learners' general Hebrew literacy. I discuss this more below.

The purpose of the 24 May meeting was two-fold:
First: to feedback to the team what I had observed and to show them the links I had produced from what I had seen in their lessons. For example, in the *Ivrit* lessons, the teachers always say *boker tov* (good morning), *tov me'od* (very good) and *tov toda* (thank you). A very simple link to Jewish studies is the prayer that is recited at the beginning of a service called *ma tovu* (how good) and also in the book of Genesis when god saw what he had created and said it was *tov* and *tov me'od* (good and very good). There was an excitement in the room when they began to see all the links that I had made and the fact that they could have also made these links if they were more conscious of the connections. The teachers realised how important it was to know what was being taught in each other's lessons and they discussed ways of sharing their medium term plans. Moreover, they suggested that they would like to meet at least once a term so that they could interact with each other and talk about what they were teaching. This was a crucial turning point for the teachers as they began to understand the importance of collaborative planning and interaction. Another theme I will be investigating and analysing in depth is the crucial role teamwork and collaboration plays in the classroom.

Second: I wanted to discuss the concept of Hebrew Literacy with the group: "What do we mean by Hebrew literacy? Because my idea for this project is that the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew will impact positively on children's Hebrew literacy. So, that's my, or the question is: to what extent will this integration impact positively?"[39]

I shared with the group what Suzy and I had discussed regarding Hebrew literacy and we came up with seven areas that we considered contributed to Hebrew literacy. These were:
1. *Phonics* (recognizing letters and vowels and decoding)
2. *Oracy* (the ability to conduct simple conversations)

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[39] Taken from the transcript of the 24 May 2013 meeting.

3. *Vocabulary* (the ability to recognize and understand 50-100 high frequency words)

4. *Reading* (with understanding)

5. Jewish *ethics/core values* (which children need to understand in *Ivrit*)

6. *Jewish Studies* knowledge (festivals, basic/key prayers and key Jewish laws)

7. *Peripheral language* (for praising, greeting, disciplining and instructing)

I asked the group for their input and comments and a lengthy and fruitful discussion took place regarding all these points. For example, when talking about reading, the question of fluency was raised. How can it be defined? Are all children able to read fluently or accurately? What about children with learning difficulties? There was also discussion about the importance of children being able to understand the key prayers and whether the English translation should also be given to aid this.

The group added a further area, that of *school environment* to the list. Teachers felt that the whole school provided access points for learning, such as the school foyer, wall displays, even all members of staff who did not know *Ivrit* could share in the learning process. I mentioned that in the displays in the foyer of the different Jewish festivals, there was English and transliterated Hebrew rather than Hebrew itself. Just by simply adding the Hebrew would impact significantly on learning opportunities. I was mindful of the fact that it took an outsider, such as myself, to notice these small details.

Fig 3 shows one of the display cabinets in the foyer of the school with labels of Hebrew words of different Jewish festivals transliterated into English and not written in Hebrew.

One of the action points from this meeting was that I would start thinking about how I would integrate these eight areas into some form of a workable framework. I was also asked by the Headteacher to produce a short report of my progress for the Board of Governors of CTJPS School.

As I demonstrated earlier, the Hebrew root letters of words are the same in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew, I had prepared a number of roots letters in a template form and showed the teachers some of the different Biblical and Modern Hebrew words that emanated from different root letters. Again, there was much excitement and discussion around words that were very familiar to everyone and the occasional unfamiliar word (even for the Israeli teachers!)

It was also agreed that for the remaining part of this academic year, I would spend time observing more lessons and acclimatizing to the school and for the school community to also acclimatize to me. I would not yet start to concentrate on formulating a framework, as it felt somewhat premature.

I arranged further observations, which would take place in June which would include an assembly and two further *Ivrit* lessons.

The 24 May was a very important meeting. Everybody in the room was energetic and enthusiastic. Everyone was excited by the prospects of the research and I could not have asked for a more positive outcome. The Headteacher endorsed the way forward; she was very excited about the impact the research would have on the whole school community. She made me feel welcome and part of the school. The teachers could also see the potential benefits and were open and accommodating. I felt very fortunate to be conducting my research in such a friendly and eager environment. The future was looking good.

Despite this positivity, reflecting on what transpired in this meeting, I was beginning to be concerned about how I would be able to translate what we discussed into a workable framework. I was anxious whether there was enough substantial material with which to work. Ostensibly, what we discussed were words and phrases emanating from different areas of Hebrew literacy. This was only one level of language acquisition. Any language is so much richer than a set of random words and phrases and Hebrew is no exception. In fact, Kor (2010) argues that Hebrew is the living breath of Jewish existence and without it,

we (the Jews) are breathless (or soulless). Even here, the Hebrew word for breath and soul, *neshama*, is one and the same, giving this statement an even greater significance.

The future was beginning to look more complicated.

I would like to pause at this juncture. I think it apposite at this time to discuss Hebrew language acquisition and pedagogy in light of language acquisition theory.

4.5.1.1 Language Acquisition and Pedagogy

My first introduction to language acquisition theory took place over twenty years ago when I was part of a Hebrew group that was set up to identify, nurture and train specialists in the language who could then themselves become Hebrew teacher trainers. Up until this point, my relationship with Hebrew was solely on a practical level: it was the language for communication when I was living in Israel and later on I began to teach Hebrew to children in various Jewish supplementary schools in London.

The convener of the specialist group, an Israeli who was sent to the UK as an emissary to work with our centre, introduced us to language acquisition theorists. This was one of my eureka moments in my Hebrew journey as we were being told that in order for us become better Hebrew practitioners we first needed to understand the theories of language development and second language acquisition.

Gass (1995) recounts exchanges that took place in 1993 on a computer bulletin board that was devoted to issues around second language acquisition (SLA). Somebody posed the question whether there was any value of having an academic course in SLA as part of a second language teacher's graduate training. One answer came back saying "[…] the idea of an MATESOL[40] degree without a course in second language acquisition is akin to a Medical degree without a course (or two) in anatomy!! Inconceivable" (1995, p.3). Personally, I had never encountered these concepts before, let alone even contemplated the notion that Hebrew teaching was somehow situated in a much bigger discipline than itself. This was a pivotal moment for me in my teaching and learning of Hebrew.

At the time, the theorist of second language acquisition that stood out for me and has continued to influence my thinking about language learning was Stephen Krashen. We were introduced to him and other linguists on a BBC language programme called 'Learning Languages'. I invite the reader to view the YouTube clip which illustrates him in action[41].

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[40] MATESOL: MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
[41] To view what we were shown: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjAHPI1ACmQ.

However, before discussing Krashen's theory, I would first like to discuss the distinction between Hebrew as a Second Language (SL) and Hebrew as a Modern Foreign Language (MFL) and whether this difference has contributed to the way in which Hebrew is being taught today in our Jewish day schools in the UK. I have always maintained that when we teach Hebrew, practitioners should view Hebrew as a SL rather than a MFL. In my opinion, Hebrew is not merely a MFL, it is the language of the Jewish people and it carries with it a history, a culture and a religion. To view it as an MFL is to do it an immense injustice.

Schiff refers to the Hebrew language as a *constant*; it provides the link to the "Jewish past and to Israel" and is a "unifying force in Jewish life". He considers Hebrew as an essential element of Jewish survival as it is a conduit for Jewish spiritual identity (1996, p.134).

Leo Strauss writes about Spinoza[42], a Jew who believed that the only way to solve the problems of Jewish exile and to prevent Jewish suffering was for the Jews to become secular, in other words to cut themselves off from the foundations of their religion or as Strauss puts it from "the spirit of Judaism". Strauss counter argues this by stating, "assimilation proved to require inner enslavement as the price of external freedom" and did nothing to curb Jewish hardship. Those European Jews who began to realise that assimilation did not shield them from anti-Semitism, turned to political Zionism as an alternative route to salvation. However, this "purely human" attempt to solve the Jewish problem also ended in failure, as Jews could not easily be separated from their culture, traditions and the Hebrew language. As Strauss puts is, "the knot which was not tied by man could not be untied by man" (Strauss, 1981).

I mention both Schiff and Strauss here because their words underscore the integral place the Hebrew language has in the Jewish narrative; it has survived over many millennia and has become a testament to Jewish survival and Jewish identity.

 "A *second language* is a language that a learner masters the second best, after his *first language*". Whereas, a foreign language has "generally no direct link with the person's immediate social or personal environment", but rather people choose to learn a foreign language or are expected to learn a foreign language either for academic or professional reasons. (Punchihetti, 2103, p.5).

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[42] Spinoza (Baruch): 17th century Dutch Jewish philosopher who in 1656 was "summoned before a rabbinical court, and solemnly excommunicated" from the Jewish community because his "views took unconventional directions". https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Spinoza.html (accessed: 19 April 2016).

Taking Punchihetti's definitions and understanding of these terms, the reader can clearly discern that the Hebrew that children are learning in Jewish day schools in the UK cannot be termed as a second language but rather falls into the foreign language definition. Indeed, Hebrew finds itself under the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) framework of the UK National Curriculum (NC). The NC sees the purpose of learning a foreign language as:

- Liberating pupils from insularity and providing an opening to other cultures
- Fostering pupils' curiosity and deepening their understanding of the world.
- Enabling pupils to express their ideas and thoughts in another language and to understand and respond to its speakers, both in speech and in writing.
- Providing opportunities for learners to communicate for practical purposes, learning new ways of thinking and reading great literature in the original language
- Providing the foundation for learning further languages, equipping pupils to study and work in other countries (The National Curriculum in England, p. 212).

In Jewish day schools where *Ivrit* is being taught, it is subject to OFSTED[43] inspections just as any other MFL.

Although *Ivrit* is considered an MFL, in my view it is more than just that: it is an integral part of the Jewish religion, culture and history. It has been part of the psyche and journey of the Jewish people from the beginning. Berdichevsky (1998) relates the story of Kaplan[44] who warned more than sixty years ago, that once Hebrew becomes a foreign language for Jews, they will cease to live Judaism as a culture and no longer experience a sense of intimacy with Jewish life (p.112). I believe that Kaplan's warning has in part been materialized. When Jews only see *Ivrit* as another MFL, we are in danger of losing our connection to Judaism and its culture.

I contend that this over simplistic classification of *Ivrit* as an MFL has contributed significantly to the separate teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew to the detriment of higher achievement in understanding and reading skills. We cannot separate *Ivrit* from its religious, cultural and historic framework. That is why I advocate for integrating, where possible, between the old and the new, to keep Judaism, its culture and history alive.

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[43] OFSTED: the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. The office inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. It is a non-ministerial department. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted (accessed 10 September 2015).
[44] Kaplan, Mordecai: (1881-1983) one of the most acclaimed representatives of liberal religious thought in America, as well as a luminary of the Jewish community, from the 1920s to the 1970s. Founder of the Reconstructionist Movement. http://www.jewishrecon.org/resource/rabbi-mordecai-kaplan-american-thinker (accessed 29 May 2016).

If *Ivrit* is not considered a SL in the true sense of the term, as argued by Punchihetti, and if there are those, who like me, believe that Hebrew is more than just a MFL, what is the status of *Ivrit* for those living in the Diaspora? Nevo corroborates this view when she writes that when defining Hebrew's status for Jews living outside of Israel, Hebrew "is not a first language, but is also not a fully second or foreign language". She contends that Hebrew in the Diaspora does have certain characteristics of a being a foreign language, as Jews do not use it on a day-to-day basis. Shohamy argues that Hebrew contains attributes of a second language as those speaking it, are part of the "micro-Jewish world" associated with "Jewish belonging, identity, cultural uniqueness, and heritage" (1989, in Nevo, 2011 p421).

Perhaps there is a need for a third and more nuanced classification for the Hebrew being taught outside of Israel? I propose a new name, a hybrid term that combines both these concepts – a *cultural language*. This term allows for a modern living language bound up in a particular religion, culture and time, as is *Ivrit*.

The picture below of a wall display illustrates how the Hebrew language is inextricably linked with Jewish history, culture and religion. The wall display was created by Year Four children at CTJPS for the Jewish festival of *Purim*[45] which takes place in the spring term. The story of *Purim* can be found in the Hebrew Bible in the *Book of Esther*. It has become a powerful symbol of Jewish Identity, history and culture. One of the customs associated with the festival is the giving of food gifts, called *mishloach manot*, which is written in Hebrew in the display.

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[45] *Purim*: http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/purim-gifts/ (accessed 29 November 2015).

Fig 4 *Purim* display

I return now to Krashen's theory of SLA. It is interesting to note that Krashen does not distinguish between the terms *second language* and *foreign language* and uses *second language* as an umbrella term to include both (2009, p.1). Krashen clearly does not share my preoccupation with the distinction between the two uses of language. I build on Krashen's theory of language acquisition; however, I go further than Krashen in emphasizing the nature of the Hebrew language as not simply a second language but rather a defining characteristic of Jewish Identity.

His opening gambit is:

> "The solution to our problems in language teaching lies not in expensive equipment, exotic methods, sophisticated linguistic analyses, or new laboratories, but in full utilization of what we already have, speakers of the languages using them for real communication. I will conclude that the best methods might also be the most pleasant, and that, strange as it seems, language acquisition occurs when language is used for what it was designed for, communication" (p.1).

Krashen proposes five hypotheses relating to second language acquisition. These are *The Acquisition-Learning Distinction, The Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis and The Affective Filter Hypothesis* (Krashen, 2009).

The *Input Hypothesis* exemplifies one of my approaches to Hebrew pedagogy.
Krashen argues that "acquisition is central and learning more peripheral" and that the "goal of our pedagogy should be to encourage acquisition". This hypothesis attempts then to answer the question of how people acquire language (Krashen, 2009, p. 20). He argues

99

that we acquire "only when we understand language that contains structure that is 'a little beyond' where we are now", which he calls, *i* +1, where *i* equates to input. To answer the inevitable question of how this is possible when we have not yet acquired certain structures, Krashen argues that we also use "context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us" (p. 21).

The following illustrates this beautifully:

An English woman is in the company of an Arab woman and her two children, a boy of seven and a little girl of thirteen months who is just beginning to walk but is afraid to take more than a few steps without help. The English woman speaks no Arabic, the Arab woman and her son speak no English. The little girl walks to the English woman and back to her mother. Then she turns as if to start off in the direction of the English woman once again. But the latter now smiles, points to the boy and says: 'Walk to your brother this time'. At once the boy, *understanding the situation* though he understands not a word of the language, holds out his arms. The baby smiles, changes direction and walks to her brother. Like the older child, she appears to have understood the situation perfectly. (Donaldson, 1984, p. 37).

Donaldson argues that all the participants in this scene did not need the language to know what was happening. It was enough that the language was uttered and it was the context and the understanding of each other's intentions that enabled comprehension. She terms these as "non-linguistic events" (p. 37), very similar to what Krashen terms above as 'extra-linguistic information'.

I have observed many *Ivrit* lessons at CTJPS. It is always gratifying to see very young learners understand the gist of what the teachers are telling them without really understanding every word. This is due to the teacher's use of tone and gestures, but most importantly, the context helps their understanding.

There has been much discussion regarding the similarities between the theories of Krashen and that of Vygotsky. In particular, Krashen's *i* + 1 theory may have been influenced by Vygotsky's *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)*.

ZPD in brief, is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86 cited in Jarvis et al, 2003, p.37).

According to Schütz (2004), when talking about children, the ZPD is the difference between the child's capacity to solve problems on his/her own, and his/her capacity to

solve them with assistance. In other words, Vygotsky's *actual developmental level* refers to all the things that a child can perform on his/her own, *without* the help of anyone else, while the *ZPD* includes all the things that a child or learner can do only *with* the help of someone else. This helping process has become known as *scaffolding,* which is providing somebody with "non-intrusive intervention" by another who already has "mastered that particular function" (Schütz, 2004). The more inclusive term of *guided participation,* instead of *scaffolding,* has since been suggested by Rogoff (1990, cited in Wood, 1998, p. 101).

The similarity between Vygotsky's ZPD and Krashen's *i* + 1 theory is apparent: "According to the *input hypothesis*, language acquisition takes place when the learner receives language 'input' that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence" In other words, maximum acquisition occurs when the acquirer is exposed to *comprehensible input* at a level that is at least one level beyond the current knowledge of the learner (Schütz, 2004).

What is also core to Vygotsky's thinking is that "development occurs as a result of meaningful verbal interaction, that is, of dialogic relationships between novices and experts in the environment, be they parents, older peers, or teachers" (Vygotsky, 1962, 178 cited in Schinke-Llano, 1995, p.22). Likewise for Krashen, "language acquisition takes place during human interaction in an environment of the foreign language" (Schütz, 2004).

Vygotsky's and Krashen's theories of language acquisition and development and the importance of this happening in a social and dialogic environment were borne out in my research. This was occurring on various levels. First, I was the 'expert' bringing new thinking and skills to the teachers. I was doing this by supporting them and providing them with the *scaffolding* in order to acquire these new understandings and skills. Second, the teachers subsequently became the *experts* and enablers for their learners. These multiple layers of learning were taking place *top-down* (teacher to pupil), but also *bottom-up* (pupil to teacher) and as well as *side-side* (teacher to teacher and pupil to pupil). There was learning *from* and *with* others. This type of learning has its roots in Judaism. Judaism is a very dialogic religion; it encourages discussion and argument and has been part of the Jewish psyche forever. There is a specific form of Jewish learning called *chavruta*[46], which is derived from the three root letters, *ch*, *v*, *r* meaning friend or companion. This form of learning takes place in pairs. The traditional form of this is amongst the Ultra-Orthodox Jews who study the ancient Jewish texts in pairs as part of their religious obligations and

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[46] *Chavruta:* Study with a chavruta, or partner, is a hallmark of traditional Jewish learning
http://www.thejc.com/judaism/jewish-words/chavruta (accessed 7 January 2016).

duties. This type of Jewish learning now takes place amongst many different groups of Jews who want to learn the Jewish texts in a social environment. It can be said that when the children at CTJPS are learning from the *siddur* in pairs, they are participating in a form of *chavruta* study.

4.5.1.2 Hebrew Pedagogy

The question now arises to what extent different linguistic theories have influenced and impacted upon Hebrew pedagogy.

Dori argues that that "there is a lot of activity in the field of linguistics which can have a direct bearing on Hebrew language education" (1992, pp. 263). She writes that research on language teaching has grown over the past twenty-five years and that theories about language acquisition and learning have been developed. She argues that Hebrew educators must "take advantage of the available knowledge of linguistic theory and pedagogy". Indeed, Dori mentions in her article, the work of Krashen and gives a brief description of his SLA theory. Although her analysis of Krashen's theory is somewhat simplistic, what is important here is that we see the emergence of linguistic theory being discussed in the same breath as Hebrew teaching.

It is interesting to note that Nevo who writes some nineteen years after Dori, about the challenges of teaching Hebrew as a second language to immigrant students in Israel reports that "…teachers, teaching Hebrew as a second language to immigrant students – in contrast to other teaching professions – is not recognized by the Ministry of Education as a specialization subject area… At times teachers do receive some training in the principles of teaching Hebrew as a second language, but this is not enough to create expertise in this area, which is different from teaching a first language". She continues to say that recognition of the field as a "particular teaching profession is needed, which will then lead to appropriate formal training and high professional standards" (2011, p.426). There is no discussion by Nevo on the importance of second language theory as a prerequisite for teaching Hebrew in the diaspora. I believe this is a crucial oversight. More than ever Hebrew teachers would greatly benefit from understanding second language/foreign language/cultural language theory in order to inform their own teaching and thus positively impact on children's learning.

My research with CTJPS did not overtly include applying theories of second language acquisition to Hebrew; I was not there as a Hebrew consultant. Rather I was a researcher researching a specific area of Hebrew language acquisition. However, my knowledge of

and experience of teaching second/foreign language acquisition in relation to the Hebrew language was ever present, encapsulated within my *Hebrew Pedagogue Subjective I*.

I return now to the next part of my research journey.

The report I wrote for the Education Committee of the CTJPS Board of Governors in May 2013 was an opportunity to share my research intentions and progress with a very important stakeholder group. It was important for me to have the Board's permission for the work I was going to undertake as this constituted part of the ethical research process (Refer to Appendix E for a copy of the report).

The remaining activities for this academic year were an observation of an assembly for years 3, 4 and 5 taken by Suzy and two more *Ivrit* lessons (Year Three and Year Four) by Gila and Hannah. All these activities took place in June 2013.

The assembly is the time for pupils to come together for communal Jewish prayer using a child-friendly *siddur* specially designed for this purpose. It was gratifying to see Suzy incorporate some of her new skills and understandings in the assembly. She had written up on a flip chart three Hebrew root letters a,h,v conveying the meaning of *love*. Suzy began the assembly by welcoming the children in *Ivrit*. They then went through the different prayers which were interjected with songs and some children reading certain parts of the liturgy. When they reached a certain prayer, called the *shema*, Suzy asked the children why she had put these three root letters up on the board. Through questions and answers the children identified within the prayer the word that incorporates these three root letters – v'**ah**av*ta* meaning: *and you shall love*. Observing with my *Hebrew Pedagogue, Jewish Educator* and *Empowerer and Nurturer* hats on, I was waiting for Suzy to make a connection to *Ivrit*. However, she did not, which was such a pity. L*ove* is a very commonly used word in Modern Hebrew and can mean both *love* and *like*. Children in *Ivrit* classes, to aid their conversational and oracy skills, are asked and answer about what food/football teams /pop groups/celebrities they like or don't like and who they love. A two-minute connection to this in the assembly would have created a very meaningful link with Modern Hebrew for the children and would have given them a much deeper understanding. However, I needed to exercise patience and remind myself that we were just at the very beginning of the research process and rather appreciate what Suzy did and not what she did not do.

The two further *Ivrit* lessons that I observed gave me additional understanding of the content of the lessons as well as identifying links to JS and Biblical Hebrew. Both teachers

remained steadfastly within their *Ivrit* fields and did not make any links to Biblical Hebrew. Again, I reminded myself that we were still only at the beginning of the process.

This first phase of the research process was crucial.

To summarise, I had managed to achieve the following during this period:

1. I established myself in the role of researcher and learnt how to negotiate and cope with my *Subjective Is.*
2. I had created a positive environment for the research process: I operated in an open, transparent and collaborative manner.
3. I had demonstrated to the teachers and other members of staff the benefits of creating links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.
4. This in turn brought about a change in their belief systems with regards to how they viewed Hebrew and the pedagogic possibilities this would generate.
5. I observed numerous lessons which gave me first-hand knowledge of the different subject areas covered in the two year groups
6. With this bird's eye view, I was able to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew and start to think about how I would go about creating a framework that could practically incorporate this and accomplish my aims.

The new academic year heralded a new beginning and I felt confident to commence upon the next phase of the research process - the designing of the framework.

I now invite the reader to continue journeying with me.

4.5.2   Phase Two: *UbD* (2013/14)

I met with my Jewish Education Consultant in October 2013 to update her with my progress and to clarify my thinking. I showed her the Hebrew literacy template the teachers and I had been working on and asked for her input. She noticed that the subject area of Israel had been left off the template which was quite an oversight as CTJPS has a very extensive Israel programme and the school has been twinned with an Israeli school for many years. I would ensure that I mention this at my next meeting.

We discussed the AR cycle and how it would be used in a practical sense for my research. We went through the different phases of the cycle: 1. *Plan for change* (pedagogic intervention) which would include preparing the teacher tools (lesson plans, framework) and teacher induction into the new way of teaching. 2. *Observe* the teachers teaching the new framework. 3. *Reflection* on the lesson including focus groups with

children and feedback sessions with the teachers, and so on. This will be discussed in more detail later on in phase four.

This meeting was very useful in setting out my next steps and for putting the AR cycle onto a practical footing.

The team, as well as Simone who had recently returned from maternity leave, attended the next meeting on the 11 November 2013. It was our first meeting of the new academic year having had a break since we last met in June. The purpose of the meeting was to integrate the JSC into the group and into the research process, to update the team on my progress over the summer and to discuss the next immediate steps.

I had prepared a typed up chart of all the Biblical and Modern Hebrew links I had found when I observed the lessons and which we had gone through at the previous meeting. I went through the typed up literacy template and mentioned that we had omitted Israel and its contribution to Hebrew literacy. Indeed, as mentioned previously, the school participated in several Israel-related projects, including the twinning with an Israeli school and Year Six children spending time in Israel in the summer term. The Jewish festival celebrating Israel's independence would also provide opportunities to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. Additional areas were added to the literacy template. For example, Simone explained that the school has a *Mitzva*[47] curriculum where each year group concentrates on a particular *mitzva* in a term. Children are invited to show each other what they have done in an assembly held at the end of the term. Moreover, the school participates in the annual '*Mitzvah Day*'[48] celebrations and contributes to this in many different ways, such as donating to the Redbridge food bank. All these activities would provide many opportunities to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

I observed in the meeting that it seemed that it was easier for the JS teachers to make links with *Ivrit* than it was for the *Ivrit* teachers to make links with JS. Hannah agreed and said that she is now thinking more and more about how to make links.

This meeting further clarified for everyone that I was not creating a curriculum but rather a framework or methodology that could be used in any JPS context. My hope was that by having CTJPS participate in a case study I would be able to understand what works and

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[47] *Mitzva:* is the Hebrew biblical term for 'deed' or 'commandment' and has become synonymous with doing good deeds.
[48] '*Mitzvah Day*': is a charity set up in 2005. It is now a well-anticipated focal point in British Jewry's annual calendar. It galvanises participants – regardless of age, faith, affiliation, gender or socio-economic position – to donate their time and energy to a diverse range of causes that make a tangible difference to those in need around the world. http://www.mitzvahday.org.uk/about-us.html (accessed 30 November 2015).

what the possibilities are. I explained the generativity of research and my intention to create something that could have value beyond CTJPS.

I clarified that the framework would include material and subject areas that the teachers were teaching already and that we would find ways together to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew within them. This was important to mention as it allayed teachers' concerns about the amount of work they would have to do. I further explained that not every subject area would lend itself easily to integration and that it was not my intention that we contrive a situation just to create links. We would take their lesson plans as the starting point. It was emphasised again that in order to create these links, each department would need to have an understanding of each other's schemes of work and curriculum.

Given the teachers' time constraints, I wanted to understand how closely they wanted to work with me in developing the framework. I could work on the framework on my own and bring it to them for their comments and input or they could work quite closely with me from the outset. Hannah felt from the *Ivrit* point of view that she and Gila would first like to meet with the JS department and find out about its curriculum and then they would ask me to help them with ideas. This was echoed by Simone. The Headteacher enquired whether they felt I needed to facilitate this meeting. They were adamant that I was not needed at this meeting. Once they had met they would call me in for a meeting and they would have my input, with me "looking from the outside in".[49] I was very pleased to see that the teachers were happy to progress without me and to take on some of the research responsibility. This was a very positive move. As much as I was pleased that the teachers would be working independently I wanted to ensure that this next meeting would take place quite soon, so I asked that we set a date which was the 27 November. At this meeting we would decide on what to focus upon. I assured them that I did not expect the teachers to do all the work, after all this was my research project, but I was not going to do it without their input.

Hannah had mentioned to me previously that she knew of an *Ivrit* teacher at another Jewish day school who integrated Biblical and Modern Hebrew quite regularly in her lessons. This was not the policy of her school that she integrate rather she did this on her own initiative. I met with her on 26 November and shared my Hebrew literacy template with her. This was a very fruitful meeting where she discussed each area in great depth adding many practical ways in which links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew could be made. We discussed what a school which integrated Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* might look

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[49] Taken from the digital recording of the 11 November 2013 meeting.

like. Following the meeting I revised the Hebrew literacy template and put at the centre: 'The ethos of a JS/*Ivrit* Integrated School', with all the different subject areas radiating from it (refer to Appendix F). I would share this with the teachers at the meeting taking place the following day.

The main aim of the meeting on 27 November was to focus on creating the pedagogic framework. It was also the opportunity to receive feedback from the joint JS and *Ivrit* meeting which took place a few days before and for me to feedback to the group about my meeting the day before. The meeting was attended by Simone, Hannah, Suzy, and Gila.

I began the meeting by saying that we were entering a very exciting stage of the research process, that of starting to create the framework. I explained that I would be using *Backward Design*, an element of a curriculum design approach called *Understanding by Design* (UbD), as my pedagogic structure. *Backward Design* advocates that practitioners first consider what specific learning outcomes are sought and what evidence of these learning outcomes would be *before* considering all the teaching and learning activities. Lessons, units and courses should flow logically from the learning outcomes and not from "the methods, books, and activities with which we are most comfortable" (Wiggins et al, 2005, p.14). In other words, a curriculum should set out the most effective way of achieving the desired specific results or "the best designs derive backward from the learnings sought" (Wiggins et al, 2005, p.14). Wiggins et al.'s educational philosophy is that the purpose of education is to engender understanding and that curriculum designers need to be very clear about the specific understandings they want the learners to achieve. Once these are determined only then can "we focus on the content, methods and activities most likely to achieve those results" (Wiggins et al, 2005, p.15).

I presented to the team a one-page document setting out the three stages of *Backward Design* (refer to Appendix G). It was very encouraging to learn that the teachers already plan like this. "Obviously we're doing a lot of this anyway because you're doing it all the time. Because you always think about the results before you even start the lesson. You think what are they going to get at the end of it. What you want them to achieve? It's sort of always subconsciously hidden is the fact you actually do plan backwards"[50]. Simone brought a level of practicality to the conversation regarding the limited amount of time she has as JSC and JS teacher who has to dip in and out of classes and is bound to the time constraints of the class teachers. She argues that it is easier for somebody like Suzy who not only is the Year Three class teacher but is also the JS teacher. This would allow Suzy more flexibility in that she could continue some learning beyond a specific lesson as she

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[50] Quote from Simone, taken from the digital recording of the 27 November 2013 meeting.

has full control of her class timings. This was something I needed to bear in mind when planning the framework in order to ensure that I was not adding too much to those teachers' lesson plans. This would affect Simone, Hannah and Gila who all "dip in and out" of lessons.

There were other aspects of the *Backward Design* template that the teachers were conducting as matter of course as part of their teaching responsibilities, such as different forms of assessment, both formative (on-going) and summative (end of unit/course). "As classroom teachers we do formative assessments all the time through our key questioning and this seeps through into JS, into every subject, any class work is formative assessment. We're constantly assessing their learning"[51]. This was very informative and I was pleased that if I were to be developing a framework, it would be along the lines of what they were doing already.

I then fedback to the team about my meeting with GS which took place the previous day. I used GS as an example of a teacher who has deep knowledge of JS and is an *Ivrit* teacher. She naturally creates links between the two in her teaching. However she is a lone voice in her school. As there is no policy for integrating these areas in her school whatever impact she makes with her particular *Ivrit* classes is lost as it does not continue in other *Ivrit* teachers' lessons. It was particularly poignant that she could not believe that CTJPS was willing to take this process on, as she knew it was the way forward for Hebrew teaching and learning. I then shared with the team the revised Hebrew literacy template that GS and I worked on (refer to Appendix F). A lengthy amount of time was spent going through each of the eleven areas, starting from 'school environment' and proceeding in a clockwise direction.

My aim for going through all these areas was to show what the possibilities were and to enthuse and impassion the teachers. This discussion generated an enormous amount of excitement and ideas of how each could provide links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. For example, in the first area – school environment/ethos – the concept of a Jewish time line was suggested. This was immediately taken up by Simone who thought that it would be a wonderful whole school JS project: Each year group could take a particular period of time and plot significant historical moments of the Jewish narrative. Suzy reported that her Year Three class already creates a Jewish time line which focuses on the Biblical period from Abraham to Joseph. Simone reported that she had just completed teaching her Year Five classes about the Jews in the Greek period. She had created a timeline, showing the current period of time and then going back to 329 BCE to

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[51] Quote from Suzy (JS teacher), taken from the digital recording of the 27 November 2013 meeting.

Alexander the Great who came to the Land of Israel to visit Jerusalem on a detour from his conquest of Persia at the time. She then moved slightly forward along the time line to the mid-2nd century BCE which provides the background to the Jewish festival of *Chanuka*[52]. She was becoming very animated while she was telling us this. She also said that she explained to the children, who are not all Jewish, that at the time of the *Chanuka* story, Christianity and Islam were not yet in existence.

When we went through the fourth area – *vocabulary and roots* – the word *Chanuka* was mentioned again by Gila. She said that since these meetings with the research team, she tries more often to get her students to find the roots of certain key words, such as *Chanuka* and *chanukia*[53]. The root letters of these two words are *ch* (as in lo*ch*), *n*, *k*. The actual meaning of the Hebrew word *Chanuka* is dedication or rededication. In order to make the link to Modern Hebrew, I asked the *Ivrit* teachers what other words emanated from these three root letters. They said *chinuch* and *lechanech* which means *education* and *to educate* respectively. I wanted to make the link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew explicit so I asked them what the connection between dedication and education could be. I offered one interpretation that I heard many years ago which was: when we educate, we do it with dedication. I have since learned of another more interesting interpretation by Rabbi Professor Jonathan Magonet[54]. He found the etymology of the word *dedicate* to be 'use for the first time'. For example, when somebody moves into a new house, there is a ceremony called *chanukat habayit*, literally meaning 'dedicating of the home' and a *mezuza*[55] is affixed to the front door. Then there is an alternative meaning of *educate* in Proverbs[56] 22:6, which can be translated as "train up children in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it". Magonet suggests that the common factor could be to 'initiate in the right way', either of a significant building in an appropriate manner or of a person on the 'right' path of life. I felt that this was a new and meaningful connection between the Biblical and Modern Hebrew usage of these words coming from the same three root letters. The Hebrew language is

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[52] *Chanuka*: "known as the Festival of Lights, is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. It is observed for eight nights and days, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar" https://www.hebcal.com/holidays/chanukah (accessed 3 December 2015).
[53] *Chanukia*: special candelabra used for the festival.
[54] Rabbi Professor Jonathan Magonet, former Principal of Leo Baeck College.
[55] *Mezuza:* small casing containing the words of the *Sh'ma,* written by a *sofer,* and placed upon the doorposts of a house. The *Sh'ma*, from a passage in the Book of Deuteronomy, commands Jewish people to place a *mezuza* on the doorpost of their homes. https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/mezuzah1.html (accessed 3 March 2016).
[56] Proverbs: second book in the *Ketuvim* (or Writings), the third section of the *Tanakh*. The full Hebrew title is *Mishlei Shlomo*, or *The Proverbs of Solomon*, a reference to King Solomon, who, according to Jewish tradition, is the author of *Mishlei*. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-book-of-proverbs/ (accessed 19 April 2016).

so beautiful and has many layers and when we start unravelling them we reach the essence of the meaning of words.

My aim to enthuse and impassion the teachers was certainly achieved, but my next task was to bring all this *blue sky* thinking down to earth. It was clear that we could not possibly effect change in all these eleven areas during the research process and that we needed to focus on one area that was realistic and achievable. Towards the end of the meeting it was decided that I should concentrate on creating a framework that began with the peripheral language. Everyone felt that this was a good starting point that was easily achievable and realistic and could impact upon not only Years 3 and 4 but also the whole school community.

I explained that as part of the AR cycle, once I had created the framework (namely, the pedagogic intervention), which would include specific lesson plans, I would then have to induct the teachers into how to teach the framework. I would then observe them teaching it. I also mentioned that we would have to reflect upon and assess the learning in order to gauge whether the children were benefiting from the intervention. All this would constitute one phase of the AR cycle.

I reiterated that this framework could be used in any context and was not driven by the content but rather by the pedagogical approach. In this way the framework could be replicated in different schools enabling the CTJPS Case Study to truly be the *avant garde.*

The JS and *Ivrit* teams did meet before this meeting and they managed to go over the JS curriculum but still needed to go over the *Ivrit* curriculum.

This meeting was very significant. I felt we were one step closer to creating a framework. Both the JS and *Ivrit* departments were on board. I did take notice of the concerns and different considerations that were voiced, such as time constraints, knowledge and confidence of the other teaching staff, always being mindful of the practicalities and so on.

Despite the positive atmosphere and the practical contributions made by the team, I found myself a few weeks later alone with my thoughts and doubts were creeping in. I began to realise that the teacher's chosen area of peripheral language was not enough to impact upon the children's Hebrew literacy and that I needed to explore other areas.

I shared my thoughts and concerns with a close work colleague whose views and intellect I greatly respect. She agreed that what the teachers wanted me to focus on would not

yield the results that I wanted to achieve with my research. Their choice of using peripheral language as the conduit for integrating between Biblical and Modern Hebrew would not work on its own and I would need to find a much more substantial foundation. The time spent with my colleague provided me with a useful sounding board and by the end of our meeting I realised that the best place to start creating links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew would be from a Hebrew text. In other words, if we were in a JS lesson, we would use a JS Hebrew text that was taught as part of that lesson and find links to Modern Hebrew. Conversely, if we were in an *Ivrit* lesson, we would use a Modern Hebrew text as the starting point and create links to Biblical Hebrew. The other important element to this would be that the Hebrew root letters would act as the vehicle between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. The use of peripheral language would not be lost and this would run naturally through both areas. This was a significant juncture that enabled me to begin to formulate the pedagogic framework.

As previously discussed, I would be using the UbD approach to design my framework. A generic template is provided to help those involved in curriculum development to design their curriculum. In February 2014 I began to populate the template and this resulted in *Version One* (refer to Appendix H). During February and March 2014 I continued to develop the framework with input from the teachers and my external consultant. This was an iterative process which resulted in five versions, each building on the previous one to become more refined and sophisticated. I would now like to chart the main modifications that took place resulting in version 5.

The changes made to *Version Two* took into account the discussions I had with my work colleague and my own reflections. These changes included:

- I put all the Hebrew words and phrases into Hebrew
- Under *other evidence:*
  - I emphasised the importance of using peripheral language regularly in all JS and *Ivrit* lessons
- Under *self-reflection/self-assessment of learning:*
  - I added *focus groups* with pupils from each of the two classes with a note to ask teachers for their help
- Under *activity*:
  - I clarified that the activity should be a twenty minute task
  - I specified the amount of roots that could be identified
  - I added that smaller and regular interventions should be included in all lessons in order to create continuity from one main intervention to the next and to

encourage both teacher and learners to do this as a natural addition to their lessons

The changes made to *Version Three* incorporated discussions with and suggestions made by my external consultant. These changes included:

- I removed all the Hebrew and reinstated the transliteration. Ultimately I would need to present all material with transliterated Hebrew so that my readers would be able to access all the information.
- Under *established goals*:
  - The word *coherent* in the fourth goal was elucidated upon and a fuller and clearer statement was given
  - An additional goal was given which spoke about the generativity of the framework
- Under *understandings*:
  - I expanded upon and clarified students' understandings
  - I incorporated statements that would cater for differentiation (children of mixed abilities) as used in the National Curriculum. Therefore, I added sections about *most students* and *some students* with regard to their knowledge and skills.
- Under *other evidence*:
  - I created a generic category entitled *reinforcement* under which I placed the previous various different activities of games, assemblies and homework
  - I clarified the aims of the focus groups and how I wanted the teachers to randomly select the pupils

The changes made to *Version Four* incorporated discussions with and suggestions made by Hannah in April 2014. These changes included:

- Under *established goals*:
  - I created three categories to articulate my goals from different perspectives: the researcher, learner and teacher. This differentiation helped to create even more clarity and understanding of what my goals for this project were.
  - I now referred to the students as l*earners* which was a subtle yet important change as it was in keeping with my use of teaching and learning nomenclature throughout the project.
  - The notion of the learners and teachers *naturally* integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew was added, as this was a vital aspirational and future thinking goal. In other words, after the research project had come to an end, it was

hoped that my interventions would continue as a natural part of the Hebrew teaching and learning in the school.

- Under *understandings*:
  - Further expansion and clarification of the general understandings for most learners were given as well as including the word *planning* which articulated the desire by the teachers to make time to plan together
  - In the section that deals with the knowledge and skills resulting from the activities, small iterations were made to hone the statements. Additionally, more realistic expectations were stated for the different learners, namely, the number of words and examples the learners could achieve were decreased.
- Under *other evidence*:
  - I added the statement *transferable skills* as this would be an important way to assess learners' knowledge and skills
  - I clarified that I would conduct the *self-reflection/self-assessment of learning*
  - I clarified that I wanted the teachers to randomly select the pupils for the focus groups
- Under *learning activities:*
  - For the smaller class interventions, I clarified that the teachers should *plan* to teach a number of key words related to a root. Hannah and I were concerned that in the beginning teachers needed to consciously plan for these with the hope that this would come naturally to them as time progressed.

In addition to these above changes, Hannah suggested that when I fed this back to the group I should mention that Suzy should be viewed as a model of good practice: besides her being the Year Three class teacher she would also be the class' JS teacher as well as taking on the role as *Ivrit* teacher one day a week. In effect, Suzy was best placed amongst all the teachers in CTJPS to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew. Hannah also suggested that at the next meeting, which was taking place the following month, I should teach the teachers how to teach root letters to the learners. She also suggested that I emphasise to the teachers that they should all take small steps forward when going through this research experience.

At the meeting in March I presented the team with the project as I saw it at that time using version four of the UbD design to explain my intentions. This was the first opportunity for the whole group to be presented with my work on the framework (other than Hannah with whom I had had a discussion the previous month, as mentioned above). I went through each section of the design and this resulted in fruitful discussions, questions and clarifications.

The salient points that emerged from this were as follows:

1. The starting point would always be from the basis of a text. As the teachers in both JS and *Ivrit* lessons used texts in their lessons I wanted to assure them that I was not asking them to change their *modi operandi*. Rather I would help them to look for key words and phrases within the text and then to look for opportunities to make links to either Biblical or Modern Hebrew. A text could be a prayer, a poem, a song, a sentence, a dialogue or a paragraph. With regard to the teachers' request that I use peripheral language as my starting point, I explained to the team that even though peripheral language was extremely important I did not feel that it would "give me enough meat for me to actually see how the integration would work".[57]

2. I clarified that the goal of this project was not to get the learners reading perfectly, but rather to give them a deeper understanding of the language and to make connections between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

3. I explained that the way to make these links was through the root letters. To allay Simone's concerns, I reiterated that we would be making links to a text that the children would already be learning in their curriculum. Most teachers said that they looked for the root letters quite naturally but they do not plan specifically to do this. It is interesting to note that when I first broached the subject with Hannah of using the root letters as the vehicle for integration, she was quite concerned, as she had never taught the root letters to her children before. She felt that this was going to be too difficult for them. I thought that I was hitting a barrier, but I realised that in fact she was projecting her own concerns onto the children and the other teachers. When I heard that some of the teachers already included root letters in their lessons, I was right in my understanding that it was Hannah who had the fears and no one else.

4. I reiterated that some texts or lessons might not be conducive to finding links and that was fine. We did not want to contrive a situation in order to create connections.

5. All members of the team echoed the importance of the two departments meeting regularly to plan together.

6. My ultimate goal was that the JS, *Ivrit* teachers and learners would be able to naturally and instinctively make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

7. Simone raised concerns that she did not feel that she would be able to get through all the material she had to cover plus with finding links to *Ivrit*. She was voicing realistic concerns to which I replied that I was not talking about big changes, but

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[57] Taken from transcript of 3 March 2014 meeting.

rather taking small steps and I would be there to support her. This brings me to another theme that I will be analysing – that of *scaffolding*, namely, supporting the learning of both the teachers and the learners.

8. I explained to the team that I had decided that I would carry out the research with a single year group, Year Three, the following academic year and not with Year Four as well as we had previously discussed. The reason for this was that I felt that two year groups with two classes in each would be too onerous and time consuming. I was mindful of setting myself realistic goals and I realised that I would have to conduct double the amount of lesson observations, focus groups and feedback meetings. I wanted to do the best job possible and this would be more achievable with one year group. The team agreed that I should concentrate solely on Year Three for the reasons cited above. However, a consequence of this decision was that Simone would not be able to participate fully in the research process as she would not be teaching Year Three the following year. This meant that she would not be able to test out the framework and I would not be able to observe her teaching. It was very important to keep Simone on board as she was responsible for everything in the JS department and thus she needed to be kept abreast of all the developments of the research. Moreover, it was my aim that after I had completed the research, the teachers would continue to implement the framework and that it would eventually be extended to other year groups. Simone suggested that she could still contribute by observing some lessons and taking what she had learnt back to her own classes albeit in a more limited way. I also suggested that if she were to have the time she could use the summer term to 'try' out the methodology on the current Year Three class.

9. I also discussed that I would be conducting focus groups with children following each observation. At this stage I was also interested in creating a focus group with parents of these children in order to examine if any of this new learning was transferring to the home. In fact the letter that was sent out to parents (see Appendix B) did state that I would be inviting the parents of those children selected for the focus groups to work with me. In a later discussion with my Jewish Education Consultant, we decided that I would be gaining enough material from my four data sources and that it would not be necessary to work with the parents as well.

10. The teachers were asked to randomly select six mixed ability and mixed gender children from each class.

11. I would write to all parents seeking permission and participation in the research.

12. I asked all three teachers to email me texts that I could incorporate into the framework.

There were very minor changes made to Version five and these were under *Other Evidence* (Refer to Appendix I). The highlighted red sections plot these changes. These changes included:

- Under shared JS and *Ivrit assemblies*, we added festivals as a good focus for these assemblies, for example the celebrating of Israel's independence, where the use of Modern Hebrew would be able to be used extensively.
- Under *reinforcement and transference of skills*, we changed *homework* to *home challenges*. This term seemed more appropriate for the tasks that we would be asking of the learners.

Version five was the result of an iterative process which took place over a two-month period. It was the result of consultations, meetings and discussions with the teachers, Ivrit coordinator, my colleague and consultant. The meeting with the team in March was significant as everyone was happy with all that was suggested in version four with only minor changes.

In order to arrive at Stage three – the learning plan, we went through the whole *backward design* process, starting at Stage one, the *desired results* which included the goals, understandings and questions, to stage two, which included the assessment evidence, then on to stage three – the actual learning activity. This journey was crucial to the research process as it enabled everyone to have their say and most importantly it gave the team a full understanding of what the research was about and what I was trying to achieve.

It must be noted that following version five, there was one further modification made. This was regarding the use of the evaluation sheet which I was hoping to conduct with the whole class after the lesson. I was concerned that this would use up too much of the teaching time. In discussion with my consultant we agreed that as I was going to be conducting focus groups with some of the children straight after the lessons, this would provide me with the opportunity to gauge understandings and attitudes.

The next set of meetings took place in June. One was with the Headteacher, one with the whole team, including Simone, a separate meeting with Simone, a separate meeting with Hannah and a separate meeting with Gila.

The purpose of the meeting with the Headteacher was: First, to confirm that I would be working with Suzy, in her role as JS teacher, and Gila and Hannah in their roles as *Ivrit*

teachers. Second, to share with her the activity plan that I had designed and how I envisaged it would work. Third, to set some dates so that I could induct the teachers into the framework which required her to provide cover for Suzy as she was both a class and JS teacher. Fourth, to review the letter I had drafted to be sent out to the parents of all the children who would be participating in the research the following year. This meeting proved very important as it enabled the Headteacher to be totally *au fait* with all the details of the pending AR.

The main purpose of the meeting with the team on 2 June was to prepare for the AR taking place the following year. The majority of the time was devoted to going over the activity plan that I had devised using an *Ivrit* text that Hannah had given me as an example. This generated a healthy and fruitful conversation. I emphasised the importance of allowing the learners to first listen to the text either read out, recorded or on *YouTube* without having the text beside them. This was an important skill in language acquisition and I felt that children were not often given the opportunity to just listen to a language, to hear its different tones and rhythms.

We discussed the teaching of root letters and how it was not as difficult as was first thought. In fact, Hannah who had never taught root letters before was willing to 'give it a go' before the actual research.

I showed the team how the activity plan accommodated differentiation, but I deferred to their knowledge and experience of their children to decide how much to cover in the lesson. I reiterated that the teachers would be using existing texts and within these they would find the links to either Modern or Biblical Hebrew. I clarified that, as part of the AR process, I would be observing each teacher teach one of these learning activities once a term. However, I also explained that I wanted the teachers to continue to make links to Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the intervening weeks. In other words, I wanted the teachers to get into the habit of making these links in a more natural way as part of their weekly lessons and not to only rely on the bigger pedagogic interventions that I would be observing.

Simone spoke about the importance of the team meeting regularly to plan collaboratively in order to do this integration properly. As previously mentioned Simone would not actually be teaching in Year Three the following year, so her involvement with the research project would be less. Nevertheless, in her role as JSC she wanted and needed to know what was taking place. She proposed that the team meet twice a term on a Monday afternoon

when the rest of the teachers would be having curriculum meetings. I left this with her to take back to the Headteacher.

The meeting ended with me reminding the teachers to send me their texts which I would incorporate into the activity plan ready for the meeting on 1 July.

Again, this was another positive meeting. There was tremendous goodwill and the teachers were ready to embark on this new stage of the project. I was also noticing a growing confidence amongst the teachers with previous concerns becoming less apparent.

I had a brief meeting with Hannah separately on 17 June. We discussed she would be taking the average and below average children the following year in Year Three for *Ivrit* and Gila would be taking the higher ability children. We also discussed which units of the Hebrew programme she would be concentrating on in Term One and Term Two.

The meeting with Gila was held on 24 June. She brought the texts that she would be teaching the following year. These would be the same texts that Hannah would be teaching. Gila felt that as she would be teaching the higher ability class, the learners would get through the work fairly quickly, enabling them to move onto another topic in that term. The main part of the meeting was spent going over the texts and fitting them into the activity plan. It became apparent that Gila had taught Hebrew roots before and she was very much at ease with this. Moreover, she had started to make links between *Ivrit* and Biblical Hebrew with other classes whenever the opportunity arose. We went through the two texts and we selected certain words and phrases that could lend themselves easily to creating links to Biblical Hebrew and JS. We agreed that, as this class would be of higher ability learners Gila would be able to stretch them a little more. The meeting was extremely positive, Gila was excited about how many links to the Biblical Hebrew we discovered. I found her to be enthusiastic and willing to not only stretch the learners, but herself as well. She was prepared to 'give it a go'.

The meeting with Simone took place on the same day. I felt it was important that I spend a dedicated amount of time with her to ensure that she felt part of and knowledgeable about the research project. We reemphasized the importance of arranging regular collaborative meetings between the JS and *Ivrit* departments. She felt that these planning meetings would enable her to participate in the process and to get to know what links were being made so that she could also experiment with them in her lessons. I agreed with her as I maintained that when the research project would come to an end, the idea would be to

continue the integration and introduce it to the older age groups. I mentioned that Hannah said that she would try out the root letters with the older classes and see how that goes. I felt that this in itself symbolised a major shift in the culture of the school with regards to the teaching and learning of Hebrew. Simone felt that CTJPS was evolving as a school. Despite the fact that the JS curriculum was working well, she was "very aware that we don't want to become stuck in a rut and you want to try new things and you want to see how things go. I think this is a perfect way of us moving on"[58]. I also suggested that she and Hannah meet regularly as they both have an overview of their respective departments and it would be an excellent opportunity for collaborative work.

The meeting on 1 July was the last we would hold in the academic year. I had received the texts from the three teachers and I had slotted them into the activity plan ready for this meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to induct everyone into the running of the lesson. I reminded everyone that what I had produced was a one-off activity that I would be observing for the benefit of the research and I did not expect them to teach this way every time. This was a specific intervention that I had designed to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew. These one-off lessons would take place instead of their normal lesson, once a term. I also reemphasised the importance of the smaller interventions, the natural on-going integrations in the lessons in between these big interventions. I went through each stage of Suzy's lesson (refer to Appendix J) with everyone. I then continued with Gila and Hannah's lessons (refer to Appendix K). As they both would be teaching the same content, it was sufficient for me to only go through one lesson. There were some minor changes to be made to the activity plan which included another stage before focusing on the key words and introducing a plenary session at the end to gauge learner understanding. I would bring the revised versions to a meeting in the new academic year. Going through the activity plans and seeing all the links to Biblical and Modern Hebrew generated once again much discussion and excitement. There was a positive and very relaxed atmosphere in the room. I assured everyone that I would support them in creating the materials, such as flashcards, they would need for their lessons. The meeting ended on a high with everyone feeling happy and confident.

It had taken many meetings and many different versions of the design process over two academic years to arrive at the pilot stage of the research process.

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[58] Taken from transcript of 24 June 2014 meeting.

4.5.3 Phase Three: *Pilot* period (September to October 2014)

I convened a team meeting on the 10 September of the new academic year. The purpose of which was to give out the revised lesson plans and the supporting teaching materials.

It was also the opportunity to explain to the team that I wanted to conduct a pilot of the lesson plans to ensure that everything would run smoothly for the actual observations. We planned for these lessons to take place on the 20 and 22 October. I arranged a joint feedback session with Gila and Hannah and an individual feedback session with Suzy on the 22 October after all observations had taken place.

The letter to the parents of the Year Three children was sent out in October (refer to Appendix B). During this time six children from each of Gila, Hannah and Suzy's classes were randomly selected to participate in the Focus Group, giving me a potential of eighteen children with whom to work. I received only one rejection from a parent who did not want her child to participate in the focus group. As I still had five children in this one group, (Hannah's *Ivrit* group), I decided that this was sufficient and not to recruit another. I did not conduct a pilot of the focus groups, as I needed to wait a sufficient amount of time for any refusals to come back from the parents. Each group of children consisted of a range of abilities and an equal amount of boys and girls.

4.5.4 Phase Four: *AR* period (December 2014 to July 2015)

I had now reached the point where I was to undertake the AR part of my research. I was ready to implement the pedagogic intervention that I had spent over the past two academic years preparing for.

I would like to remind the reader of the cyclical nature of the AR process and apply it to my project. I conducted three cycles per teacher, one per term, with an additional cycle for Suzy, the JS teacher, in the Summer Term. This was due to the fact that as she was the only JS teacher and as I was observing two *Ivrit* classes, I wanted to observe an additional JS to balance, as much as possible, the total number of lessons for both JS and *Ivrit*. In the end, I observed six *Ivrit* lessons and four JS lessons.

The figure below illustrates the three AR cycles I conducted with each teacher and her class, with an extra cycle taking place in the Summer Term for the JS teacher as explained above.

| **Autumn Term** | **Spring Term** | **Summer Term**
(Plus extra JS lesson) |

Plan:
pedagogic intervention (lesson according to new framework)

Reflect:
Conduct Focus Groups with learners and feedback with teacher. Teacher completes reflection sheet

Act:
Teacher teaches the lesson

Observe: I observe the lesson

Re-plan:
pedagogic intervention (2nd lesson according to new framework)

Reflect:
Conduct Focus Groups with learners and feedback with teacher. Teacher completes reflection sheet

Act:
Teacher teaches the lesson

Observe: I observe the lesson

Re-plan:
pedagogic intervention (3rd lesson according to new framework)

Reflect:
Conduct Focus Groups with learners and feedback with teacher. Teacher completes reflection sheet

Act:
Teacher teaches the lesson

Observe: I observe the lesson

Fig 5

Deconstructing the AR cycle:

Plan:

With my guidance and support and with support from the other teachers, the teacher planned a lesson using the new integrative framework. The topic of the lesson was part of the existing JS or *Ivrit* curricula so it slotted in naturally into the normal flow of lessons. Please note that I use the terms *lessons* and *interventions* interchangeably.

Act and observe:

I have combined these two elements of the cycle as they took place in parallel. Namely, the teacher conducted a lesson using the new integrative framework and I observed the teaching and learning that took place as a result of this intervention.

From the teaching perspective, I was interested in:
1. The extent to which the teacher was able to translate the lesson on paper to a live teaching and learning environment.
2. The extent to which the teacher was successful in teaching the root letters to the learners.
3. The extent to which the teacher was able to make the links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew explicit for the learners.
4. The extent to which the teacher facilitated differentiation within the class.

From the learning perspective, I was interested in:
1. The extent to which the learners were engaged in the lesson.

2. The extent to which the learners grasped the notion of root letters and were able to apply this knowledge.

3. The extent to which the learners were able to make some connections either to Biblical Hebrew or *Ivrit* (depending on which lesson)

Reflect:

The reflective element of the AR cycle consisted of two different activities:

First, I conducted focus groups with the selected children straight after each lesson.

All the Year Three children were undergoing a process of change in terms of the new skills and understandings they were being exposed to. However, the impact of this was even more significant for those learners who participated in the focus groups. There were seventeen children who participated in the Focus Groups. Six from Suzy's class, six from Gila's class and five from Hannah's class (one child's parents did not permit participation). After each observation, I took the selected children out of the class to another location where I conducted the focus groups. Each focus group lasted up to an hour. Each child from Gila and Hannah's class participated in three focus groups, one a term, with those from Suzy's class participating in four (two in the summer term). I conducted a total of ten focus group sessions.

The purpose of these focus groups was to ascertain:

1. The learners' general understanding of the lesson's learning objectives.
2. What activities in the lesson were seen as easy or hard.
3. What new learnings were gained, such as new vocabulary, phrases and concepts.
4. The extent to which the new skill of identifying root letters was achieved.
5. What enduring understandings were acquired, such as the role of the root letter, the overall meanings derived from the root letters, the nature of Hebrew, the similarities between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.
6. The attitudes and feelings associated with learning Hebrew.
    (Refer to Appendix L for a copy of the script).

Second, I met with the teachers soon after each lesson observation to conduct feedback interviews and conversations. These sessions gave the teachers the opportunity to be *reflective practitioners*, in other words, to reflect upon the teaching and learning elements with the view to make any pedagogic changes that were deemed necessary for the next cycle of lessons. These moments also provided the opportunity for the teachers to reflect upon the research process as a whole and to voice any personal or professional concerns. These conversations took place with individual teachers or as a group.

Each teacher underwent three AR cycles (or four in the case of Suzy) with each cycle informing and improving the following one. These teacher cycles were working on two levels: One was on the *intrapersonal* level, where there was a process of change and transformation taking place *within* each individual teacher. The second was on the *interpersonal* level, where there was a process of change and transformation taking place *amongst* the teachers in terms of how they were operating as a team due to their participation in the research. I will be analysing these in the following chapter.

I conducted a final feedback meeting with the team in July. I provided the teachers with a set of guided questions to aid the process. The questions were formulated in order to elicit information about the following areas:
1. The research process as a whole
2. The impact of the research on the teaching
3. The impact of the research on the learning
4. The impact of the research on the school community
5. The continuation of the integration in the future
6. Anything else the teachers wanted to add

The final meeting of this phase was conducted with the Headteacher in August. I reformulated the questions I gave to the teachers for this meeting. This was also the opportunity to bring the research activity to a formal conclusion and to thank her for her support and willingness for her school to be part of the research process.

4.5.5   Phase Five: *Post-AR* period (October to November 2015)

This phase took place towards the beginning of the following academic year of 2015/16. The final observations, focus groups and feedback meeting with the team all took place in June of the 2014/15 academic year. The only matter that was outstanding was the completed teacher reflection sheet which none of the teachers managed to complete within the academic year. After a number of reminders I received reflection sheets from Gila and Hannah in October leaving two from Suzy outstanding (she did two observations in the summer term). I understood that she was under a great deal of pressure as she was juggling multiple roles of year teacher, JS and *Ivrit* teacher as well as having recently taken on the SENCO (Special educational needs coordinator) role. This, together with an imminent Ofsted and *Pikuach* inspection looming, contributed to her not being able to complete her reflection sheets. I sought a pragmatic solution by arranging a time after school when she dictated them to me over the telephone.

4.6 Summary

This chapter began by providing the reader with the sociocultural context of the teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the United Kingdom. It then explored the notion of the development of new pedagogies and professional practice, both as separate yet overlapping research paths in the context of the project. Next the reader was given an overview of the whole project activity that I undertook at CTJPS. The activities took place over a period of four academic years: 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. I presented these periods as five distinct research phases: Phase One being the *Appreciative Inquiry* period, namely, *AI*. Phase Two, the framework design period, which I named *UbD*, Phase Three was the *Pilot* period, Phase Four was the *AR* period and Phase Five was the *Post-AR* period. Should not be in bold!

I supplemented these phases with an exploration of various academics, writers and practitioners as well as giving moments of personal critical reflection.

I was extremely fortunate to have been given the opportunity to work in such a positive setting. The Headteacher and the Governing Body of CTJPS gave me full support and access and the teachers and children were willing to come with me on my journey. Ultimately it became *our* journey.

I now invite the reader to continue journeying with me as we enter into the world of the teachers and the learners.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY BUILDER

It is March. As I settle myself on one of the chairs at the side of the classroom, Hannah's fifteen Year Three children are singing a Hebrew song about a dream. The lesson takes place in an airy, comfortable and well-equipped classroom. After a brief question-and-answer session, Hannah moves on to the topic of the day. She explains that she is going to focus on a new verb that has to do with school subjects, and that the verb is 'lilmod' and means 'to learn'. After explaining that 'lomed' means 'he learns', she goes through the other forms – 'lomedet' (she learns), 'lomdim' (plural, masculine form) and 'lomdot' (plural, feminine form). She then distributes paper and pens. I quickly jump up and whisper to Hannah to let the children first listen to the Modern Hebrew recording without writing anything down. This she does. After they have listened to the recording once, Hannah instructs the children to listen again, and this time to write down any words they recognise from the dialogue. Following this, she asks the children to name the shoresh (root letters) of the word 'lomed', which they all work out beautifully – l, m, d! She then hands out a sheet listing sentences from the Bible that include variations of this word, and the children are asked to find the words with this shoresh. I was really impressed with the way Hannah was able to move from Modern Hebrew to Biblical Hebrew so seamlessly.
(Taken from a real-life lesson I observed on 11 March 2015)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings of the research undertaken during the AR phase of the project. The findings will be presented from both the teaching and learning perspectives. The chapter will initially explore the notion of qualitative analysis before focusing specifically on Thematic Analysis, my chosen analytic approach. I will explore the four main themes that emerged from the data and give a detailed report of the analysis and findings. The chapter will end by giving a summary of all the findings.

5.2 Qualitative Analysis

Schutt (2004, p. 415) points out that qualitative data analysts "seek to describe their textual data in ways that capture the setting or people who produced this text on their own terms, rather than in terms of predefined measures and hypotheses". He contends that qualitative data analysis tends to be more inductive, where the analyst "identifies important categories in the data, as well as patterns and relationships, through a process of discovery".

Hesse-Biber et al (2006) argue that there is no single way to conduct qualitative analysis. "Qualitative analysis can and should be done artfully, even 'playfully,' […]" (Tesch, 1990, p.97 in Hesse-Biber et al, 2006). Denzin writes about the "art of interpretation", where it moves "from the field to the text to the reader". This "art allows the field-worker-as-bricoleur…to translate what has been learned into a body of textual work that

communicates these understandings to the reader" (Denzin, 2000, p.313 in Hesse-Biber et al, 2006).

The task of analysis according to Dooley, (1990, p. 288) as mentioned in Chapter Three, is the "interconnection of discrete observations within a small number of conceptual categories". He uses the metaphor of the jigsaw puzzle to describe the process that the researcher undertakes in fitting and refitting the pieces in a "variety of preliminary models until there are no or few pieces left over" and the end result is a fit that is both acceptable to the researcher and is logical in its outcome.

5.3 Thematic Analysis

TA is a process "for encoding qualitative information" where the encoding "requires an explicit 'code'", which may be a "list of themes; a complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are causally related; or something in between these two forms" (Boyatzis, 1998, p.4). Boyatzis describes a theme as a pattern which is found in the data that at "minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon". He explains that a theme may be "identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon)". Themes can be "generated inductively" from the raw data or they can be "generated deductively from theory and prior research". He contends that TA has a number of "overlapping or alternate purposes" and can be used as:

1. A way of *seeing*
2. A way of *making sense* out of seemingly unrelated material
3. A way of *analysing* qualitative information
4. A way of *systematically observing* a person, an interaction, a group, a situation, an organization, or a culture
5. A way of *converting* qualitative information into quantitative data (1998, pp.4-5).

Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that Boyatzis (1998, cited in Braun et al, 2006, p.4) does not consider TA as a specific method of qualitative analysis but rather as a tool to use across different methods. However, they consider it as a method in its own right (2006, p.4) for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (2006, p.6). They contend that because TA is not bound to any one particular theoretical or epistemological approach it is a flexible and useful research tool, which "can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data" (2006, p.5).

It is important to provide certain terms which will help to define the parameters in which I have conducted the analysis. The *data corpus* refers to all the data that I collected during the entire research project over the period of the 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 academic years as described in Chapter Four and which can be referred to in Appendix C. The *data set* refers to the data from the *corpus* that I am using for this analysis. Thus, my selected *data set* is from Phase Four, the AR phase, and part of Phase Five, the post-AR phase, of the project. This comprises ten classroom observations (six *Ivrit* and four Jewish Studies lessons), ten focus groups of learners (totalling seventeen children), ten teacher reflective sheets (three from the *IC* and *Ivrit* teacher and four from the JS teacher), three individual teacher feedback conversations (the *IC*, JS and *Ivrit* teachers), one joint feedback conversations with the JS teacher and the *Ivrit* teacher, and two team feedback conversations, involving the JS and *Ivrit* teachers and the *IC*. The *data item* then refers to each of these individual pieces of data collected as described above. Lastly, the *data extract* refers to "an individual coded chunk of data, which has been identified within, and extracted from, a *data item*" (Braun et al, 2006, pp.5-6). As there are many data extracts taken from the entire data set, I will be highlighting only a selection of these in the analysis.

In my role as *observer-participant* and as *participant-observer*, as outlined in Chapter Three, the classroom observations that I conducted provide a check and balance of the teachers' and the learners' experiences of the lesson from my perspective, and which have been viewed through my subjective lenses. The extent to which their feelings about, understandings and perceptions of the lessons accord with mine will be explored and discussed.

I will analyse the data set from the teaching and learning perspectives. The data set for the teaching perspective comprises the observations, the teacher reflection sheets and the feedback conversations. The data set for the learning perspective comprises the observations and the focus groups.

5.3.1   Themes
5.3.1.1 Teaching

The two main themes that I will be analysing are the *Evolution of the Individual* and the *Evolution of the Team* (Refer to Appendix M for the thematic map). Within the first main theme, I will be analysing the growth and development of the teachers from the *personal* and the *professional* perspectives.   Within the *personal* perspective, I will provide evidence to support the notion of the teachers having undertaken a personal journey

whilst participating in the research project. I will analyse how they *reflect* upon the research process. Within the *professional* perspective, I will analyse the extent to which the teachers have undergone a change in practice and what strategies and techniques they employ to teach the new integrative framework. In addition, I will analyse the notion of the *reflective practitioner* and the extent to which they have been able to reflect on their own practice and that of their learners. Within the second main theme, I will be analysing the growth and development of the *team*, comprising the three teachers. The first sub-theme will analyse the development and nature of the *collaboration* between the JS and *Ivrit* departments. The second sub-theme will analyse the *impact* the team has had, due to the research process, on the wider school community. My analyses will include areas for development and succession planning, as well as the notion of change agency.

Thus, in terms of my research, from the teaching perspective I set about investigating three areas (as discussed in Chapter Two):

1. From the **programmatic/material** perspective:
   The ability of the teachers to translate the theoretical framework I devised into practical lessons, as well as their ability to modify and change it as and when necessary.

2. From the **teaching approaches** perspective:
   The ability of the teachers to teach the root letters of key Hebrew vocabulary as the key skill and inroad for pupil understanding. Whether both the Jewish Studies and Hebrew teachers are bringing in the links more naturally in their lessons. Whether Modern Hebrew is integrated more generally into the life of the school. Whether the JS and *Ivrit* departments have established a collaborative planning and working partnership.

3. From the **changes in beliefs** perspective:
   Whether the teachers understand and appreciate why integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew can enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew. Whether they have internalised this integration as a positive step in enhancing the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

5.3.1.2 Learning

The two main themes that I will be analysing are *Acquiring Hebrew* and *Meaning Making* (Refer to Appendix M). The first theme of *Acquiring Hebrew* will analyse what factors *help* the acquisition of Hebrew. Within this, I will examine the many different strategies and techniques the learners have employed to aid their understanding and mastery of skills. I will also analyse what factors *hinder* the acquisition process. The second theme of *Meaning Making* will analyse the meanings, feelings and attitudes the learners attribute to Hebrew learning. This includes the function and purpose of Hebrew, ownership, personal values and the value of learning. Additionally, I will also analyse the extent to which two central enduring understandings of my research, namely, the purpose and function of the Hebrew root letters and the nature of Hebrew (Biblical and Modern Hebrew being one language albeit with differences), have been internalised by the learners. Additionally, I will analyse the extent to which the Hebrew learning has served as a gateway to aspects of the learners' Jewish identity. The growth and development of each of the focus groups over the course of the research period will also be charted.

From the learners' perspective, I set about investigating the following three areas:

Skills:
1. Ability to identify root letters of key Hebrew words.
2. Ability to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew with teacher intervention and then naturally without teacher intervention.
3. Ability to recognise and identify recurring Hebrew words and phrases that appear in different contexts.

Attitudes:
1. The extent to which they have a positive attitude to learning Hebrew.
2. The extent to which they feel a sense of achievement when they are able to identify root letters and apply knowledge from one context to another.

Understandings:
1. The extent to which they know that the Hebrew they learn in JS lessons and the Hebrew they learn in *Ivrit* lessons have many similarities and are the same language.
2. The extent to which they know that the vast majority of words (verbs and nouns) in the Hebrew language come from a three-consonant root word that contains the essence of the word's meaning, thus enabling them to become independent learners.

3. The extent to which they know that these same root letters appear in both the Hebrew they learn in JS lessons and in *Ivrit* lessons and that these root letters have the same or similar meaning.

4. The extent to which they know that their JS and *Ivrit* teachers are working and planning together to help them achieve and understand this.

5.3.1.3 Approach

My thematic analytic approach will be, in the main, deductive. This means the researcher's starting point is his or her own theory of what happens as he devises the indicators and evidence to support this theory (Boyatzis 1998, p.31). This approach is one that is driven by the theoretical and analytic interest of the researcher (Braun et al, 2006, p12). The themes emerge from the researcher's "construction of the meaning and style of communication […]" and the codes often convey the researcher's language and knowledge of the field (Boyatzis, 1998, p33).

5.3.2 Analysis and Findings

5.3.2.1 Teaching

The overarching theme that emerged for the teaching perspective is the concept of evolution, namely growth and development. Although the external manifestation of this perspective is the teaching, there has been a complex internal process of learning and change that the teachers have undergone during the research process. This has enabled the teachers to move from an individual teacher stance to that of a team.

5.3.2.1.1 Evolution of the Individual

1 Personal

As previously alluded to, each teacher has been on a personal journey during her participation in the research project. This has involved many achievements, challenges, stresses and surprises, but most of all transformation.

The extracts that follow give the reader an insight into this journey of personal growth and development. I have presented the extracts in chronological order (per term) in order to plot their progress over time.

Reflections of the Research Process

The following extracts have been taken from either individual or team feedback conversations, or the teacher reflection sheets. They relate either to a specific lesson or to the research process as a whole. (My comments or questions have a 'J' in front and are in italics. As a reminder: Suzy is the JS teacher, Gila is the *Ivrit* teacher and Hannah is the *Ivrit* coordinator/teacher).

J: Anything else you want to say, I mean, are you feeling alright? I'm not stretching you too much? I mean I know the workload is.

I don't think you actually stress us at all. I think teaching has changed since we've …. [Unintelligible]. And that's the stress. I mean, I'm quite happy for, I don't feel like you're observing me and judging us. It's not a pressure to have you, looking how we … [cross-talk], that's not the pressure.

J: It's just the whole thing of teaching, fitting everything in everything, and I'm sorry, I'm adding to that. However, for things to change and move on, there has to be a challenge.

If there wasn't this, it would be something else, I'm sure of it.
(Suzy, feedback conversation, Term 1)

Planning and resources take a long time especially as *Ivrit* is not my first language. Feel the need to over resource to compensate for lack of *Ivrit* even though I know some links.
(Suzy, reflection sheet, Term 1)

J: Because obviously anything that you do differently does require more work and we can't get away from that.

And I think because we are only starting to build it, I mean once we do it once, we've got everything, so we can reuse it, for example the PowerPoint, that's the time consuming, but now I've got it, we put it in a folder, we can share it, Suzy can share it, Hannah can have it, so do you know what I mean, it's just the building work.
(Gila, feedback conversation, Term 1)

Preparation time for this second observation was considerably less than the previous one. I assume the reason was that I was less apprehensive and much more relaxed. Ideas for activities just poured out…
(Hannah, reflection sheet, Term 1).
Where she refers to the 'previous one' she is referring to the Pilot observation.

These extracts illustrate how the teachers are beginning to address the additional demands that the research was placing on them. A common thread that runs through these extracts is the comments about the time taken to prepare and plan for the lessons I observed. There is an acknowledgment by Gila that the first time something new is undertaken, the more planning and time consuming it will be. These comments reflect what I was expecting at the beginning of this journey.

In contrast, I found Suzy's comment of not being pressured by me observing her, intriguing. Being observed by others, be they colleagues, head teacher, inspectors or indeed a researcher is stressful and coupled with having to teach differently, would put

any experienced teacher under pressure. Another interesting comment made by Suzy is the fact that she over-resourced her lesson to compensate for what she perceives as her lack of Hebrew. In my mind, there is an interesting tendency here to 'hide' things: she seems to be in denial, which is a form of hiding, about not feeling pressured by my presence in her lessons and she 'hides' her lack of Hebrew behind over resourcing the lesson. These comments do need, however, to be put into a wider context; at the time of the research, Suzy was holding numerous roles – that of class teacher, JS teacher for both Year Three classes and an *Ivrit* teacher for one lesson a week. Suzy had a tremendous workload and her participation in the research only added to it. Suzy rose to every challenge and in fact she was the only teacher who underwent four observations, the last one taking place in the week preceding her son's wedding.

Hannah on the other hand, seemed to have rid herself of any anxieties in the pilot observation as she found the lesson this term more relaxed and her preparation time was "considerably less". My observation notes from this lesson corroborate with Hannah's reflection of the lesson. She was very relaxed and she made excellent links to Biblical Hebrew. In fact, Hannah brought in the children's *siddurim* (prayer books) into the class and she got them to search for all words from the liturgy that contained the three root letters that were being covered. I understand from Hannah that this was the first time she had ever brought *siddurim* into her lesson. I was very excited to see this taking place – the connections between Modern and Biblical Hebrew were seamless. I was also impressed with Hannah's ability and desire to step out of her 'comfort zone'. Hannah had never made links to Biblical Hebrew in all the years of her teaching. This was new territory for her and she struggled with it, as will be revealed further on, but she rose to every challenge.

The following extracts are from a feedback conversation that I had with Suzy and Gila in February in the second term. I understood that they were finding their workloads challenging and I felt that this could potentially impact negatively on the research. I called a meeting so that I could understand what the specific issues were in order to alleviate some of the stress before the next set of observations that would be taking place the following month.

> *J: We have to address the issues, and that's part of the process, because what we've done here is actually introduce a whole different way of working, way of thinking, and inevitably it has impacted on your work, your workload, although in a way I'm only seeing, I'm only observing you sort of once a term. However, there's a whole thinking process that has gone through it, around it, so please just feel free just to talk, it doesn't have to be long, just anything that we can just reconnect, and how I can help you.*
>
> Suzy: So my main thing is that what you see isn't always what we do.
>
> *J: Yes.*

Suzy: You see, know what I'm saying. The way we present the lessons to you is not how we teach them. Definitely not with me, how I teach Jewish studies, but it's how I did my assembly this morning. It's more, you know, more implicit, it's disconnected from what we always do, and feeding in a little bit of what we do into that, you know think another way around, you know. : It's a special lesson about connecting Jewish studies and *Ivrit*. Where in a normal *Ivrit* lesson, I will do a little bit of it. I might mention it twice in my lesson, where I can find a root word, a same word in *t'filla* (prayer). But it's not the whole lesson, whereas when you watch us, it's just about that.

J: Got it, okay.
(Joint feedback conversation, Term 2)

You know what I think is difficult is the, 'cause we're trying, we're looking at the script from *Ivrit b'klik (on-line Hebrew curriculum)*, the script of a topic, and I think it's hard to find things with a bit of meat on them.

J: Got it. Okay.

So for example, the new topic I'm going to start at the half-term is *eifo ani gar* (where do I live)

J: Okay, so that'll be something to …(talking over one another)

I don't know the scripts all by heart, I need to refer back to it and see what I can find, but from what I remember I was already looking and thinking, I'm blocked.
(Gila, joint feedback conversation, Term 2)

I realised that both Suzy and Gila had planned "special" lessons (the pilot and the first term lessons) for me to observe and what I was observing was not what they considered 'normal' lessons. These were specially put together to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew. It was also clear that this entailed too much work for them, as Suzy admitted: "so that I don't' have this, have to plan it in such detail, for hours on end, okay?". "In order to make my work easier as well".

I explained that these observations were a means of getting the teachers into the mindset in order that we can 'test' out a methodology. I reemphasised the importance of the smaller interventions – the daily, natural links they could make either to Biblical or Modern Hebrew. I reminded them of the nature of action research, that it is about observing a change, reflecting on it and making improvements for the next cycle. Thus, it was clear that they were investing two much time in the planning of these lessons and I advised them that they should perhaps reduce the amount of examples they bring into the lesson. The most important thing was that they were getting more used to bringing in the links and were feeling more comfortable with that. Once they were more attuned to integrating it would flow more naturally. I was reminded that this was still very early days and they had

only planned and executed two lessons, including the pilot. They needed the time to get used to a whole new way of working.

> It is becoming a more natural process and therefore I feel that this time it wasn't a lesson planned specially for Jo-Ann.
>
> Making the link to JS is happening more often now and in different year groups! This however takes place mainly orally and isn't always put down in the lesson plan ☹ still, I feel it is a great progress in terms of how often I introduce or encourage the children to notice the link to JS in all year groups.
> (Hannah, reflection sheet, Term 2)

At this stage, Hannah had planned and implemented three lessons (including the pilot). Her reflection reveals that she is quite at ease with the process; she is finding that linking to Biblical Hebrew and JS is becoming a much more natural process. Furthermore, she is feeling able to bring in the links to Biblical Hebrew in different year groups. She acknowledges this progress. Her use of the 'sad face' voices a concern that the smaller, lesson-to-lesson, interventions are not being written down in her lesson plans. She is aware that she needs to plan for these smaller interventions. My observation notes from the actual lesson echoes with Hannah's sentiments. She brought in the links to JS very naturally, firstly by recapping the root letters that the class had learned in the previous lesson and then moving on seamlessly to the new target word and root letters. This clearly was not a 'special lesson' rather it was the topic she would have taught anyway at this time, the only difference was that she was now making explicit links to Biblical Hebrew and JS.

> To start off with I was struggling with link words that are not obvious to the root letters. With help from the *Ivrit* team they have told me about a song they have taught, which I will use to help reinforce that biblical Hebrew and *Ivrit* are connected.
>
> Relief!
> After the observation I was given the opportunity to correct the misconception of *Chalon* (window) and *Chalom* (dream). Creating a small intervention.
> My findings so far, is that the children in the class are becoming more aware of links between *Ivrit* and JS.
> I in turn am becoming more aware of trying to create more mini interventions during JS lessons.
> (Suzy, reflection sheet, Term 2)

These comments were made after Suzy's second lesson observation and after our joint meeting the month before. They show that she is beginning to be more at ease with the methodology. She is honest about struggling to find links to *Ivrit* and that she approached the *Ivrit* team for help. Her use of research terminology – "my findings so far" indicates that there is an attempt to immerse herself into the research world, which I found gratifying. She was able to make "more mini interventions" (again using my terminology) in her JS lessons. There is definite progress being made. My observation notes of this lesson echo Suzy's comments: she made small links to Modern Hebrew throughout her

lesson and most of the learners definitely knew the root letters and were able to work them out independently.

> I decided that the lesson will be where we got to. Face the challenge and not change the topic in order to find easier links.
>
> Jo-Ann, you give me more confidence with your comments after the lesson.
>
> I actually enjoy these special lessons (as hard as is the preparation for them). It is worth it.
> (Gila, reflection sheet, Term 2)

These reflections written after her second observation also indicate that Gila has begun to be more at ease with the process. She decided not to change the topic of her lesson to suit Biblical links but rather continue with her normal lesson and bring in the Biblical Hebrew links. This was an important shift in her thinking and planning. Gila's acknowledgment that my comments after the lesson helped her feel more confident was pleasing to hear as I was glad that my support was effective and was enabling her to progress. Despite the challenges of preparing for these 'special lessons', she was beginning to enjoy them. My observation notes from this lesson very much coincide with those of Gila's. The topic of this lesson was "where do I live?" and the target verb for that lesson was 'to live'. The root letters for this word are unusual in that the middle one is dropped when forming nouns and verbs. Despite the challenges this particular word presented, Gila was adamant not to change the topic to make things easier for her or the children. This was an excellent lesson that was well planned, researched and delivered and which made explicit and interesting links to Biblical Hebrew.

> *J: Right, okay, so Gila, the research process, please.*
>
> Gila: Okay, so I've very much enjoyed the research process. I've tried to really not change my *Ivrit* teaching. I, if I was teaching 'where do I live', I would stick to it and just see if I can research the Jewish studies to suit my *Ivrit* teaching. And I felt as a professional that it enriched my Jewish studies knowledge, and I felt like I grew a lot as a teacher, as an *Ivrit* teacher and that helped me, well gain more knowledge in Jewish studies, which is a biggie in my eyes because, you know, and finding the roots to Jewish studies, also, I found very interesting.
>
> What was easy about the process? It wasn't easy. I didn't find it was easy. But when you get an idea, it just enlightens you, you know, a lot, all of a sudden you run with it, so I didn't find it at all easy, and it takes time, you know, you've got to set time aside to really plan a whole lesson that is different, you know, from what I'm used to do, so it's time consuming, and, but very rewarding, you know. Yes, that's what I've got to say so far about the research process, but I've enjoyed it very much, because I feel that it made me grow as a teacher.
>
> *J: Suzy?*
>
> Suzy: Okay, so, similarly, I've also enjoyed the process tremendously. It has impacted the way I teach JS because I always showed, from the very beginning, I showed *Ivrit*, our words in Hebrew on the board, but I didn't do anything with it. It was just there, right, so I used to show a text but not really do very much with it, maybe translate it, that's it, so it's helped me to see, to pull out the

shoresh (root letters), to pull out that little bit of *Ivrit* connection, and what it's done certainly with my class as it has opened up this, this whole new world for them where, and they, together we have become very enthusiastic and it has really benefited the year group quite tremendously.

In terms of what I found easy about the process. Finding the text was easy. Finding the connections was sometimes very hard, okay? To find those connections and to make those connections and to find the *Ivrit* words, especially, particularly for a non-*Ivrit* speaker, you know, to find those *Ivrit* connections sometimes was a little bit tricky for me, but as you run with the process, I found that you build up momentum and as you get the word bank going, it becomes, not easier, but you get into a flow of it, and so, yeah, the only other thing I'd like to say is that the children have really enjoyed the process, that they absolutely had.

J: Hannah?

Hannah: Okay, just to add to what Gila said, and Suzy, because they said all the things that I feel the same as well, most of the things. So, I think it's the relationship with the Jewish studies, I think that we talk more, don't we about things and we share more things and I feel, you know, with Suzy, it comes from her heart, everything comes from her heart, so it's so nice to come to Suzy, and ask, you know, from the Jewish studies point of view and that's, I think that's a big change for me, from beginning, how we communicate. Through that project, that's what happened. I also think, also to festivals, you know, the some ideas that Suzy suddenly brought, and we planned our lesson, instead Suzy changed everything for us by, it was *Purim* I think, or something, and it just didn't make sense, and I thought, oh why don't we actually do it like that. (All from final feedback conversation, July, Term 3)

Feeling a lot more competent with the research process – becoming second nature at this point, feeling confident.
(Suzy, second last reflection sheet, Term 3)

Thank you so much to Jo-Ann for coaching us and for 'escorting' us throughout this journey. This is a concept that we have neglected in the past and now brought it to life and to use in a pleasant and fun way. It is a slow process. We are doing it in small steps but only going forward!!
(Hannah, final reflection sheet, Term 3)

The whole process was a growth, in the beginning it was complicated but as it went on I realised I didn't need to include so much in the lesson. Didn't need fancy PowerPoint – it was about the kids getting the *shoresh* (root letters).

I learnt a lot about myself as a teacher: I wasn't confident at the beginning, I was doubting myself, this process allowed me to believe in myself, it gave me the growth. Before I had self-doubt.
(Suzy, final reflection sheet, Term 3)

By this stage Gila and Hannah had planned and delivered three lessons that I observed (four including the pilot lesson) and Suzy four (five including the pilot lesson). It is evident from the comments made in the final feedback conversation that that they had all undergone a process of tremendous growth and development whilst participating in the research. Some of the words and phrases they use indicate this – "enriched", "grew", "enlightened", "enjoyed", "impacted", "opened this whole new world", "enthusiastic", "run with the process', "flow", "relationship", "share", "talk more", "communication".

The reflective sheets above provide another insight into their reflections and the process they underwent. Hannah thanks me for "coaching us", "escorting us throughout this journey". She acknowledges that this is a concept (integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew) that "we have neglected in the past" and "now brought it to life", "slow process", "small steps", "going forward".

Suzy expresses her feelings in the following terms: "more competent", the process is "becoming second nature", "feeling confident", "process of growth", the beginning "was complicated", "learnt a lot about myself as a teacher", 'wasn't confident at the beginning", "self doubt', "this process allowed me to believe in myself", "gave me growth".

Gila also acknowledged my help using terms such as "support", "guidance was fantastic", and "enthusiasm is catching". In terms of her personal and professional development she "learnt so much", "gained more knowledge", "grew in confidence", teaching Biblical and Modern Hebrew "should always go hand in hand". As Hannah did, Gila also ends with similar sentiments that the "task isn't easy" but she "must continue these teachings".

> I would like to thank you Jo-Ann for all your support during this process. I was very nervous about it at the beginning but your guidance was fantastic, I have learnt so much. Your enthusiasm to *Ivrit* and Jewish studies is catching and I feel that through this process I have gained more knowledge and grew in confidence in teaching these subjects that should always go hand in hand.
>
> The task isn't easy and I must continue these teachings with my year 4 and begin with new year 3 groups. *Toda raba m'kol halev* (Lit: Thank you so much from the whole heart).
> (Gila, final reflection sheet, Term 3)

It is apposite at this point to share a quote by Rabbi Tarfon, from the *Sayings of the Fathers*[59] *(Pirkei Avot)*, chapter 2, verse 21.

<div dir="rtl">

לא עליך המלאכה לגמור ולא אתה בן חורין להבטל ממנה

</div>

"You are not expected to complete the task, but neither are you free to avoid it".

What both Gila and Hannah have expressed is an embodiment of this saying. They know the task is not easy, but they must continue on with it. They are fully aware that they are just the current custodians of this knowledge that needs to be passed on and continued by

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[59] *Sayings (Ethics) of the Fathers:* "Sixty-two of the sixty-three short books that make up the Mishna are legal texts. The only tractate of the sixty-three that does not deal with laws is called *Pirkei Avot.* [...] *Pirkei Avot* transmits the favourite moral advice and insights of the leading rabbinic scholars of different generations. The quotes found in *Pirkei Avot* generally are spiritual and edifying, but they can also be practical". https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/pirkei_avot.html (accessed: 3 February 2016). The reader may want to view a rendition of this in song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xwUPZHKFT0 (accessed 3 February 2016).

others. Another insight into this saying is that it has been and continues to be used in many different Jewish contexts. The one context with which I am most familiar is that of the Jewish youth groups. This saying has been adopted by the youth and has become almost an anthem – a rallying cry for continuing to 'repair the world', a Jewish, and universal, value. This is yet another example where liturgical/ancient Hebrew is being used in a modern day context. Most of the words used in this saying are words that we find and are used in Modern Hebrew today.

I have presented very compelling evidence that all three teachers have emerged from the research process the richer. They struggled initially and continued to grapple with their demanding workloads, but the overall sense is that this was very worthwhile in terms of their own personal and professional growth and development.

Now that the reader has been given an indication of how the teachers fared overall, I would now like to move on to professional growth and development that the teachers underwent during the research process.

## 2	Professional

This section will be examining different aspects of the teachers' practice. I will be giving the reader an insight into the strategies and techniques employed by the teachers to teach the new integrative framework. Additionally, I will be examining how the teachers reflect upon their own practice and understandings, and their children's ability to grasp these new understandings and skills. In other words, I am analysing the extent to which the teachers have become reflective practitioners.

There are too many examples to include within the main body of the text here so I have selected only a few that will give the reader an interesting insight.

> *J: So, Gila, I just want to ask you how you felt the lesson went in terms of your lesson objectives, if you felt that what you wanted to get across came across. Tell me also about what you think you could do differently and mainly how you are dealing with this whole new concept of what we're trying to do, do you think it's working, what could be changed?*
>
> I felt that the lesson began very well, I felt that the children understood what they had to do. They had to listen to the short conversation and that went very well, I think the fact that I read it out first helped a lot because in the film I thought it would be too fast. Now they have never seen any of the film so I was a bit anxious about that so that's why I picked a very short, the first bit was very short. It contained language that they would know cos I ask them the same question: how old are you?– *bat kamah at?* and there was one word we could pick, which was *shalom* and so I felt the beginning was really good, they could follow the conversation, they enjoyed following the script, the written script. Most of them still struggled to kind of pick and write down the words they recognised, but I think it's in their heads, they certainly can talk about the words that they recognise or understood, so to me the written concept is not so important, I don't know if that's right or wrong.

> *J: I think the written just reemphasises what they've learnt, but I think, it's, you're right the big idea we want them to get which is that there's this linking and that they are finding the links.*
>
> And then they could find some of the songs they sing from assemblies with the words *shalom* and they could pick out the *shoresh*, they recognised the *shoresh*.
>
> *J: Which was great! So, if you think about it they were already going into assembly songs and stuff they were doing in JS.*
>
> That's right.
>
> But as the lesson went on, I felt that I was talking too much, it does feel that sometimes getting them to, extracting things out of them or answers that are very to the point is quite hard. I just feel the lesson is them listening to me and I, that is a difficult thing for a teacher, especially a language teacher, cos I want to listen to them speak. Not just bombard them with lots of information, so where else?, you try and delve into it even more. So, it's in *shlomo hamelech (King Solomon),* and it's in *Yerushalayim (Jerusalem)*, and perhaps too much information.
> (Gila, all from individual feedback conversation, Term 1)

This conversation with Gila reveals many different aspects of her pedagogy. She felt the lesson started well which was helped by the fact that she read the text out to the children, as the actual recording on the film was very fast. She also selected a very short excerpt because the children had not seen any of the film before. Both these examples demonstrate a keen awareness of the learners' needs and abilities and her ability to be adaptable and flexible. She identified what her children were finding hard (listening and writing) and felt that the listening exercise was more important than the written part. It is interesting to note that this particular class comprises the higher ability learners and I would have expected them not to have 'struggled' as much as Gila felt or perceived they did. Referring to my lesson observation notes, I observe that there is no mention that the children struggled with the writing element, but that is not to say that some did not. My notes do corroborate with Gila regarding the learners' ability to "find some of the songs they sing from assemblies with the words *shalom* and they could pick out the *shoresh*, they recognized the *shoresh*". The next section reveals a great deal about Gila's ability to reflect upon the lesson but also to be reflexive as she was aware that during the lesson she was talking too much, giving out too much information and "extracting" answers from them. She felt that as a language teacher her job is to enable them to speak and be more active learners rather than being passive recipients of knowledge. I appreciate Gila's honesty, and I thought she had conducted an excellent lesson, which included all the different elements that my integrated framework demanded. This was a highly accomplished lesson and the learners demonstrated that they were beginning to understand the nature of Hebrew being present in many different contexts. We spoke that perhaps for the next lesson she could reduce the amount of information she would give the children and to evaluate it. This was only the first observation and I was feeling very

optimistic that Gila would be able to find the right balance between active and passive learning in addition to making links to Biblical Hebrew.

> Yet again it was great to see how enthusiastic and cooperative the children were.
> Children were thinking 'outside the box' and contributing to their class' mates with their valuable comments, thoughts and knowledge.
> Children were active learners and fully understood the concept of linking modern Ivrit to JS. They were very excited to look through the Siddur for words with the א.ה.ב root letters.
> The less able children were fully engaged and were able to participate in all activities.
>
> Some of the activities were rushed as I was eager for Jo-Ann to observe all the activities that showed clear link between JS and Ivrit. I therefore repeated some at the next lesson, this time given sufficient time.
>
> I now bring up the *shoresh* whenever the opportunity arises.
>
> Planning lessons to specifically make link to JS happens only occasionally..:(as I still don't think about it automatically when I do the planning.
> (Hannah, reflection sheet, Term 1)

Hannah's reflection of her lesson in the above excerpt is very positive. The adjectives she uses to describe the lesson - "enthusiastic and cooperative", "out of the box" thinking, "contributed", "active learners" and "excited" correspond very much with what I observed. This lesson was reminiscent of a mini – *beit midrash*[60]. Children were working in pairs (*chavruta*), there was sharing of information, there was positive noise in the room and the children were working from their *siddurim*. It was a joy to see. Yes, some of the activities were rushed, which was a pity, but I was pleased to learn that Hannah revised some of the material in the following lesson. This lesson told me a great deal about Hannah. She had stepped out of her 'comfort zone' as she had never before this research project made any links to JS or Biblical Hebrew. She was prepared to learn and modify her teaching to suit the new framework. She was fully aware of the lower ability learners, but as I also observed, they were able to access the material and give valuable contributions. It is evident at this stage that the process of integrating is not as natural as she would like, but this could only improve.

> There's certainly more awareness amongst children about the connection between *Ivrit* and JS. And that's the most important thing. I think that we're gaining, and I think if we continue it with other year groups, then slowly, that awareness will become more apparent.
> (Suzy, joint feedback conversation, Term 2)

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[60] *Beit Midrash*: literally means house of study. It is a place where Jews gather to study the *Talmud* and other religious writings; a small synagogue. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/beth-midrash (accessed 4 February 2016).

> What is also nice is that I'm very aware of connecting from a very early age. So for example, today in Year One, we had a consolidation lesson in the reading on the topic *Shabbat*. And they did really well, they worked really hard this term, and I said to them, "you know your reading is wonderful."
>
> *J: Go on.*
>
> "I can't wait 'til you'll be able to actually follow a prayer in the *siddur*." And they're so excited about that! I said, "There's nothing more wonderful than knowing where you are on the prayer and following the prayer in assembly." And it was wonderful because although we were reading words in *Ivrit*, their progression is so good that they, you know, they nearly may be ready to have a look at a prayer that is very basic.
> (Gila, from joint feedback conversation, Term 2)

> *J: Fantastic. Can you imagine-*
>
> Suzy: they knew something, and they show it.
>
> *J: Yeah, absolutely, and I'm thinking, in terms of helping them with understanding of it, the more integration you do from your side, from modern Hebrew, into looking at a prayer and taking one or two words, key words, that's all I want.*
>
> G: Yeah. And to understand that it's the same thing.
>
> S: And I think also an appreciation of what they're praying, because-
>
> *J: Absolutely.*
>
> S: Just making those connections make them suddenly realise that they're praying something that's very important. (Joint feedback conversation, Term 2)

The above extracts from Term 2 demonstrate the teachers' 'awareness' of how the process is developing and the importance of making these links not only in Year Three but in the other year groups as well. In fact Gila argues the importance of creating these links at a very early age, in Year One. What is most interesting about what Gila said was that she was thinking not just as an *Ivrit* teacher but as a JS teacher. Here again is a teacher who, before this research project, had never made any references to Jewish studies or prayers. This suggests a substantial paradigm shift.

These extracts also show the important role integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew can play in the understanding of prayers and thus contribute to the spiritual development of children[61]. Shire (2013, p.3) argues that the "universalistic approach to spiritual development expressed in a definition of 'making meanings' is seen to blur distinctions between religious traditions". He believes by so doing the "particular Jewish notion of religiosity in favour of a generalized definition" is ignored. As spiritual development has become a "normative feature of state children's education in the United Kingdom", Shire argues that Jewish educators need to consider how to educate for

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[61] All maintained schools have the obligation under section 78 of the Education Act (2002) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society (Department for Education, 2014).
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf (accessed 4 February 2016).

religious growth and spirituality. In addition, educators need to think about the relationship between religious development and religious learning and practice. Some of these questions he poses are: "How will the faith of the child be characterized and expressed in Jewish terms? What conceptual tools can be used to best understand the nature of the spiritual child? How can faith be formed and nurtured authentically in Judaism, and how can young people be personally enriched and their faith enhanced through Jewish religious education" (2013, p.3). In answer, I believe that integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew and its associated skills and understandings, can be provide a gateway for learners to access a deeper meaning of their Judaism and Jewish prayer.

> Today, we did the map of Israel with Y3, they were so interested. […] And we were talking about this Dead Sea and they remember that I told them on *Yom Ha'atsmaut* (Israel Independence Day) somebody remembered that I said we don't call it the Dead Sea, we call it in Ivrit […]*yam hamelach* (the sea of salt) and when I said *yam hamelach*, aah do you remember when we do *Kiddush* we put *melech* (salt) on the *challah* (special braided bread for the Sabbath).
> (Hannah, from team feedback conversation, Term 2)

This is an example of a mini intervention that Hannah made in her *Ivrit* lesson. Here she is linking the word *melach* (salt) of the Dead Sea in Israel to the *melach* that is put on the *challa* (special plaited bread) on the Sabbath eve during *Kiddush*. This is an excellent example of a quick and simple integration between Jewish blessings and Modern Hebrew.

> I think most children are making connections, thinking about *shorashim*, thinking about the words. I'm conscious in thinking constantly about the children who don't, so it's just something we need to think about. Because I want all my children to feel safe about it and not worry and not understand, do you know what I mean? Because some concepts are difficult to understand. How "I live" is connected to the strangers.
> (Gila, team feedback conversation, Term 2)

In this extract, Gila is aware that *most* of her learners are making connections to Biblical Hebrew and that they are "thinking about" the root letters. However, she is concerned about those learners who are not able to make these connections so easily and she wants to ensure they feel "safe" in her lessons. Ensuring that learning activities for all learners is accessible is vital and is a universal concern for all those involved in teaching. Reading between the lines, I suspect that this comment was prompted by the fact that Gila taught a very difficult concept in her lesson. This was to find the connection between the word "stranger" and the verb "to live" both of which derive from the same root letters. Gila provided some excellent examples from the Bible, which talks of the stranger, but understanding the connection between that and *live* is difficult, even for adults.

G: I think the children also, understand that words from the siddur or the *Tanach* (Bible) and modern *Ivrit* come from *shoresh*, they understand that and they independently now trying to find, and sometimes there's a hit and sometimes there's a miss, sometimes they ask me, oh does that come from that *shoresh*, *alef, chaf, lamed*, and I said, no this one is written with *chet*, but well done for trying…

J: Because they're becoming investigators, they're detectives.

G: Exactly, so what they, they're constantly thinking about that link, which is really nice. And independently trying to find the *shoresh*.

J: So, when we come to this. What skills and understandings do you think they've acquired? During this process. What skills?

S: So, definitely the ability to investigate some shorashim.

J: So identify shorashim. Definitely, I would say, it was the main skill that we gave them and that was the key to opening up the connection, right?

S: Your focus group has really, the groups that you have taken out, have definitely got more out of it and they have definitely got the links more.

J: Sure, because they've had more intensives.

S: But then, what's beautiful is they share back to the rest of the class.
(Final team feedback conversation, Term 3)

This extract from Term Three highlights the teachers' perceptions of their children's abilities and competencies. The words that 'spring out' at me are *independently*, *trying, constantly thinking about*, *investigating*, *shoresh* and *definitely got the links more.* These illustrate that most learners have to a great extent acquired the skills and understandings that this research project has endeavoured to instil. Suzy is correct that the children whom I took out in the focus groups have benefited the most from the research and the interventions. These children have brought back their knowledge to the class and shared it with their classmates.

It took the children no time to work out the root letters.
Children greeted Jo-Ann in *Ivrit* and with a smile and seemed very happy to embark on this lesson's task. Yet again it was great to see how enthusiastic and cooperative and engaged the children were.
Children were active learners and fully understood the concept of linking modern *Ivrit* to JS. They loved searching for other words with this *shoresh*.
Discussions and searching for words in pairs was very successful. Children seemed to particularly enjoy doing the work together, in pairs.
(Hannah, reflective sheet, Term 3)

Hannah's description of her lesson corresponds very closely to my observation notes. This was another industrious, positive and active learning environment. Children again worked in *chavruta*, which as Hannah commented, was highly successful and enjoyable. When Hannah asked the class towards the end of the lesson, why she was bringing in the concept of the *sofer* (*Torah* scribe) into her *Ivrit* lessons, a child answered: "We are linking

Jewish Studies with *Ivrit* wherever possible". It must be noted that this child was a member of one of my focus groups.

> I was pleased that the children remembered some of the links we have learnt during the year. They felt more confident to contribute to the lesson as they were familiar with the order and the steps of the lesson. They understand what shoresh is and how to find it in different words.
>
> I thought the lesson went well. This process has helped me grow as an *Ivrit* teacher and I felt excited.
> I understand the importance of linking modern *Ivrit* and Biblical *Ivrit*, I feel more confident to link and teach Jewish studies in my lessons. It's extremely important to cross curricular these two subjects.
> (Gila, reflective sheet, Term 3)

Before moving on to the new key word and root letters for this lesson, Gila began by revising all the four different *shorashim* (roots) the class had learned over the year. It was gratifying for both Gila and me that the children remembered them and the words that were made from the letters in both Modern and Biblical Hebrew. This was testament to the fact that the intervention had worked and that Gila's excellently planned, well-researched and executed lessons had made a significant contribution to enhancing the children's understanding of Hebrew. Gila now appreciates the importance of linking these two areas of the curriculum and she now has more confidence in her ability to teach aspects of JS in her lessons.

> Very funny – mind set in planning and mind set in the teaching – being anxious unnecessarily in the teaching. There was no reason to be feeling anxious, what would they get from it? But in fact they got a lot out of it. They knew what *etz* (tree) is and when I said *Tu* – they said *Tu Bishvat* (festival of the trees) and *chaim* (life) – from Fiddler on the Roof. I was worrying that there wouldn't be enough Modern Hebrew connections.
> (Suzy, final reflective sheet, Term 3)

Suzy's comments above shed some light on the amount of professional and personal stress she was under at the time of this observation. Her workload was huge and her son was getting married that weekend. In order to alleviate some of these pressures, we worked together to find some simple links to Modern Hebrew emanating from what would be her normal lesson that she would be teaching at that time. As it happened she managed to deliver an excellent lesson where she managed to create very natural links to Modern Hebrew. The children did know more than she expected and they did "get a lot out of it". I think this proved to Suzy that she didn't need to worry as much as she did.

Before moving onto the next theme, namely, the evolution of the team, I would first like to offer some concluding remarks regarding the growth and development of the individual. I analysed this first from their personal perspectives by looking at their reflections of their journeys. I provided evidence to show that despite it being challenging in many different ways; they emerged the other side enriched and accomplished. I am reminded at this time

by what Yalom (2005) points out about life journeys that we should live our lives to the full and we should not leave any unlived life behind.

The second perspective examined their growth and development as professionals. I examined the strategies and techniques they employed to teach the new integrative framework and provided evidence to support the fact that they were able to reflect upon their practice and the process of learning undertaken by their children.

5.3.2.1.2   Evolution of the Team

In this section, I will be analysing and providing evidence for the development of the team and the nature of the *collaboration* between the JS and Ivrit departments. I have presented this in a loose chronological order so that the development can be seen.

Thereafter, I will examine the *impact* that the team has had on the wider school community, including succession planning.

1   Collaboration

> *J: So, are you feeling okay?*
>
> I'm feeling okay. I might ask you, I might go to Suzy even if she has more the knowledge.
>
> *J: That means you are working together…*(H: she can contribute to words, with links). *But don't forget, she's teaching Ivrit as well, so, even though I'm only seeing it from the Jewish studies side, she's teaching Ivrit, so she needs to know this anyway, nachon (correct)?*
>
> Exactly. And she speaks *Ivrit.*
> (Hannah, feedback conversation, Term 1)

> The liaison between JS teacher and myself takes place mainly before and immediately after the observations and not on a regular basis.
> (Hannah, reflection sheet, Term 1)

These two extracts show that Hannah has started to meet with Suzy to discuss their observations. The collaboration is still in the infancy stage and does not take place regularly. Hannah (in her role as *Ivrit* coordinator) and Suzy meet regularly for *Ivrit* planning as Suzy started to teach one class of *Ivrit* this year. According to Belbin, a high performing team is dependent on all the team members having knowledge of each other (Belbin, 2010, p.97).

The context for what follows is Gila felt that she had given the children too much information in the lesson I observed.

> *J: Ok so next time, if that's how you're feeling, I didn't feel that particularly, but if you feel that then maybe don't give as much next time.*
>
> It all depends on the *shoresh* as well, there might be a *shoresh* where I will ask Suzy and she will say "you know what, they should know this because we've worked on this story or…"
>
> *J: And that's the key actually, Gila you really need to be checking with Suzy and that she needs to be checking with you so there is more of collaboration.*
>
> That's right because last time we did the *gadol* (big), it was *Yom Kippur*, they worked on the big fish, that story, so they could relate to it, they were more enthusiastic, so I think if I can find something that… you know.
>
> *J: And then all you do is you need to have a few minutes conversation with Suzy and that is the beautiful thing about it because you are all working to the same goal. There should be no competition, holding back of information because… (G: no), what I'm saying is that you're all working to the same goal which is to impact on their Hebrew.*
>
> And it's nice, it makes us a team.
> (Gila, feedback, Term 1)

I felt that Gila and Suzy should be meeting more to discuss their respective topics. I learned however from this conversation, that they were indeed meeting and discussing the JS topics the children should know. I was keen to emphasise the point that collaboration between the teachers was the key to this project succeeding. Gila acknowledged that this was "nice" and "it makes us a team". This was the first time I heard the word team which was a very important development and one of my goals for this project.

> G: And we're making also the effort to see what is Suzy teaching in Jewish studies, it's very important for you to know that…
>
> *J: Absolutely…*
>
> G: …and we haven't done that this year…
>
> *J: Yes, that's what I'm understanding. It's not happening as much as you would perhaps like it to happen.*
>
> G: Yeah.
>
> S: Yeah.
>
> G: And then if I knew, I know we've got a table and we've got roughly what the topic is, but it's nice to talk to you and say, you know what we did yesterday, whatever, and then I can see if I can naturally put it into whatever we're doing. (Gila talking to Suzy)
> (Suzy and Gila, joint feedback, Term 2)

The conversation above took place in February 2015 and it shows that the team had not yet managed to meet to discuss their JS and *Ivrit* topics. Gila was keen to make sure that I knew they were making the effort to meet. Gila understands the benefits of meeting with Suzy so that she can make mini-interventions ("naturally put it into whatever we're doing").

Below is a continuation of this joint feedback conversation. I felt it necessary to reemphasise the importance of their working together as a team. Also, I wanted to encourage them to work more independently and to use each other as a resource. Gila acknowledges that things will "fizzle" out if they do not keep on top of it, as the reality of school life gets in the way.

J: You've got dates, please before you come to me share your ideas and then come back to me. I don't actually need to see your connections, really. You need to do it yourselves, you know? And with Hannah. The three of you should be sitting together and looking beyond your lessons. That will be a major achievement to have Jewish studies and Ivrit departments actually working together.

G: I think we have to do it, we do have, it does fizzle out if you don't keep on top of it, if someone doesn't say, "Right, we need to meet. When can you meet?" And because school life is so busy-
(Gila, joint feedback, Term 2)

The extract below is from a team meeting that occurred over a month after the meeting above. This is probably one of the most significant conversations we had regarding the notion of bringing the two departments closer. Suzy saw an opportunity to include the *Ivrit* department and ran with it.

S: That was because I felt as a class teacher in the past we have always left out the *Ivrit* department during Book Week, Arts Week and I feel that why should they be missing out on it, they are part of the school community and we should find a link so that it makes it easier and with *Purim* it was very, very easy and there was absolutely no reason why we shouldn't include the *Ivrit* department.

H: And the children were feeling so comfortable, I was so happy with this, we did it, I think we run the lesson together for Year Three. It was like a last minute change but it's something that was really to do with that...

J: So, that was my question, so do you think because of your participation in this project that you wanted to create that link or do you think it would have happened anyway even if we weren't doing this?

S: I think it's made me more aware that, it isn't the *Ivrit* department, the JS department and the teachers and the cross curricular teachers, we have to start thinking as one, if this is really going to work then throughout the school then there has to be this idea that we're one so that all the teaching can happen, that's why I think it's quite good that I've been because as a class teacher I've given a different perspective to the… and not as a non–*Ivrit* speaker, I mean I can read and write as you know, but I'm a non-*Ivrit* speaker, so in that perspective, I think it has been very important for us to see where my own professional development has taken place and it has made me more aware that it shouldn't be the *Ivrit* department, the JS department, the teachers, it has to be a… there has to be a link, you know. And the link should happen within the displays.

J: It's a very good place for it to happen.

S: Because the displays it doesn't take much, ok, if I'm not sure how to spell a word, I ask H or I ask G, you know, I find a way of making sure that I've spelt the word correctly, but its just one or two words around the school make the children feel, aah that's the link with *Ivrit*, but hold on a second, but that's a maths board, but you know.

J: So, you're not just doing it across JS and 'Ivrit' now, it's even going across the disciplines.

H: I also feel if I can say something important that it made an effect on my relationship with S.

J: In what way?

H: I feel like she's the one we can go to if we have something to ask about JS or she's always happy to give us information if we need to.

G: There's good communication between us.

J: So, this has improved?

G: Before we didn't have any.

J: In the first term it wasn't so great, but this second term, there has been an improvement, which is really very, very important.

G: Very important.

H: Suzy is really enthusiastic always to tell me what she's doing and all that, so…

S: I share my plans, I show Hannah, I show Natan who teaches the other *Ivrit* lesson, I make sure I share my plans with him, so we know what we're teaching. So, I think that's very important that we have an idea of what we are all doing because by doing that we can be more aware and ...

G: Of making the links

S: Of making the links

G: Of finding the links

J: I don't know if you remember right at the beginning I said, ultimately, what you could be doing is getting all these lesson plans *that you are doing anyway with these little links and sharing them so you're actually have a …, you know what each of you are teaching at some point in the year, so you've always got those links. So, you will build up a repertoire of these links and of the words and the 'shorashim'.*

J: Gila, are you finding you're part of this little group of working together, do you also share your lesson plans more now, is that working or do you like it to be better?

G: We speak together before an observation with you, it's not like a regular sharing, but I will before the observation with you, I will say to Suzy, this is what I'm teaching can you see anything that jumps onto you, that you can share with me, that you've taught the children I can relate or... you know what I mean, and when Suzy was about *chalom (dream)*, so yeah, I feel comfortable to.

J: Yeah, it's beginning to start, ok.

S: That conversation's also happening.

J: That's very important because to me this was one of the probably the most important thing is to start having these conversations and not keeping the different departments separate, in other words there is a lot of cross fertilization, so I think that's the only way that it can work.
(Team feedback, Term 2)

Another interesting point to mention is that Suzy with her unique position as class teacher, JS and *Ivrit* teacher is the one to initiate this change. She has more of a 'bird's eye view' and is able to see things more objectively, she has been "given a different perspective" as a class teacher. Her use of words and phrases such as "part of", "include", "start thinking as one", "this idea that we're one", "shouldn't be the *Ivrit* department, the JS department", "there has to be a link" all demonstrate her vision she has for the school, that of more integration and not just between the two departments but also cross-curricula. The latter part of this conversation shows that whilst Hannah and Suzy seem to be enjoying a close working relationship, it is not happening to such a degree between Gila and Suzy.

JS teacher and myself exchanged info. on what each of us has been teaching during the lessons leading to this observation.

JS teacher made a link to these key words too which was fantastic!

The liaison between JS teacher and myself is becoming more intense, especially around festivals topics and we share activities and plan accordingly. This time it was for *Shavuot* and the link of the number seven to the name of the festival.

Meetings between JS staff and *Ivrit* staff - although now take place more than before but still very occasionally (mainly to do with the *chagim* - festivals) and not on a regular basis.
(Hannah, reflection sheet, Term 3)

This extract highlights the close relationship that has developed between Hannah and Suzy. The impact that this is having on Hebrew teaching and learning is that both teachers are making links to each other's key words, so the learners are receiving double reinforcement.

H: The only minor thing I can say is when you find really nice link and you do it in this particular lesson, but then I'm asking myself, how is it going to help if they don't never do it in Jewish studies because it's not in the curriculum or, so, are they going to remember that because it's not reinforced on both sides? And every link that you can do is something they can learn in…

J: However, if you do share your lesson plans, then Suzy will see that you used that link. Even, so she'll be aware, even, so if you know what I mean, you've got to kind of make a memory, put it in your diary, ah, this has been made in Ivrit, Suzy will note it, it might not come up for a while, but, so it doesn't have to be…
H: Although it's not in Suzy's curriculum.

S: Another thing that we can do is if we create a folder on the network where we can put a word bank, and we can add the words.

H: Anything that we use we can use…

J: Absolutely, so it's about an awareness of what you are, what links you are making…that's a brilliant suggestion.

H: I think we should be *tachlis* and say exactly when are we going to do that. The worst thing, and I'm not saying it's like, it's the nature of many places, also we do this and we do that and we don't and I think because of all the…

S: Is it at the end of every half term or the beginning of the term? The pressure isn't so much at the end, we can reflect on all our plans and say these are the words that we've used, and then we put them on to the…

H: So if we come now at the beginning of September, the term, do you think maybe we should do it during the first week, we go on the computer whenever we can and we put everything that we've used so far.

G: Definitely

S: Yeah, and we can build on it.

G: I feel that Hebrew and Jewish Studies are now connected, where it wasn't before. So I do feel, and just to reinstate what Hannah said, reinforce, I do go to Suzy, Suzy is very approachable, what do you think about this? So, I'm consciously thinking, and also it made me realize that I enjoy Jewish studies, you know I enjoy teaching it as well, it's part of *Ivrit*.
(Final team feedback conversation, Term 3)

The earlier section of this extract shows how the teachers are thinking about practical ways of sharing material and links. They are beginning to work as a team. The end reveals that Gila feels that the two departments are now connected. She also speaks about Suzy in very positive terms and that she realises that she actually enjoys Jewish studies and that "it's part of *Ivrit*". Gila has fully taken on this concept of integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew as has been noted in earlier sections.

I have provided evidence that shows a group of individual teachers who at the start of this research process went about their normal day-to-day tasks but as the research progressed they became part of a team with a joint purpose and vision. Jaques et al (2007, p.4) distinguish between the terms groups and teams, where they refer to the former as people coming "together to share knowledge or to learn from each other [...]" and the latter where they engage "in a task with a plan, product or decision as the end point".

Their definition applies aptly to what our team has undergone over these past few years. The teachers came together and we devised a plan to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew and set about putting that plan in action. Using Belbin's sporting metaphor, I, the manager/coach, brought a group of individual players together to embark upon a mission. We had a game plan and each member of the team took on a specific position and had a specific role.

The skills of each individual player are important, but as Belbin argues, the strength of the team depends on how well the players work together. He also sees the knowledge of each player of one another as indispensable (2010, p.97). To Belbin the "essence of a team is a set of players who have a reciprocal part to play, and who are dynamically engaged with one another" (2010, p.98).

I feel that at the end of the research process, the team had won several important matches but the road to winning the tournament was still in front of them.

I would now like to move on to the next sub-theme that of impact.

2   Impact

The extracts that follow give the reader an understanding of the different ways the team impacted upon the wider school community whilst participating in the research project.

Impact on cross-curricula activities

> And, also, I liked, I wanted to focus on *v'ahavta (and you shall love)*, okay, from the *shema*, and the v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha *(And you shall love your neighbour as yourself)*, which I think the concept of it is…
>
> *J: Is wonderful.*
>
> …it's really good and we work a lot on spiritual, moral and all this, so *v'ahavta l'reiacha kamocha*, and what does it exactly mean, and "you should love your friend like yourself". And then there was a discussion, which I thought it went…
> (Hannah, feedback, Term 1)

This brief extract is interesting in that Hannah already in the first term is connecting to issues beyond the Hebrew language. She was looking at the root letters that make up the verb *to love* and she used this very familiar quote from the Bible (Leviticus 19:18) incorporating the word *love*. She asked the children what it meant to *love your friend as you love yourself*. I noted some of the answers the children gave in the lesson: "Respect your friend", "Be kind, be nice, welcome them" and "Treat them the way you wanted to be treated". Thus, the beauty of this was that out of one Modern Hebrew word Hannah was able to connect it to a Biblical quote and then went further by entering into a conversation about it with the children. As Hannah said this fitted well with the *spiritual*, *moral*, *social and cultural development* of the children as stipulated in the National Curriculum. This is a fine example of 'added value' that this project has created.

Impact on other members of staff

> S: And for me as a class teacher as well as an *Ivrit* teacher I find that I'm slipping it into everything, not just JS and *Ivrit*, like you saw with the *Purim* display, that was a display about Arts Week, but it lent itself and I wanted to make sure that the *Ivrit* was there and the connections between *Ivrit* and JS and the curriculum was there to change the mind set of other teachers, that they see it, then they might start doing it as well.
>
> H: It was amazing, it was Suzy's initiative. We had our lesson plan and then she comes and said no, let's do …
>
> *J: So, you're not just doing it across JS and Ivrit now, it's even going across the disciplines.*
>
> S: But I think...
>
> *J: Which is an amazing thing, because this is really important, Ofsted will go wow, wow, wow.*
>
> G: It's not happening in the school yet (*no*), but it's happening with Suzy, I think the children in her class are very lucky because they're getting that connection in every aspect of the curriculum.
>
> S: As Hannah says, it's small steps, but this is where I see it going, this is the bigger picture.
> (Team feedback, Term 2)

I shared a different aspect of this extract earlier when I was examining the development of the team. Suzy was arguing that there was no reason why the *Ivrit* department should not be included in cross curricula events. What is interesting from these extracts is that I can see the impact the research project has had on Suzy's professional practice. It is as though she is looking at the school through new lenses; she wants to use these opportunities of integration and involvement of the *Ivrit* department as a catalyst for change for other members of staff so that they too can see the benefits of integrating JS and *Ivrit*. She has a vision for the school and she has become an agent of change.

Gila, however, brings a touch of reality, as she maintains that these changes are not happening in the school quite yet, but rather with Suzy and her class.

> S: I feel that we should be, have training here. You should be part of our CPD here. In order for the school to, the whole school, to take on the idea of it, because even non-Jewish teachers pick up words in *Ivrit*, and if they understand the link, that there are links between Hebrew and the *Torah*, then that's very important for them. Because for the teachers to understand, for the non-Jewish teachers to understand that there's a link. They're not in JS, and they don't listen to the JS lesson, they're not in *Ivrit*.
> (Suzy, joint feedback, Term 2)

Suzy is adamant that in order for the whole school to "take on the idea" of making links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew, all members of staff, Jewish and non-Jewish, should participate in training that would help them to understand the importance of it. Again, we see Suzy taking on this role of change agent.

> *J: Okay, so the school community. Is there anything more, I mean, you said about the linking and the, you know, in the hall and bringing it out in a display form, etc., is there anything else that you feel that this has impacted in terms of the school community? It can be people, things, whatever.*
>
> G: Well, I wrote I didn't know about, well I knew about the Purim, but I just didn't think about it, so I wrote it hasn't impacted yet, but it has the potential to impact, I feel that more members of the staff should be aware of what we've done this year.
>
> S: I think all the Jewish members of staff should be. They need to be fed back with what we're doing.
>
> H: Maybe you are the one person to come and talk about, maybe Jo-Ann…
>
> S: They've kind of been isolated from it, and I feel because of that, there's no interest, and it's a difficult thing, because like when I said to the teachers, put some *Ivrit* in there, I think maybe two or three teachers took it on board but the rest kind of not.
>
> G: I think they need more guidance.
>
> S: They do.
>
> H: One thing I started with the teachers, but I think it has been neglected a little bit that—I don't know if you were there at the meeting where I gave a list of words in *Ivrit* for the teachers to use in the class. So, some of the teachers came to me and said, I'm using it and I love it, or it takes time, or we just use this word or two words. I haven't heard from all the teachers, and I didn't chase teachers, but I think something like that, we can continue.

> G: Yeah, so, as opposed to a list, tell them, speak to them, like, let's concentrate on one word or two words. And slowly build up, so, say, once a month, we add another word. So carry on using the *slicha* (excuse me) and *b'vakasha* (please/thank you). Let's add *metzuyan* (excellent) and whatever.
> (Final team feedback, Term 3)

Gila believes that the research project has the potential to impact more on the school community if members of staff are made aware of what the team had undertaken. Suzy believes as they were not part of the research project they do not have any interest in it and any attempts made by her to encourage them to include a few words of Hebrew here and there have not been overly successful. The team then discusses various ways in which they can help staff acquire more Hebrew.

Impact on Parents

> S: Because, for example, we've had *Kabbalat Shabbat* and we've been inviting parents to the school. Okay? That was lovely. *The Headteacher* wanted to progress it on to something else and she asked me to create a booklet. Okay? Of the prayers that we do. So now, as I'm using that booklet, I'm seeing that there's faults in it, and I'm already trying to change the booklet to make it better. Right? So the booklet for the parents to use, not for the children to use. Right? It's that kind of awareness that we need to create amongst the staff so that they can, so-
>
> S: I've had parents that said, "Can we have *birkat hamazon (grace after meals)*? Can we have- they're actually asking me"
> (Joint feedback, Term 2)

These two short extracts above demonstrate that the research project is now beginning to impact on the parents in a small way too. Suzy was asked to produce a *Kabbalat Shabbat* (welcoming the *Shabbat*) booklet for the parents so they could follow the service with their children. However, since the research, Suzy has been looking at everything afresh and realised that what she had created contained some mistakes – the booklets do not include all the prayers nor do they have page numbers. Little things like these have become important to Suzy. There seems to be a need for coherence and integration in all aspects of the school's life. Some parents also asked Suzy if they could have a *grace after meals* booklet. It is clear that the research has begun to impact further afield.

Impact on future

The following extract is a discussion that took place regarding ways in which the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew could continue in the future after I had left.

S: I'm just thinking outside of the box because we've done a lot of policies. Is this something that has to be included in the policies?

J: It could be a policy

S: Because if it's part of the policies or an appendix within the policies.

G: It needs to be added.

S: It needs to be added, because then in that way it is something that if it becomes part of the policy then you would do it.

J: Ok, so that is a very pragmatic way of doing it and actually I think that's an excellent idea. So you have to speak to the Head teacher about actually saying, the three of you going to the Head teacher and saying we want this to continue the only way that this can really continue is that it is part of a policy of the school that we create more of an integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. And you can help them with certain practical steps for that to happen. I think that is an excellent idea.

G: And that's nice because that paragraph will be in the *Ivrit* paper and in the JS.

J: And it will also be when the Head teacher talks about the school, about the prospectus, and the philosophy of CT is that we make the connections between B and MH so it helps our children have a deeper understanding of the Hebrew they are learning in both spheres. Can you imagine?
(Joint feedback, Term 2)

Suzy's suggestion that this integration become part of the school policy was a very practical and realistic way for continuing. I had a final meeting with the Headteacher, in August and I brought this suggestion up with her. She was very open about the idea and it was just a matter of finding the right way to include this. She felt that perhaps it did not need to be a policy as such by rather "be sort of pedagogy in relation to Hebrew and Jewish Studies, an appendix of the Hebrew policy, rather than a separate one". She thought it also important to involve the rabbi who was on the Governing Body to "get on board" with it as well. She had no doubt of the teachers' "passion for it and the fact that they were so positive about it and for the fact that they, I mean in a way if they didn't want to move it on it would almost have been a pointless exercise just to do it".

The following extract is taken from the final team feedback conversation in July.

J: So, a very practical thing that was suggested. The idea would be to continue what you've been doing with this Year Three when they move up to Year Four. Just carry on with it.

S: Sure.

J: And to get it, to use the framework when you need it, to use the methodologies, the approaches, you don't have to use stock, lock, and barrel, that framework, but the ideas around it, the methodology. And then you're also saying, perhaps, to bring in the Year Two into Year Three and to, so in other words you've only taught Year Three, you know what you teach there. So you can repeat it with those Year Three. You don't have to do anything more. For the new Year Fours, you might have to do a little more, more complex, but they already know it, it's a little easier. So you have, in effect, next year, two groups doing it.

H: Yeah. *Nachon. Ken* (correct, yes).

J: And then what I would see that the Year Four group moves up to Year Five, they continue.

> *So you are building not from top, bottom to top, top to bottom, you're actually growing from the inside, which is Year Three to both sides.*
>
> G: Can you imagine what Year Four will be by the end of next year if what they achieved this year, and then another year-
>
> *J: Absolutely.*
>
> *J: So, for this to continue, we've spoken about certain things. But there has to be a facility for, for this. Has to be a structure. So that's what I want you to think about: what has to be in place in order for this to happen, what is the role of the different people? What is your particular, personal role in this? What is the JSC's role? You know, the IC's role? What, think about what you're doing and where you can be in this, in this process.*
>
> S: I think one key thing, we all as teachers, we need to be given time. We all do other things besides this. I'm the ICT coordinator, I teach in class, Gila does stuff, Hannah does stuff. We're all very, very busy. But we need to be given time out of class to sit together.
>
> S: If we have Simone on board, then there will be the enthusiasm that we need and a lot more, because she's been through it in a different way, and her enthusiasm will be great because when you've got, and she will encourage the other Jewish teachers who teach Jewish studies lower down the school just to introduce it at the lower level. We're not asking them to bring *shoresh*, but they can say, "What does *tov* mean? *Tov* means good." At a very basic level lower down the school they will have that already.
> (Final team feedback, Term 3)

What is significant about this extract is that the teachers themselves had decided that they wanted to continue with the integration into the following year and they came up with the idea of how to do it in a practical and easy way. I was keen to get them to start thinking about what needed to be in place for this to happen and who would be the key members of the staff who could help move this forward. It became clear that what the teachers needed more than anything was time out of class to sit together to plan. The other key point was that Simone needed to be brought on board. With her enthusiasm she could encourage the JS teachers lower down in the school to start to introduce some basic Modern Hebrew to the younger classes.

I was very pleased to hear the Headteacher make the following comment:

> And what I think is probably I would like to have a meeting with them once, set up meetings with them once a month so that I can talk to them with how it's going generally with *Ivrit* and Jewish studies, perhaps we can have a shared meeting. Um, because it is about the manageability of it and you know it's making sure, so I think it was great that you observed them because as you said I think that helped develop them professionally.

I have given the reader a glimpse of the impact that the team has had beyond the Year Three and other classes. I examined four different areas which have been impacted already by the research project, namely, *cross-curricular* activities, other members of the Clore Tikva *staff*, the *parents* and finally the *future* continuation of the integration.

Without the team, this research could not and would not have happened. All three teachers took a leap of faith with me and together we embarked on an incredible journey. It is therefore apt now to enter into the world of the learners and gain an insight into the impact the research has had on them.

5.3.2.2 Learning

The two main themes that I will be analysing from the learners' perspective are *acquiring Hebrew* and *meaning making*.

The first theme will analyse what *helps* the acquisition of Hebrew. Within this, I will examine the many different strategies and techniques the learners themselves and I employed to aid their understanding and mastery of skills. I will also analyse what factors *hinder* the acquisition process.

The second theme will examine the meanings the learners have attributed to their Hebrew learning.

Again, I have put my initial before any questions or comments I have made and have put these in italics. I have included the actual language the children have spoken: it is a window to their world and gives a sense of verisimilitude.

5.3.2.2.1 Acquiring Hebrew: Factors That Help Acquisition

Below are some examples of the different strategies and techniques that the learners used to acquire Hebrew or I used to aid this process.

1 Lesson recall

> *Excellent, okay. So what do you think the main idea of Hannah's Ivrit lesson was today? Think a bit before you answer. Do you know? What was the main idea? Yes?*
>
> Well, the main answer is basically that you can learn something from your *siddur* not just reading from it.
>
> *J: What can you learn from your siddur? What specifically?*
>
> You can learn that you can see words that you never noticed before. Through the root letters.
>
> *J: Through the root letters, thank you. H, do you want to add something to that, what do you think Hannah's idea about her lesson was today? The main idea.*
>
> Um, so, you can't just learn your *siddur* from Jewish Studies, you can learn from *Ivrit* as well.

> *J: Right, so you can look at the siddur not just in Jewish studies and assemblies, you can also learn from it in your Ivrit lessons. Okay. Anything else that think about the main, yes?*
>
> Um, I think the main idea was really to help us know the link between Jewish studies and Hebrew.
>
> *J: In what way? What is the main idea…?*
>
> In the root letters way.
>
> *J: Okay, so you've said that the main idea was to know that there is a link in the Hebrew between what?*
>
> The Biblical Hebrew.
> *J: The Biblical Hebrew, and…?*
>
> The *Ivrit* that we learn.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 1)

I asked this question, as I wanted to ascertain to what extent the learners had grasped the main idea (enduring understanding) of the lesson they had just had with Hannah, namely that there is a link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. It was also an opportunity to reinforce this EU through questioning and probing. Each of the ten focus group interviews started with this question.

2   Concepts

> It's like a game of hide and seek, except with *Ivrit* letters.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 1)
>
> It's like a word search!
> It is, a bit.
> It's a root letter word search.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 3)
>
> I think it was easy cos that worksheet we had all we really had to do was find the three letters and put them in them things, it was kind of like word search and word searches are easy.
> (Suzy's FG, Term 1)

> *J: All right. So. Okay. Excellent. Once you've done that, I'm going to give you a biggie, biggie challenge like last time. A biggie challenge, and I wonder if you're going to be able to do it, guys. The big challenge is, I've put in, like last time, I gave you all words that you did over the whole year, all the different words, and I want you to find the root letters of these words.*
> I spy! I'm good at that!
> (Suzy's FG, Term 4)

During each focus group, I prepared an exercise for the children which involved them looking and circling the three root letters within various words and phrases from Biblical and Modern Hebrew that the teacher had just taught in the lesson. In each subsequent focus group, the exercise included the previous lesson observation's words plus the new ones that had just been taught, thus accumulating knowledge. The four examples above demonstrate how the learners use familiar concepts to aid their understanding of this activity, such as. 'word searches', 'I spy' and 'hide and seek', but with Hebrew root letters.

> *J: Sofer, okay don't worry about "stam." But "sofer" means a scribe. So, from the word "sefer," which means "book," to the word "sofer," which means "scribe," what is the connection between sofer and sefer? Why, why do they share the same root letters? Why are they similar? Go on, K.*
>
> Um, um, they're similar because they've got the same root letters, and also, sofer *stam*, *stam* sounds like stem.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 3)

> *J: Okay. So, yes A? The role of the root letters, what is it?*
>
> I'm just saying that, in English, would it, is it going to be like, E, J, G, and M?
> (Suzy's FG, Term 4)

Here both children use English concepts to aid their understanding of the Hebrew. In the first extract, K likens the Hebrew word *stam* from *sofer stam*[62] with the English word *stem*. This is a useful technique to recall certain words. I remember many years ago I was teaching a group of ten or eleven year olds the Hebrew names for different fruit and vegetables. We came to *afarsek,* (peach) which is quite a hard word to remember. Then one child said it sounds like "I feel sick" and from that day on he always remembered the word *afarsek*. I saw him a few months back (he was about twenty years old) and we joked about this and he still remembered the word!

The second example is the learner's way to understand the concept of the Hebrew root letters, which are always consonants, by likening them to English consonants.

> *J: Eretz (land of..), ok, so we didn't say eretz, if I was to say artzot habrit (USA). Brit means covenant, union, the United States of America, you know the 50 states...*
>
> I know another kind of word *brit*, when you've just been born and it's a Jewish boy....when the boy's 8 days old.
> (Suzy's FG, Term 1)

This is an example of a learner applying a Hebrew word to something else using the same word. Here he is referring to *brit mila*, which literally means the *covenant of circumcision*, and is the ceremony marking the circumcision of an eight-day-old Jewish boy.

---

[62] The full phrase is *Sofer ST"M – a scribe of ST"M*, with ST"M being an acronym for **S**efer Torah (Torah),**T**efillin (phylacteries, cube-shaped black leather boxes, containing four scriptural passages, attached to the head and arm and worn during the morning prayers) and **M**ezuza (a special case affixed to the doorposts of Jewish homes, containing parchment inscribed by a *sofer* with the inscription: "The words that I shall tell you this day": that you shall love your God, believe only in God, keep God's commandments, and pass all of this on to your children.
http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tefillin-phylacteries/ and
http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/mezuzah/ (accessed 8 February 2016).

3   Previous knowledge

J: Okay, M, what other words have you been hearing that go in both-

You could hear *shalom* in *Shabbat Shalom* when we were in Year One and we would do *Shabbat Shalom* in *Shabbat* topic.

J: Aah, excellent. Okay, so in Gila's class, she would say "Shalom yeladim, ma shlomchem?" (hello children, how are you?)

Tov todah (good thanks).

J: Yofi. (lovely!) And then you'd go into Mrs. C's class and she'll say "Shabbat Shalom!" So you'll hear the same word, which is?

Shalom!
(Gila's FG, Term 1)

This example demonstrates the important role previous knowledge plays in language acquisition. Here a child refers back to Year One when he/she first remembered the word *shalom* from a particular Hebrew programme the children were learning at that time.

4   Questions

What does Biblical mean?

J: Right. Biblical means old Hebrew. That we find in the Bible, in the Torah. Okay?

Isn't the Bible Christian?

J: There's a Hebrew Bible as well, the Jewish Bible.
(Gila's FG, Term 1)

Asking questions is a very important learning strategy that children use to understand difficult concepts.

5   Triggers

Olam!

Olam?

J: No, no. Shabbat shalom. No, Shabbat shalom.

Olam?

J: Olam, no that's not the same word we're talking about.

(Children singing "*Gesher tsar me'od*" in background)
(Gila's FG, Term 2)

Here the children are hearing one word, *shalom*, but it can sound similar to another word, *olam* (world) due to some similar letters. What is interesting here is that the children pick up on the wrong word and it triggers them to start singing a well-known Hebrew song that incorporates this word. The first line of this song is "*kol ha'olam kulo gesher tsar me'od*" (the whole world is a narrow bridge).

6　Logic

> Well, today's lesson was like, what we were just talking about, finding root letters in like a couple sentences was easy because all I did was I put my finger on the first line and I was like, "Ooh, found one," and then I went to the next line and found one, and I went to the next line and found two, and then to the next line and found one, and I went to the last line and found one, and then I just underlined them.
>
> *J: So you found that easy?*
>
> Yeah. And then I like did a square on them and then, then, Hannah said to underline the root letters. And then I looked at the one that had "*mem, lamed, mem, daled*" and I was like, "That isn't right, we're not supposed to include the first *mem*," but then after that, literally like two seconds, she said, "Oh, we can't include ones that aren't in the right order."
>
> *J: So you found that easy, yeah? Well done. A, what did you find easy today about your lessons?*
>
> Finding the words with the root letters in, because when Hannah wrote the root letters on the board, she wrote *lamed, mem, daled*, all I had to keep repeating those three letters in my head, and I would read, I was looking for those words, and then I just came up, I just found loads of words with-
>
> *J: That had those three root letters, excellent.*
>
> Yeah. In the right order.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 2)

> Can I tell you how it gives me like a clue? I think the easiest part of telling what it was cos you know when you write right to left. These words are right to left, so the connecting (J: the root letters), the root letters are all together.
>
> *J: Not all the time, in this case yes, but if you looked over here, you would find that this word you've got another letter in between.*
> (Suzy's FG, Term 1)

These examples show how the learners are using their logical parts of their brains to understand that the three root letters need to be in a specific order and that there cannot be four letters that make up this three root letter word. Furthermore, they understand that Hebrew is written from right to left. It is as though they have found the formula.

7　Perseverance, Determination and Self-Belief

> In Hebrew if like you don't understand anything just try your best and eventually you carrying on doing different guesses you will eventually get it right and you will be really good at *Ivrit*.
> (Suzy's FG, Term 1)

> And when I'm happy, it's because, well, I've made my mind up, I want to think about it, because when I say I want to think about it, you do it. Because you say, like, if you were doing a picture, if they ask, that's going to be rubbish. I'm so bad at that. Obviously, it's going to be rubbish. It's going to be bad.
>
> *J: So what are you saying J?*
>
> I'm gonna do this. I'm gonna try.
>
> Um, and also, adding to J, J. Um, Mrs C (Suzy), she gave, I think at the beginning of the year or a little bit later, and Mrs C gave us all like bookmarks, and it said, "If I think I can, I will." And

> then, so, we all had that, and then there's another one on the board, but she didn't give it to us. I think it says, "If I say I can, I will do so." But I don't really remember.
>
> *J: Okay. All right. Okay. It's all about believing in yourself. Okay, M?*
>
> Also it goes with Gila's because when we did our *Chanuka* play at the end of it, we said to ourselves, like, "Stand up for what you believe in."
> (Suzy's FG, Term 4)

These two examples demonstrate how these three personal traits of perseverance, determination and self-belief can positively influence learning. The other interesting piece here is M's linking of *believing in yourself* with the festival of *Chanuka*, where the notion of 'standing up for what you believe in' is a central theme.

8   Visualising

> *J: In Biblical Hebrew and in Modern Hebrew you've got the same root letters. For example, for ohev, we've got ohev, ohevet, and ve-ahavta. So, we're seeing that Hebrew, does it just stay in one little corner?*
>
> No. It moves from this corner to that corner to everywhere.
>
> *J: Okay. And if that corner is Modern Hebrew, what is this corner?*
>
> Biblical!
>
> *J: Ah, and the centre could be? Could be the assembly, could be the siddur, yeah?*
> (Hannah's FG, Term 2)

This example shows how I was trying to get the learners to visualise how dynamic and fluid Hebrew is and that it doesn't just stay in "one corner". A child picked up on my use of metaphor and extended it and I extended it further still.

9   Humour

I believe that the use of humour can play an important role in teaching and learning. Cornett (1986, p. 8 in Banas et al, 2011) claims that humour can be a very powerful resource for the educator and has the potential to impact upon different educational outcomes, including managing behavioural problems and even facilitating foreign language acquisition. Banas argues further that humour in education can impact upon and increase motivation in learning, thus yielding positive results in the classroom. (Banas et al, 2011, p.116).

The extracts below highlight some of the quirky comments that children said. There was one child (K, in Hannah's FG) in particular who came out with very funny comments which made us all laugh. I have always used humour in my teaching; it is a powerful tool that can break down barriers and create a warm and open learning environment. I think the following extracts speak for themselves

J: Okay, so, tell me, there were some new Hebrew words or phrases that you learned. There were two new ones at the end of the lesson that Mrs C gave you that had something to do with chai (alive) and chaim (life).

Ooh!

I remember what they meant.

J: Okay, what did they mean?

Zoo.

J: All right.

Um, I think it was *gan* (park)?

J: Yes, gan.

And.

I'm kind of think it was *sha'ashuim.*

I can't get "*sha'ashuim*" out of my head!"

J: What word did you get?

"sha'ashuim"

*J: Is-*sha'ashuim*, what word was that?*

Um, garden, no, like, 'cause it's gan...

J: Oh, gan sha'ashuim *- a playground.*

I can't get it out of my head now.
(Suzy's FG, Term 4)

J: Can I just say how impressed I was that you managed to do this very hard page? I didn't think you'd do it?

Neither did I.
(From Suzy's FG, Term 3)

J: Right. What are some of the words that you've done here? Brilliant. Well done.

My brain's gonna pop.

J: No it's not. Your brain has capacity.
(Hannah's FG, Term 3)

J: You are a talmida (girl pupil)*. You're a talmid (boy pupil). What does it mean? What is a talmida? Yes, A?*

A girl.

J: A girl what? A girl pony?

Pupil, pupil!

J: Pupil. Well done.

Oooh!
(Hannah's FG, Term 3)

And, I had a dream that people were asking me questions in Hebrew and I started sleep-talking.

J: Oh! In Hebrew? Did you answer in Hebrew?

Yeah!

J: That's amazing.
(From Hannah's FG, Term 3)

Yep. It's so easy.

J: Good, I'm so pleased it's easy!

I find this easier than the last two.

J: Good! I'm very, wow, because we-

I find it easier than Year One homework.

It's easier than nursery homework.

I find it easier than one plus one.
(Hannah's FG, Term 2)

J: I want you to circle each one separately, so like that. And that. And like that. Okay? Alright? So think about what they are?

Oopsie-daisy.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: Love. When someone says "ani ohevet shokolad" what does that actually mean?

I like chocolate.

J: Great. Shokolad we know means chocolate. Ani means: I. So what does ohev/ohevet mean actually? Like. Or love. Love. Okay. So we know that ohev, those root letters in all different ways that we saw all those words written differently means something to do with. [Child: "love"] liking or [children: "loving"] loving, ok, so when we say ani ohevet Arsenal. [Children: boo and yay] Ani ohevet Spurs [Children: yay and boos]. Alright so now you know what ohev/ohevet means, it means love or like. Yes A?

What about Liverpool?

J: Liverpool, oh goodness gracious me. Okay. Alright.

Who do you like?

J: Arsenal.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: Right, so it will get you to understand more words as we did, right? K, do you think it's important to know the job of the root letters?

Yes.

J: Why? Why do you think it's important to know this job that they do?

Because if someone just told you to do it and you didn't know, it'll be like, what am I doing? What am I doing?

J: So what do those three root letters help you find out in Hebrew?

That's the hard part.

J: That's the hard part, true.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: Children, tell me, how does it make you feel when you finally find those root letters. What do you feel when you do that? O?

It, you've got that feeling, you want to say thank God.

J: Thank God! K, how you do feel when you've worked it out?

It makes you feel victorious.

J: Why victorious?

Because you find your victory.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: Joyful, okay, alright. So it was nice to be able to work them out, isn't it? It's like a little detective, investigating and looking at all these words and suddenly, oooh, they kind of, when you know what you're looking for, they suddenly jump out at you, don't they?

Yeah.

J: Right, it's almost like they are yellow, wooo, pick me, pick me because I'm your root letters!

(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: So tell me, K, how do you feel when you learn Hebrew?

Oh I kind of feel it's like … thank you, thank you cause I feel like my brain's gonna pop out cause it's just like so much.

You've got maths and English and everything popping out of your brain. It's like, how will I get this out. How will I get this out?
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

There's one language that no one has for me.

Go on.

The 'K language'.

J: I had a feeling you'd say that!
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

10   Chavruta

Chavruta is the *Aramaic* word for friendship or fellowship. It is an activity that involves a pair of students working together and helping each other to read and understand the Bible, Talmud and their commentaries. Not only does the word refer to two partners

studying together but also to the process of learning. This method of learning was first mentioned in the *Talmud* and was used extensively in the *yeshivot*[63] of Eastern Europe, particularly in Lithuania in the nineteenth century. Today *chavruta* is used in many different settings, such as the more formal contexts such as seminaries and *yeshivot* or as a way to prepare students for a subsequent lesson or as a follow-up study. These activities often take place within the *Beit Midrash*. Today we are seeing a renaissance of *chavruta* and its use in many other contexts, such as in Jewish adult education, where "more structure and scaffolding is provided by a facilitator who mays select the text for study and add study questions to help the learners" (Ruppin-Shand et al, 2012, p.511).

I observed many occasions where *chavruta* learning was taking place in all three of the teachers' lessons. Children were working in pairs and studying a particular Hebrew or Jewish text with the teacher acting as facilitator. There are many skills that *chavruta* learning can enhance: questioning, reasoning, critical thinking, listening, appreciating other views, sharing of knowledge and so on (Ruppin-Shand et al, 2012, p.511). Below is an example of *chavruta* learning that I observed in Hannah's lesson.

> *J: All right, so there was some, so you had the three root letters, and then you were following and you were finding them on the page?*
>
> Yeah. We're working in pairs, see?
>
> *J: You were working in pairs, and that helped, doesn't it? Sometimes to work together with your friends helps you as well.*
> (Hannah's FG, Term 2)

11   Guided Participation/Scaffolding

In Chapter Four I wrote about the concept of *guided participation*, which was a term that Rogoff (1990, cited in Wood, 1998, p. 101) coined to describe "non-intrusive interventions" given to learners by somebody who has already "mastered that particular function" and which Vygotsky termed as *scaffolding* (Schütz, 2004). There were many occurrences of *scaffolding* taking place during the research process, one such example is the use of *chavruta* as described above. This was evident by the help that the teachers gave to the learners in the lessons I observed. I too provided *guided participation* in the focus group sessions through giving individual attention and gentle questioning. Children also provided *scaffolding* to one another. Here are some instances of this articulated by the learners.

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[63] *Yeshiva/yeshivot (pl)*: Numerous Jewish academies of Talmudic learning, whose biblical and legal exegesis and application of Scripture have defined and regulated Jewish religious life for centuries. http://www.britannica.com/topic/yeshiva. (Accessed: 16 February 2016).

I feel when I'm doing *Ivrit*, I feel quite quiet because I just want to listen and so nobody disturbs me and I just get on with my work, but sometimes I don't really 'cause I don't really get it sometimes.

J: Okay so sometimes you don't get it, and what do you do if you don't get it, who do you ask?

Gila.

J: Okay, and then Gila will help you and when you get it how do you feel?

Confident.

J: Confident, okay, excellent. Thank you, that's a very good word. So not everything we have to know immediately, do we? With help we can learn. Exactly.
(Gila's FG, Term 1)

J: Brilliant, ok so can you just say were there any bits that you found really easy to understand today? M?

I found the part that was really easy that you had someone there for you so if you were stuck you would always have someone there to help you with.
(Suzy's FG, Term1)

J: Remember that the root letters, they have to be in order. Okay, so, H, think again, we're starting over here from this way, so think about which is the first one, it's that one, right? And then the next one is that one and that one. Do that again. Thank you very much. Well done.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

J: No, but how did you manage? Did you do it all by yourself, or did you get help?

I did it by myself.

J: And how did you do it, by..?

I did it by looking.

J: By looking! Okay.

By learning.

I actually got help, because everyone found them and then they were like, I found one, and they told me and they said what page it was, and I looked on that page.

J: Okay, so you got some help.

Um.

J: Did you get some help as well?

Well, I did it on my own, I just found it, someone told me.

J: Somebody helped you, okay.

Somebody helped. Hannah helped me.

J: So Hannah helped. That's absolutely fine. So isn't that the role of the teacher to help you when you get a little bit stuck and when things are new and a little bit difficult? True?

Like our teacher.

J: So it's fine for things to be a little bit difficult as long as you've got the help to help you, isn't it?
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

5.3.2.2.2 Acquiring Hebrew: Factors That Hinder Acquisition

I would now like to consider some of the factors that can hinder acquisition.

Uh, well, I found it easy going, uh, making the sen-, but I didn't actually find it that easy, but I found easy writing down the things when Hannah said it, because when the, when she played it on the video-

J: Very fast, wasn't it? (talking over one another) So it was much easier when Hannah *read out the text rather than listening to Ivrit B'klik, right?*
(Hannah's FG, Term 3)

J: M, do you want to talk? Go on, what did you find hard today?

I found hard when the video was on, I didn't understand quite a lot of what-I think it was three children-what they were talking about.

J: Okay, so you found it just hard when you were just listening and watching, yeah? And just listening you found quite hard 'cause, why was it so hard?

'Cause they went so fast.

J: They went so fast, and then what did Gila do? She?

She stopped through.

J: She slowed it down, right. So it was very hard, but, okay? A?

I was going to say the same because-

J: Go on.

It's very quick and you can't really write stuff down that quickly. Especially when it's in *Ivrit.*

J: Okay. But did it help that you listened actually quite a few times?

Yeah.

J: All right, so, Gila allowed you to listen without writing-she was very clear, "Don't write! Just listen, okay?" And that was hard, but she did it a few times. Yes, J?

When we listened to the video, I found it quite hard to write in Hebrew, so just wrote it all in English.
(Gila's FG, Term 2)

Both the examples above show that the learners found it very difficult to follow the conversations the Israeli children were having on the recordings because they were speaking too quickly. I pointed this out to the teachers after the pilot observations and I suggested that they perhaps read out the conversations in order to slow down the process. The teachers did this, but there were also occasions when they let the children listen to them.

Below, are two examples where Hebrew was not the problem but English itself. One phrase that I used often was the *nature of Hebrew.* I realised that the children could not answer this question, as they didn't understand what I meant by *nature*. I had to rephrase the question using less complicated terms.

> *J: What does it tell us about the nature of Hebrew?*
> (Suzy's FG, Term 1)

I also took for granted that children of this age would understand terms such as *process.*

> *J: Okay, anybody else? A, tell us about how you are finding the whole process of finding the root letters and linking it.*
>
> What's a process?
>
> *J: The way we're learning at the moment...*
>
> When I don't know the word I find it a bit hard, but sometimes it sounds exciting.
> (Gila's FG, Term 2)

The following extracts focus on one particular child who participated in Hannah's focus group. As the year was progressing, I noticed that there was a negative shift in the child's responses during our time together and that he was becoming increasingly disengaged from the group. This manifested itself in different ways. He said on a few occasions that he was bored by Hebrew learning, that he didn't really like learning Hebrew and that he found everything easy. I found that in fact he did not find everything easy and needed some gentle guidance as most of the children did. However, he projected a different image to me and to the rest of the children when answering questions.

It is not my intention to analyse in depth why this particular child showed signs of disengagement; I just want to highlight another side to the learning process that I witnessed. As educators we need to be aware of the signs of negativity and lack of motivation that can lead to boredom and pupil disengagement, and thus, a decrease in learning and attainment.

> *J: All right, well done! O, how does it make you feel?*
>
> Bored, but I don't have a reason why.
>
> *J: You feel bored because, maybe it's because you find it very easy?*
>
> Yeah.
>
> *J: You find it easy?*
>
> And some people find it hard so they get to struggle and I get to sit there being like "Ooh."
>
> *J: Okay. But some of this wasn't that all so easy for you; you had to think a little bit about the words, yeah? Okay. So some of us find things easy, some of us find things a bit harder. All right. Okay.*
> (Hannah's FG, Term 2)

> *J: So here's my first question. I think they're pretty similar to what you've- so what was Hannah's lesson today about? K?*
>
> Um, Hannah's lesson was about, let me just think, her lesson was about, um, if you could write down what you heard, and we did root letters, and we, um, learned that the people who write the *Torah* are called scribes.
> *J: Right. Okay.*
>
> By the way, I already knew that (said by this child).
> (Hannah's FG, Term 3)

> *J: What did you find easier today?*
>
> Nothing, I find it pretty easy finding the root letters like I always do.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 3)

> *J: I just want to know what you found hard today.*
>
> Nothing.
>
> *J: You, everything you found easy, nothing was hard for you?*
>
> Nope. That's the only reason why I find *Ivrit* a bit boring because I find everything easy.
> (Hannah's FG, Term 3)

This section has given the reader an insight to the many different strategies and techniques that the learners and I employed to aid Hebrew acquisition. I also focused on those factors that can hinder or make acquisition difficult.

I would now like to proceed to the theme, of meaning making.

5.3.2.2.3 Meaning Making

This theme examines how the learners make sense of their Hebrew learning experiences and what meanings and values they attribute to this learning. There are a number of sub-categories that will be explored:

A. *Feelings and attitudes* about learning Hebrew and the Hebrew language per se.
B. *Internalisation* of *enduring understandings* (purpose and function of the Hebrew root letters and the nature of Hebrew).
C. Whether Hebrew provides a gate way to *Jewish identity*.

1   Feelings and attitudes

I asked the children two main questions: "How does it make you feel when you work out the root letters of a word?" and "How do you feel when you learn Hebrew?" I also probed further by asking why does it make you feel x or y?

Having searched through all ten focus group (FG) interview transcripts, the range of responses fell into three groups: positive, neutral and negative. The table in Appendix N shows the words, sentiments and phrases that were expressed. Their occurrence is given in brackets.

Below are some examples from the transcripts conveying these different sentiments. I have included some of the contextual conversation for the reader.

J: So tell me, when you're working out root letters, how does that make you feel?

Um, it makes me feel excited.

J: Why?

Because I'm learning a new word so if I ever do go to Israel, say maybe in year 4 or 5 when I do the Israel trip I'll know how to speak to people. Like, my, like I know a few people that live in Israel.

I agree!

I don't know why but it makes me feel quite relaxed.

J: Why it makes you feel relaxed?

Well, it's kind of like, I still work hard in it, but it's fun.

I agree.

I feel quite curious because I want to know how to work it out.

I don't agree.

I feel like the same as what J said.

J: Which was?

Excited.

J: Why do you feel excited?

Cos, I don't really know.

I feel, um, I, amazing, because I can tell it to all of my family and everyone will be happy.

J: How do you feel?

Um, it felt a bit hard to work out, but when I got the first two, I realized what the last one could be.

J: How do you feel when you learn Hebrew - A?

When we're learning new, quite new things, I get a bit nervous.

J: Do you? Okay. And then do you get help?

Yeah, I do.

J: So if you find things a bit difficult, are you able to ask somebody and they can help you?

Yeah.

J: Who do you normally ask?

Gila.

J: How do you feel when you get it and you understand it?

I feel happy as I understand it.

J: M, when you learn Hebrew how do you feel?

When I learn Hebrew I feel very excited because when we're learning a new word I feel very excited because, 'cause I don't know that word and I just find out and I find out the word.

J: A?

I feel when I'm doing *Ivrit*, I feel quite quiet because I just want to listen and so nobody disturbs me and I just get on with my work, but sometimes I don't really 'cause I don't really get it sometimes.

J: So sometimes you don't get it, and what do you do if you don't get it, who do you ask?

Gila.

J: Okay, and then Gila will help you and when you get it how do you feel?

Confident.

J: Confident, okay, excellent.

J: So how do you feel when you're learning Hebrew?

Well, when we learn new things, I felt quite excited, because Gila normally says we're learning a new thing but she doesn't tell us straightaway.

J: Excited, okay why do you feel excited?

Well, because I like learning new things, I like to move on.

J: Right, J, how do you feel?

Excited.

J: Why?

Because it's another language I can speak because I already know how to speak quite a bit of languages counting up to 10, and a few words as well, like in Japanese I know...

A?

When I learn Hebrew I feel fantastic.

J: Why?

Because when I go to Israel maybe I can talk Hebrew and I won't have to talk any more English.
(Gila's FG, Term 1)

It makes you feel victorious.

J: Why victorious?

Because you find your victory.

I don't like it, but [cross-talk] learn it so I can [cross talk]. I don't like learning it, but it's good for me to learn it.
(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

171

I think I feel really excited to just go through the room that Hannah teaches *Ivrit* in, it feels like a whole new world because you're learning someone's language.

J: Whose language is that by the way?

Hannah's

J: Hold on, and it's our language, it's your language as well.

Because we're in a Jewish school.

And Jews live in Israel so that's why we learn Hebrew.
(Suzy's FG, Term 1)

J: How did you feel when you were able to work out the root letters?

Proud of myself.

J: Why?

Because if you don't know it, if you don't really know it first, you, when you like say you're proud of yourself, you're saying you're proud of what you're working.

J: Yes, L?

Excited because, like, you're getting to know new stuff and we're not, um, we don't really speak Hebrew.

Uh, they're just making me excited because I don't know that much of-

J: How do you feel when you work out some of the root letters when you, when it stands out, just, "Oh, yes, those are the three!"

Ah, I kind of felt proud of myself like J because, you know, you're learning new stuff and you're getting to know Hebrew better and, yeah.

I don't really know.

I felt proud as well.

J: And M?, how do you feel when you work out the root letters?

I think I actually felt in some ways, I actually felt a bit upset because I, if I didn't know that the ans-, if you didn't, if it was, like, the last sheet that we have, it was all different ones, and you couldn't really realise which one was which, and it felt like that all your friends were like straight away know what it is, and you, and I felt a little bit left out.

J: How do you feel when you learn something new in Hebrew? M?

It feels sometimes, it sometimes feels a bit exciting in Hebrew with Hannah, because, like, if you're talking about (unintelligible), and you have a sentence in your head-

And, and you really want to, like, say, say that, I think I feel a bit sad because, because Hannah, if she doesn't choose me or anything, it means that I didn't get a chance to say my sentence. And everyone else did.
(Suzy's FG, Term 2)

J: K, how did it make you feel?

It made me feel like a champion.

J: Why?

Because to some people, everything is hard, and something people everything is easy. And I'm one of the people who's right in the middle. So it's sometimes hard and sometimes easy.

J: Right, okay, …Because you...?

Because I'm not that really good at Hebrew.

J: K (another child with initial K), how does it make you feel when you see the root letters in Hebrew?

Well, it makes me feel quite proud of myself. Because (long pause) because, um, sometimes I think I can't accomplish things but I really can, so, it makes me feel proud of myself.

J: How does it make you feel when you look at it - all these words?
When I got the sheet, I thought, "I'm gonna really struggle with this." And then suddenly all the root letters just jump out at me, and then, um, about two minutes later, I've accomplished everything.
(Hannah's FG, Term 2)

J: So, tell me, does it make you feel good when you work out root letters and can finally find them?

Go on, K.

Not really.

J: Go on. Go on, tell me.

It doesn't really make me that happy because it's just root letters.

J: Mm-hmm. Do you find it a bit hard?

No.

J: No? Okay. So, okay, it's just part of a language.

Because there's always a second of what you have, and if you look back to those two words, and then they're quite different but they've got three words the same, and you're like, "Oh, that's the root letters. Really easy."

J: Okay. Right.

Um, well, when I find root letters, I'm like, it's easy, but, um, when I find it, I find, I'm like, because you just lead the last part of each lesson, so I'm like, whoof, yeah, found them, because I don't really like Ivrit.

J: You don't like Ivrit?

No, I don't.

J: All right, but even though you've been doing so well.

I do, but the only reason why I like it is so I can learn to chat with my cousins. I have, like, 20 cousins that live in Israel.

J: H, do you like learning Hebrew?

Well, ish.
(Hanna's FG, Term 3)

J: J?

Surprised, 'cause usually I'm not that good at *Ivrit*, so, I was good, so I think, all you really need to do is listen, concentrate, and you'll get it. Find it really easily.

I think that, I think that I accomplished myself because, like, I, I didn't think I'd be able to do it, and I did it, so I thought that...

I kind of felt proud too because, 'cause I was proud that I actually did something because I thought I wouldn't be able to do it because I find *Ivrit* a bit hard.

J: A?

I felt normal.

J: In what way?

'Cause we done it last time and it felt the same. We're used to this, this group.
(Suzy's FG, Term 3)

J: Give me one word that describes how you feel when you learn Hebrew.

Israel.

Happy.

Excited.

Amazed.

Proud.

I feel proud because it's a different language.

J: Give me an understanding of your understanding of the nature, how, what the nature of Hebrew is. M? It's a hard question.

I think Hebrew is like, you're learning a different language, so, so basically if you didn't know Hebrew or any other language, this is your time to learn, like, an easy language, so Hebrew is basically a really easy language which you can learn really fast and it gives you a lot of things.

It's not easy.

So if you go to, like, a Jewish school, then you would link to what you're doing.

J: Okay, so, tell me about, go on, J.

And you have to, and, like, you, you do have to learn them because if you were, when you're older, walking down the street and you see a person and it's, he, he or her is Muslim, and they say, in their country, "Where, where, where, where do you get to go to, well, the show?" Let's just say. Um, you wouldn't understand them. And you wouldn't know where it is, well you would know where it is, but you didn't know what they would say, so sometimes it's just good to learn another language.
(Suzy's fourth FG, Term 3)

These extracts have highlighted an interesting range of meanings, feelings, values and attitudes that the learners have attributed to Hebrew learning. The reasons given for feeling positive towards Hebrew and Hebrew learning include statements about learning something new, sense of accomplishment, sharing this knowledge with others, using the language as a communicative tool when in Israel or with Israeli family and the value of learning another language as a value in itself.

174

There were also a number of neutral statements expressed which were more prevalent in Term Three. One learner has a 'very matter of fact' relationship with the root letters – "It doesn't really make me that happy because it's just root letters" indicating perhaps that at this stage root letters do not hold much fascination for him/her, or he/she has 'mastered the skills', they know what root letters do and so on. Or,"I felt normal", "because we done it last time and it felt the same. We're used to this, this group", indicating that perhaps an over repetition can lead to disinterest.

On the more negative side, we get an insight into some learners who find the process of Hebrew learning quite difficult, yet with help they are able to succeed. There also is the child who was feeling "left out" because she did not know the answer straight away when doing the exercise in the FG. Furthermore, the child who knew an answer, but was not chosen by her *Ivrit* teacher to share the knowledge, perhaps is having a sense of frustration and unfairness.

Another thread that emerged from these extracts is the learners' perception of their own abilities. Statements such as "well, it makes me feel quite proud of myself. Because (long pause) because, um, sometimes I think I can't accomplish things but I really can, so, it makes me feel proud of myself" and "because to some people, everything is hard, and something people everything is easy. And I'm one of the people who's right in the middle. So it's sometimes hard and sometimes easy.[…] Because I'm not that really good at Hebrew". For these children the sense of accomplishment when they achieve something they have perceived is difficult is perhaps even greater than for those who 'find' things quite easy.

Finally, I found this comment very interesting: "I think I feel really excited to just go through the room that Hannah teaches *Ivrit* in, it feels like a whole new world because you're learning someone's language". This brings into question ownership of the Hebrew language. This seems to me that the child perceives Hebrew to be something external to her and belonging to Hannah, an Israeli.

2   Internalisation of enduring understandings

The following extracts reveal the extent to which the learners have internalised two main aspects of the research that I had initiated. One was to do with the function of the Hebrew root letters and the notion that they are common to both Biblical and Modern Hebrew. The second was regarding the nature of Hebrew, namely, where can Hebrew be found and taught and the connection between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. The term *nature* was too

difficult for the learners to understand, so I had to rephrase it in different ways. Below are some examples of the conversations we had about these two areas.

I'm not sure, but it's like there's somehow all these words are connected.

Well, all of these words have kind of some connection.

J: What is the connection? What makes the connection?

The root letters

It can make other words too can't it?

J: So you were helped to understand that you can find Hebrew not just in one place but the same Hebrew is happening in all different places.

If you just started being Jewish, you can link to the *Torah* or even if you're not Jewish.
(Suzy's FG, Term 1)

J: So, what job does the root letters do for us? How does it help us when we're learning Hebrew?

Um, if it gives us different words, we can put it into different sentences.

J: Besides what you learned in Gila's lesson, where else in the school might you come across these Hebrew words. A?

The *Torah* and a *siddur*.

J: And where would you read from the Torah and siddur? Where do you come across the siddur?

Assembly!

In the synagogue!
(Gila's FG, Term 1)

So, it's their job to make new words.

J: Do you want to add anything to that?

If it's a way of, um, isn't a way of the link that I was talking about.

The link between?

The Modern Hebrew and the biblical Hebrew.

J: K, do you want to add anything about the job of the root letters?

Is it also like it will help you to understand different words?

J: Does Hebrew just stay in one place?

Mm-mm. (no)

J: Where does it go as well?

It spreads into Jewish studies.

J: So the same Hebrew, not only do we find it in Hannah's Ivrit lesson, we find it in. Mrs. C's lessons. We find it in assembly. What does that tell you about Hebrew K?

It tells you that you can use Hebrew anywhere.

Well, you can't use it in English.

(Hannah's FG, Term 1)

176

J: Who can tell me the job of the root letter? Go on, A.

They're the main letters.

J: In a?

Um, word. I think you can, you can add vowels and then add more sounds in.

J: What does that tell you about Hebrew? How-

Because all we're doing is learning Jewish, is learning words in *Ivrit*, so I go, like, "Oh, that reminds me of *Ivrit*," because, because you, sometimes you learnt the words that, that Mrs. C said, and you're like, oh, you know those words, so you don't need to worry about spelling them or anything because you already know them.

J: L?

Um, because Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* are kind of linked.

J: In what way?

Oh-

J: Through what? What have we found today that really made a fantastic link between "I dreamt a dream" and Pharaoh's dream?

Um, the link between *Ivrit* and Jewish Studies is, um, they, they both have something to do with Jewish education.
(Suzy's FG, Term 2)

J: What was Gila trying to show you in the lesson that, what were, what was she trying to show you about Hebrew?

That something from Biblical Hebrew still gets used in Modern Hebrew.

J: Fantastic. Wow. That was the big, big idea. That was the main thing. So, that is amazing.
(Gila's FG, Term 2)

We also learned how to recognize different root letters, like although when you recognize them they have to be in order.

Also, one of them had "mem, lamed, mem, daled." But, you couldn't include the first mem.

J: Why is it important to know what the root letters do?

Because if you don't, if you forget the root letters in a word, so let's say you've got a second one, lamed, mem, and daled, it wouldn't make sense.

It's linked to Modern Hebrew because the Bible is in Hebrew.

Ah! Right! K! What else?

It's also linked because when you do Jewish Studies, you sometimes realize that there's quite a bit of Hebrew in it. So, you, um, so, *Ivrit*, it's just, it's not just in *Ivrit*, it can also be in Jewish Studies, because you see things pop up.

The linking, there's another way of linking, because, sometimes we have Hebrew in Jewish Studies, and we have sometimes, we have like what we have in Hannah's lesson. We learn new Hebrew words sometimes.
(Hannah's FG, Term 2)

J: Where else do you find Hebrew?

Here, in Jewish studies.

J: In Jewish studies. So what does that tell us about Hebrew?

They connect, 'cause Jewish studies, well, you're learning about Hebrew too, and Hebrew- they're both a Jewish thing, so they connect.
(Suzy's FG, Term 3)

J: What are the root letters, what do they do for you, for us, for the language?

It helps us, um, with, to spell the words?

To find different, new words.

J: Yes, A?

Also they help us remember words with the vowel in them or the root letters in them. Because otherwise it would just be, like, "Oh, I don't know what the main letters in this word is." You'd never be able to learn what the main letters are in that word.

J: Okay, but what is the main thing she was trying to tell us about Ivrit? Go on, J.

We were linking Modern *Ivrit* with Biblical *Ivrit*.

J: And how did we do that, M?

With root letters.

J: So the root letters are the things, the root letters are the same in Biblical Hebrew as they are in…?

Modern.
(Gila's FG, Term 3)

J: Why? What do the letters do for you?

Because the root letters is basically, without root letters you can't have a word. And if there weren't any root letters in anything, they didn't exist, we wouldn't have anything.

You wouldn't have *Ivrit*.

Yeah.

J: So what is that saying about the language, Ivrit?

It's all root letters.

It's all thanks to root letters that *Ivrit* really exits.

J: Can you think about how the root letters help you in Hebrew? What does it help you to do?

Words?

and names.

Uh, because, well, if it wasn't for root letters, then nobody would be able to teach Hebrew because it wouldn't exist.

J: What does, what is the role of Hebrew? Where does it, where does it go?

In shul (synagogue).

Everywhere.

J: What does that tell you about what Hebrew is like?

Is an ancient language.

J: Is it? Okay.

It's.

J: But is it only an ancient language?

No, it can be, it can be now.

It can be really found anywhere.
(Hannah's FG, Term 3)

It is evident from the above examples that most of the learners had a real understanding of what the role and function of the Hebrew root letters are. They understood that they have to be in a certain order, that different words with the same root letters are in some way connected, that the root letters help to spell words and that they can be made into different words by adding different vowels. Regarding the nature of Hebrew, the majority understood that there is a link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew and that the root letters serve as the vehicle for this. They were able to use Modern *Ivrit* and Modern Hebrew interchangeably demonstrating that they understood both terms. They could articulate where Hebrew can be found and in what contexts.

3   Hebrew and Jewish identity

This final section gives a brief insight into the question whether Hebrew provides a gateway to the learners' Jewish, religious and cultural identities. My ontological stance is that the Hebrew that is taught in Jewish primary schools should be viewed and therefore taught as a cultural language rather than just as another modern foreign language. My research has brought about a shift where there are links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew. In so doing, the children have been exposed to different aspects of the Jewish religion and culture.

The many extracts I highlighted above in Section B and indeed in many of the extracts overall, demonstrate that Hebrew does play a significant role in their Jewish lives. The 'language' they use to describe the 'world' around them expresses this. I searched the occurrence of certain words that I deem to have a connection with aspects of Jewish identity. The word that came up twenty four times was Israel. This was not surprising as Israel plays a significant role in the life of the school. Many of the children who participated in my focus groups have family who live in Israel and many children visit Israel quite regularly. Some children also have one parent who is Israeli. Moreover, CTJPS is twinned with a primary school in the north of Israel and there is an annual Year Six educational trip to Israel. Hebrew is seen by many of the learners as a functional tool for

communicating with Israeli family members. The next word was Jewish (*not* as in Jewish studies) at eight, then *siddur* at six, *Torah* at five, family at five, religion at two and Jewish education at two. In addition, the children were very familiar with and comfortable using various Jewish and Hebrew terms such as *brit*, *Ivrit, shema,* synagogue and *haggada*. They also mentioned different Jewish festivals, such as *Pesach* (Passover) and *Chanuka*. Furthermore, they were familiar with many Hebrew songs either learned in *Ivrit* classes or sung in assembly.

Clore Tikva children are surrounded by many different aspects of Judaism: Jewish symbols, values, art displays, Hebrew and so on. They also hear Hebrew being spoken in the corridors by the Israeli teachers.

5.4 Summary of Findings
5.4.1 Teaching:
5.4.1.1 Evolution of the Individual
1   Personal
The evidence shows that through their participation in the research project Suzy, Hannah and Gila went through a transformative process. The nature of the research demanded that they think and act differently regarding the teaching and learning of Hebrew. It required them to leave behind their area of familiarity and comfort and enter into a much more challenging arena. Their personal journey brought them face to face with their own inadequacies, fears and shortcomings. Conversely, the process enabled them to realise that they were much more capable and resilient than they had thought previously. Fullan argues that a change in beliefs is difficult to achieve as "they challenge the core values held by individuals regarding the purposes of education" (Fullan, 1991, p.42). The data has clearly demonstrated that the teachers had undergone a change in their belief systems regarding the teaching and learning of Hebrew and specifically regarding the importance of integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew where appropriate and possible. The significant amount of time that the teachers and I spent together during the AI phase proved crucial.

2   Professional
This change in belief systems allowed the teachers to embark on their next challenge that of using a new pedagogic framework and adapting their teaching approaches to suit it and their learners. The evidence from the AR phase demonstrates that from the pedagogic perspective, the teachers were able to adapt the new integrative framework to suit their learners' needs whilst imparting new skills, knowledge and understandings. The evidence shows that integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew was becoming a more natural

process. The data also indicates that the teachers were becoming more reflective in their practice; they were able to reflect openly about their own pedagogy as well as being able to reflect upon the learners' abilities and progress. The teachers also displayed the ability to be reflexive during the lessons when they would make in-the-moment decisions to adjust certain aspects of their lesson plans in order to either accommodate different abilities or to reinforce the new skills and understandings.

5.4.1.2   Evolution of the Team

1   Collaboration

The evidence indicates that as the research process progressed the JS and *Ivrit* departments began to work more collaboratively and most importantly the teachers began to perceive themselves as a team. This was one of the goals that I had set for myself, as I knew that if the project was to succeed, the teachers from the two departments needed to begin to work and plan together. The findings in the third team clearly show that this was happening to a far greater extent. There was a strong connection between Suzy and Hannah that was due to the fact that Suzy, in her role as *Ivrit* teacher, would work closely with Hannah as the *Ivrit* coordinator. The collaboration between Gila and Suzy improved as the research continued. The main concern articulated by all three teachers was the lack of time that they had away from their duties that they needed for more joint planning.

2   Impact

As the two departments began to work as a team, the data show evidence of the impact the team had not only on the Year Three learners but also on the wider school community. Suzy emerges as an agent for change and uses her experiences of the research process to impact more broadly upon the wider school. She begins to realise that the *Ivrit* department has not been included in many of the cross-curricula activities such as Book Week and Arts Week and goes about making small, simple but significant changes to address this. She develops a bird's eye view of the integrative possibilities even beyond that of the JS and *Ivrit* departments. The team began to impact in small ways on other members of staff as well as on the parent community. The data also demonstrate how the team was planning to continue to provide this integration for the following academic year by putting a logical plan in place. They wanted this integration to be part of the school's policy and on their behest I brought this suggestion to the Headteacher.

5.4.2 Learning:

5.4.2.1 Acquiring Hebrew

1   Factors helping Hebrew acquisition

The data generated from the focus groups illustrated the vast array of strategies and techniques the learners, the teachers and I utilised to aid Hebrew acquisition and understanding and mastery of new skills. Eleven strategies and techniques emerged from the data. These were *lesson recall*, *concepts*, *previous knowledge, questions, triggers, logic, perseverance/determination/self-belief, visualising, humour, chavruta and guided participation/scaffolding.* The evidence shows that the uses of lesson recall and humour in the teaching and learning process were particularly prevalent, as was the notion of guided participation/scaffolding. This was evident in both the focus groups and in the lessons I observed. The usage of these various teaching and learning methods was crucial in facilitating the acquisition process.

2   Factors hindering Hebrew acquisition

Conversely, the data also provided evidence of factors that hindered the teaching and learning process. There were incidents of simple technical issues that hindered the process, such as the speed of the conversations in the film clips. There was also evidence of English concepts that were used that were too difficult for the learners to comprehend, such as nature, process, Biblical and so on. These were taken for granted and the teachers and I needed to rephrase or explain them in order to move forward. Other factors were connected to class dynamics where learners on occasion felt excluded or upset if they did not grasp matters as quickly as their peers. My analysis of one child in particular revealed a disengagement from learning which manifested itself in terms of boredom and arrogance.

5.4.2.2   Meaning Making

1   Feelings and attitudes

In response to the two questions I posed: "How does it make you feel when you work out the root letters of a word?" and "How do you feel when you learn Hebrew?" the data provided evidence of a range of different meanings, feelings, values and attitudes that the learners had attributed to Hebrew learning. In the majority of cases the sentiments were articulated in very positive terms, with the highest occurrence being the sense of *pride* the learners had in learning Hebrew, then *liking* learning Hebrew, feeling *excited*, finding it *easy* and being *happy*. The other extreme showed some learners finding Hebrew learning *hard* or feeling *sad*, or *struggling* or feeling *bored*. The neutral sentiments expressed, such as "it's just root letters' or "I felt normal" were more prevalent in Term Three. This perhaps indicated that the learners were very familiar with the concept of root letters and found

nothing extraordinary about them at this stage. For some learners the sense of accomplishment in achieving something that they have perceived as too difficult or out of reach was tangible.

2   Enduring understandings:

The data provided evidence that the majority of learners had acquired the two enduring understandings that I had hoped to achieve in the research process. These were the role and function of the Hebrew root letters and the nature of Hebrew. The learners understood that the root letters had to be in a certain order, that different words with the same root letters were in some way connected, that the root letters helped to spell words and that they could be made into different words by adding prefixes, infixes and suffixes. The majority understood that Biblical and Modern Hebrew has many commonalities and that the root letters serve as the vehicle to link the two. They could articulate that Hebrew can be found in different contexts such as in the synagogue, in assemblies, in *Ivrit* and Jewish Studies lessons. They understood that Hebrew can be found in different religious books such as the *Torah,* the *siddur,* the *haggada* and in modern Hebrew texts*,* such as stories, songs, films, dialogues and so on.

3   Hebrew as a gateway to Jewish identity

The data revealed that the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew during the research process played a significant role in connecting different aspects of the learners' Jewish identity. This connection between Biblical and Modern Hebrew and the learners' Jewish identity was evident by the language the learners used to describe their Jewish world around them. The occurrence of certain words that I deemed to have a connection with aspects of Jewish identity was investigated. The word that arose repeatedly was Israel. Israel plays a substantial role in the life of the school: many children have family who live in Israel and visit Israel quite regularly. Some children also have one parent who is Israeli. Moreover, Israel forms an integral part of the school community; Clore Tikva is twinned with a primary school in Israel and there is an annual Year Six educational trip to Israel. Furthermore, the learners' familiarity with and comfort in using various Jewish and Hebrew terms, including different Jewish festivals show compelling evidence of connections to aspects of Jewish identity.

Finally, the evidence has corroborated with my ontological stance that Hebrew should be viewed and therefore taught as a cultural language rather than just as another modern foreign language. For me, Hebrew is the essence of Jewish existence and a pathway to Jewish identity.

CHAPTER SIX: THE PERPETUAL VOYAGER

The radio is tuned to my favourite easy listening station set at a volume that is comforting and not intrusive. I am sitting in front of my computer in the dining room that has served as my study for the past year. I am surrounded by books, stationery, printer, paper and discarded older versions of chapters. I have come to relish the solitude and my own company. I can't quite believe that I am very close to the end of writing up my research project. It has been a monumental task that has at times brought me to the brink of despair and defeat but also unbelievable joy, discovery and achievement. I have been told that when you finally get word that you have achieved your doctoral status, it can be quite anticlimactic. Where do I go from here? What awaits me round the corner? All I actually want to do now is do nothing and not feel guilty about not doing anything.

But, I know that once the jubilation and celebrations have come to an end and my feet touch the ground once again, I will need to think about my next steps, my next journey and to look around the corner and see what's there. Because that's who I am, the perpetual voyager…

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the reader with an overview and succinct summary of each of the preceding five chapters of my research project through the lens of my Subjective I's. Next I offer five recommendations in light of the research findings for those working in Jewish education and involved in Jewish educational research. I then provide a critical reflection of the research project in order to gain a more detached view of my work by discussing five specific points. The penultimate part of this chapter will be an insight into my personal and professional journey that I have undertaken. Finally, the chapter will end with some brief final thoughts.

6.2 Overview

I have taken the reader on a journey that has spanned over 5000 years, from the Bible to the present day. This has been my journey spurred by a love for the Hebrew language that has been the motivating force throughout my life. The culmination of this connection with the language has been the undertaking of this Doctorate and, in particular, this research project. I have used autoethnography to tell my story and I have related this through six subjective lenses, each given its prominence at the start of each chapter.

My journey started with the **Hebrew Enthusiast**, which gave the reader an insight into my life growing up in South Africa, Israel and later on in England. Hebrew was my constant companion in all three continents. I developed a love for the Biblical language through learning it as a child whilst attending *cheder* three times a week. Modern Hebrew then

served as a practical tool of communication when I left South Africa at the age of seventeen to go and live in Israel where I studied more advanced Hebrew initially on a *Kibbutz Ulpan* and then at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where I obtained a BA in Education. Hebrew then served as a route for employment when I came to the UK and began my first job at a Jewish supplementary school teaching Modern Hebrew to eleven and twelve year olds. Soon after, Hebrew formed an important component of my career in Jewish Education where I have been working at the forefront of Hebrew pedagogy and curriculum development for the past twenty-five years.

The relationship between the ancient and the secular in Hebrew had always held great fascination for me. I was fortunate enough to have studied both, therefore it was natural to me to integrate the two whenever possible when teaching. An amalgam gave learners a much deeper understanding of both Biblical and Modern Hebrew. The separate teaching and learning of Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew is prevalent in most Jewish day schools, where a physical separation exists between the Jewish Studies department and the *Ivrit* department where the two do not communicate or collaborate on lesson planning. It is my contention that this division has perpetuated a cycle of missed teaching and learning opportunities in Hebrew and the integration between the two could, in fact, enhance this. Five and half years ago I embarked on the Doctorate in Professional Studies to investigate how the integrating of Biblical and Modern Hebrew, where appropriate and possible, could enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in Jewish day schools.

The **Hebrew Pedagogue** began by giving the reader an insight into the status of Hebrew teaching and learning in the UK and the research that has been undertaken over the past four years.

Then, using Fullan's (1991) educational change theory as a framework, I discussed the rationale for the educational change process I embarked upon in this research project. My project incorporated all three elements that Fullan (p.37) deemed are necessary to enable meaningful and sustained change to occur: I introduced a new framework for linking Biblical and Modern Hebrew to the teachers; I inducted them in the different teaching approaches and techniques that the new framework demanded; and most importantly, I set about to change their belief system with regard to the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

The chapter then took the reader on a Hebrew journey spanning some three thousand years. I provided the reader with insights into the development and evolution of the

Hebrew language by delving into four main periods that demarcate significant junctures in the Jewish narrative.

The first stop on the journey was Hebrew of the Bible of the second millennium BCE. As Biblical Hebrew did not contain a system for reading, the Masoretes' contribution to this made Biblical Hebrew into what we have come to know today – the language of the *Torah*. Our next stop was the rabbinic period. Despite there being strong disagreement on the exact nature and origins of Rabbinic Hebrew, the tremendous contributions the rabbis of the period made to Jewish liturgy, through its prayers and blessings, which were composed in Rabbinic Hebrew could not be underestimated. This was the era of the creation of the *Talmud*, incorporating *Mishna* and *Gemara*, and *Midrash*. The next period on our journey brought us to the mediaeval times. We learned that Mediaeval Hebrew was not a language in the full sense of the term, but rather it was a combination of various linguistic usages and traditions that the writers of the day developed according to their own ideas of the language and according to their own social and cultural backgrounds. We also had a brief exploration of the Hebrew poetry of the period and the revival of Biblical vocabulary as a means to counter the rivalry that surfaced between Hebrew and Arabic, the language of the host country at the time. Our final stop brought us to the Modern Hebrew period. We witnessed the rebirth of the Hebrew language first through the efforts of Eliezer Ben–Yehuda at the end of the nineteenth century, then with Hebrew becoming one of the official languages of the State of Israel. We learned that Modern Hebrew leaned heavily on Biblical Hebrew, but it also borrowed aspects from Rabbinic Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Latin and Yiddish as well as from other European languages such as Polish, Russian and German. We then came to present day Hebrew, or as is sometimes referred to as Israeli Hebrew, the language that is spoken in the Modern State of Israel. It is a language that is still changing and adapting to the needs of its diverse population.

We also took a short detour to examine the diglossic nature of Hebrew and I compared it to that of Greek. With regards to Hebrew it is clear that diglossia existed in one form or another in ancient Hebrew, and it still exists today with Biblical and Modern Hebrew living side by side each with its own purpose and function. With Greek, however, its diglossia officially ended after almost two thousand years.

The **Jewish Educator** navigated the reader through the complicated world of research methodology. I used Jonker et al.'s (2010) *research pyramid* to frame the chapter and to articulate my rationale for choosing a hybrid methodology where I conducted an *Action Research* project, within the context of a *Case study*, in a culture of *Appreciative Inquiry*

and through the lens of *Autoethnography*. I went through each methodological approach systematically. I then demonstrated that each type of research method and technique that I selected was sound and appropriate for my particular type of research. These were classroom observations, focus groups with seven to eight year old children, interviews and teacher reflection sheets. These methods generated a rich and varied amount of data that enabled me to significantly understand the extent to which my Action Research project had been successful. I discussed the triangulation of the data sources that supported the validity and reliability of my work.

The chapter also articulated my ontological and epistemological stance with regard to the Hebrew language. From a pedagogic perspective, the teaching and learning of Hebrew has remained a challenge in the Jewish day school sector in the UK and I argued that steps needed to be taken to improve this. One way to do this was to integrate the teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew, where possible and appropriate, in order to enhance the experience for both teacher and learner. My 'philosophical intent or motivation' for undertaking this research project was about making a unique contribution in the field of Hebrew pedagogy through enhancing the teaching and learning of Hebrew in the diaspora through innovative curriculum design that integrates Biblical and Modern Hebrew. It was also about exposing practitioners invested in the Hebrew language teaching and learning field to a new narrative and fresh possibilities. Moreover, it was concerned with empowering and working in partnership with them.

I also discussed the various ethical issues that could arise when conducting qualitative research and especially when it included children as participants. Lastly, I introduced my chosen method of analysis, namely Thematic Analysis and gave the reader an insight into the process I underwent.

The **Empowerer and Nurturer** began by providing the reader with the sociocultural context of the teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the United Kingdom. The chapter then explored the notion of the development of new pedagogies and professional practice, both as separate yet overlapping research paths in the context of the project.

I put Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School centre stage and gave a brief description of the school. I then gave a detailed account of the activities I undertook during the research process. During my time with the school, I conducted over seventy-five separate activities that took place over the period of four academic years: 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16. I categorised these periods of time into five distinct research phases: Phase One

was the *Appreciative Inquiry* period. Phase Two was the *Framework Design* period where I used a curriculum design approach called *Understanding by Design*. Phase Three was the *Pilot* period. Phase Four was the *Action Research* period and Phase Five was the *Post-Action Research* period. I highlighted the ebbs and flows, pushes and pulls and turning points that determined the research path. The overview was complemented by the examination of various academics, writers and practitioners as well as moments of personal critical reflection. Additionally, I discussed Hebrew language acquisition and pedagogy in light of language acquisition theory. I argued that Hebrew teachers would greatly benefit from understanding second language and foreign language theory in order to inform their own teaching and thus positively impact on learning.

The **Research Community Builder** brought the reader into the worlds of the teachers and learners. I employed Thematic Analysis as my method of analysing the data which is a process of encoding qualitative information with an explicit code. This could be a "list of themes; a complex model with themes, indicators, and qualifications that are causally related; or something in between these two forms". A theme can be described as a pattern which is found in the data that at "minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon". A theme can be "identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon)". Themes can be "generated inductively" from the raw data or they can be "generated deductively from theory and prior research" (Boyatzis 1998, p.4). I chose Thematic Analysis for its flexibility and its ability to accommodate the data set that I generated and chose to analyse. It provided a detailed and rich account of what I witnessed and of which I was part. The parameters in which the analysis was carried out were as follows: My selected *data set* was from Phase Four, the AR phase, and part of Phase Five, the post-AR phase, of the project. This comprised ten classroom observations, ten focus groups of learners, ten teacher reflective sheets and a number of individual and group teacher feedback conversations.

I analysed the data set from two perspectives, that of the teaching and that of the learning. From the teaching perspective, I examined two main themes: the evolution of the individual and the evolution of the team. This exploration charted the journey of the teachers first as individuals and discovered how the research project impacted upon them personally and professionally. I then examined the movement from individual to that of team and explored the development of the collaboration between the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* departments. I finally examined the impact the team had on their Year Three learners as well as on the wider school community. From the learning perspective, I explored two themes: the acquisition of Hebrew, specifically looking at those factors that help Hebrew

acquisition and those factors that can hinder acquisition. My final theme examined the notion of meaning making and I explored three sub-themes: the learners' feelings and attitudes about learning Hebrew and the Hebrew language per se, their internalisation of enduring understandings, namely, the purpose and function of the Hebrew root letters and the nature of Hebrew and lastly, whether Hebrew provides a gateway to aspects of Jewish identity.

A detailed summary of the findings was given. In brief, the evidence strongly suggested that the research project brought about a significant shift in the teachers' thinking of the teaching and learning of Hebrew and of their practice. They experienced the importance of integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew where appropriate and possible from their own perspective and that of the learners. My time spent with the children in the focus groups revealed a growing understanding of the nature of the Hebrew language and equipped them with a new skill set of identifying Hebrew root letters. In turn, integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew gave the learners a more meaningful and coherent relationship with Hebrew.

Exploring the notion of Hebrew providing a gateway to the learners' Jewish, religious and cultural identities was not one of the specific goals of the research, rather it was a sub-theme that emerged during the analytic process. However, the findings revealed that the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew did indeed play a part in making connections to different aspects of the learners' and, indeed, the teachers' Judaism, Jewish history, practice and culture. My assertion that Hebrew teaching and learning outside of Israel should be taught from the perspective of a cultural language was supported by the fact that the integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew provided a more meaningful and enhanced understanding of and relationship with the Hebrew language and with Judaism.

6.3 Recommendations

The research findings outlined in the previous chapter have determined that the integrating of Biblical and Modern Hebrew, where appropriate and possible, enhanced the teaching and learning of Hebrew. In light of these findings, I present a number of recommendations.

These recommendations are directed towards those working in Jewish education - the practitioners, leaders, lay leaders and policy makers in different Jewish educational contexts whose responsibility covers the teaching and learning of Hebrew and those involved in Jewish educational research. These recommendations may also be of interest

to educators in general; those wanting to engage in educational change and embark upon innovative programme and curriculum design. Furthermore, language specialists and teachers and those responsible for determining language-learning policies may also find these recommendations of use.

Herewith my recommendations:

1. Jewish day schools should be working towards breaking down the 'barriers' that exist between their Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* departments. These two areas of the Jewish day school curriculum give the school its Jewish nature and ethos. I argued in Chapter One that there was no reason from a religious perspective to maintain this separation, as it should not be considered *chilul hashem*. It does not diminish the importance or relevance of Hebrew as the language of the *Torah* and Jewish religious law. From a pedagogic perspective, this on-going separation has perpetuated a cycle of missed teaching and learning opportunities. Breaking down these barriers both physically and mentally can facilitate the creation of a teaching and learning environment that puts Hebrew and Jewish learning at its core. My research has shown that such a school can instill the values of collaboration, enhanced communication and coherence, not just at the teaching level in the classroom, but also at the school wide level.

2. A school that chooses to create opportunities to integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew within its curricula is embarking upon educational change. This would require a dynamic change agent to move the process forward. It is argued that it is normally the principal or headteacher that strongly influences the likelihood of change and can have a major impact on the implementation process. Research shows, however, that the Headteacher is not often the one who actually takes on the active change leadership role (Fullan, 1991, p.76). In fact, some teachers may be more "self-actualized" and may in fact have a "greater sense of efficacy, which leads them to take action and persist in the effort required to bring about successful implementation" (Fullan, 1991, p.77). My project found that it was Suzy the JS teacher, spurred on by being part of the research process, who was taking a very active role in implementing some changes and influencing other members of staff. It was also her who suggested that for the integration to continue and to work successfully there was a need for an addition to the school policy.

Successful change requires an acknowledgement of what is working well and to build on this. It involves working towards a joint vision and working together for the greater good. It entails a process of co-constructing and not deconstructing. Using elements of

Appreciative Inquiry as outlined in Chapter Three may help to create an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Successful change requires an alteration in people's belief systems. The success of my project was due in part to the considerable time I spent with the teachers in changing the way they perceived the teaching and learning of Hebrew. It was crucial that they understood and internalised the fact that integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew could enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in a significant way. Only once this has been achieved can there be a change in teaching resources and teaching approaches.

In order for this type of change to have the optimum chance of success, I feel it is important that the whole school community, including parents and governors, is inducted into the philosophy, pedagogy and rationale of this form of integration. The stakeholders should be made aware of the benefits that integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew can have on the school community. My research has shown that a school that embarks on this integration, will impact upon the personal and professional development and growth of its practitioners. The learners will acquire transferable skills and enduring understandings thus gaining a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the Hebrew language. Another important benefit is that the profile of Hebrew will be raised and will become an integral part of the whole school community.

3. My research highlighted the fact that those involved in language teaching and learning would greatly benefit from understanding and learning about second language and foreign language theory. Not only would it inform their own teaching and thus positively impact on the learners, it would give them a much broader field of reference. When I first started teaching Hebrew I had no idea that Hebrew teaching and learning was situated in a much bigger discipline that itself. My research highlighted Krashen as one of the leading lights in language acquisition theory. His theory and different hypotheses had a great influence on me professionally and I have used his work extensively to continue to inform and question my work and that of others.

4. My exploration of Krashen and other theorists brought me to consider the distinction that is made of teaching Hebrew as a *Second Language* (SL) and teaching Hebrew as a *Modern Foreign Language* (MFL). I had always maintained that Hebrew should be taught as a SL, but further research brought me to understand that according to the definition of a SL, this could not define how we are teaching Hebrew in the UK. Hebrew in the UK falls under the auspices of the MFL framework of the National

Curriculum and *Ivrit* is subject to Ofsted inspections just as any other MFL in the UK. In Chapter Four I argued that although *Ivrit* is considered an MFL, it is more than that. I maintained that Hebrew is an integral part of the Jewish religion, culture and history that has been part of the psyche and journey of the Jewish people over the millennia. Nevo (2011) related the story of Mordechai Kaplan who warned more than sixty years ago, "that once Hebrew becomes a foreign language for Jews, they will cease to live Judaism as a culture and no longer experience a sense of intimacy with Jewish life" (p.429). I argued that Kaplan's warning has in part been materialized. When Jews only see *Ivrit* as another MFL, we are in danger of losing our connection to Judaism and its culture. I argued that this over simplistic classification of *Ivrit* as an MFL had contributed significantly to the separate teaching and learning of Biblical and Modern Hebrew to the detriment of higher achievement in understanding and reading skills. As previously asserted, we cannot separate *Ivrit* from its religious, cultural and historic framework. For this reason I advocated for integrating, where possible, between the old and the new, to keep Judaism, its culture and history alive. I suggested that there was a need for a third and more nuanced classification for the Hebrew being taught outside of Israel. I proposed a new name, a hybrid term that combines both these concepts – a *cultural language*. This term allows for a modern living language bound up in a particular religion, culture and time, as is *Ivrit*.

5. Those wishing to embark upon innovative programme and curriculum design may want to consider using *Backward Design*, an element of a curriculum design approach called *Understanding by Design* (UbD) developed by Wiggins et al. I explained in Chapter Four that *Backward Design* advocates for practitioners to first consider what specific learning outcomes are being sought and what evidence of these learning outcomes would be *before* considering all the teaching and learning activities. Wiggins et al.'s educational philosophy is that the purpose of education is to engender understanding and that curriculum designers need to be very clear about the specific understandings they want the learners to achieve. Once these are determined only then can "we focus on the content, methods and activities most likely to achieve those results" (Wiggins et al, 2005, p.15). UbD proved to be an extremely useful iterative process and approach, as it compelled me to consider the overarching goals, outcomes and understandings of my research before concentrating on the actual learning activities.

6.4 Critical Reflection

It is important now to take a step back in order to gain a more detached view of my work. Whilst the findings have demonstrated the overall success of the project in terms of achieving the goals that I set out at the beginning, there are a number of areas that are worthy of a more critical examination.

There were a number of areas that arose from the data that could not be expanded upon within the remit of this project. The first area is regarding the impact the parents might have had, both positively and negatively, on the outcome of the project. I did not know of the exact makeup of the families of the children who participated in the focus groups. I did know that one child was not Jewish and that there were a number of mixed families, namely, where one parent was Jewish. Furthermore, I know of one family who had one parent who was Israeli as this came out in the child's response. I did not have knowledge of which families supported their children Jewishly or which did not. Suffice it to say that in order to get a fuller picture of all the factors that contributed to the success of this project, the impact of the child's home environment would need to be investigated further and would need to be undertaken at the time of the research.

Another area that arose was that Suzy considered this particular Year Three group a good year group and that she found the children to be enthusiastic about their Judaism and about their Jewish identities, which she felt motivated them to do well. This was not echoed by Hannah who reminded Suzy that this Year Three group did not have such a good year the previous year and when they were in Year One. Suzy however was adamant that if a different year group had been chosen to participate in the research perhaps the results might not have been as positive. This effect would have been counterbalanced had I conducted the research with another Year Three group at another school. I am reminded however, that any research of this length that is undertaken is only a snap shot view at a particular time.

Another area that I feel could have a negative impact on the future viability of this project is the fact that the Jewish Studies Coordinator was not fully involved in the research process. This was due to the fact that she was not teaching Jewish Studies to the Year Three classes. This meant that she was not fully invested in the project and that she did not have first-hand knowledge of its progress and so on. I was fully aware of this and I tried as much as possible to include her in the joint meetings as well as having individual 'catch up' meetings with her. The success of this project continuing relies heavily upon her and Hannah, the *Ivrit* coordinator, working together and planning for the future. I fear that

this may have been impeded by her not having been part of the process, as she needed to be.

A further area that emerged during the analysis of the data is that of pupil disengagement. I touched on this very briefly while examining factors that can hinder learning. Disengagement in learning can manifest itself in a multitude of ways and the data revealed two such indications, that of boredom and what I considered, arrogance. I felt that there was much more going on under the surface with this particular child, but it was not my remit to delve any further other than sign posting the need for practitioners to be aware of pupil disengagement. Disengagement with learning can also rear itself with those learners who have learning difficulties. There were one or two learners in my focus group that had learning difficulties and which can be compounded when learning other languages. All three teachers were very sensitive to the needs of these children and others in their classes who experience difficulties.

My main concern is that unless there is somebody moving this project forward in the school, it will eventually fizzle out. Knowledge has to be shared and a mechanism needs to be put in place that can facilitate this project becoming embedded within the school's ethos and *modus operandi.*

6.5   Critical Reflection of My Personal and Professional Journey

I would like to critically examine two aspects of my personal and professional journey: one, the emergent nature of the study and two, the requirements of undertaking a successful Action Research project.

The Emergent Nature of the Study

The integrating of Biblical and Modern Hebrew as a way to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew challenges the status quo in Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom**.** Where the teaching and learning of these subjects have normally taken place within their separate departments, my research has brought about a shift in the way practitioners think about and teach Hebrew. I have challenged the notion that Biblical and Modern Hebrew should remain separate entities and insisted that their integration can contribute towards a holistic approach to the teaching and learning of Hebrew. This integration brings about collaborative planning amongst the Jewish Studies and *Ivrit* departments and encourages joined-up thinking and planning resulting in enhanced teaching and learning. It also helps to raise the profile of *Ivrit* within the greater school community.

My research also calls for a new classification of the *Ivrit* being taught in Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom. I contend that *Ivrit* is an integral part of Jewish religion, culture and history and it cannot be separated from these aspects of Jewish life and treated like any other modern foreign language being taught in UK schools. *Ivrit* is also not taught as a second language in the UK and therefore, I suggest that a more nuanced classification of the Hebrew that is taught outside of Israel is sought. I propose the term *cultural* language as it more aptly describes the Hebrew that is being taught in Jewish schools in the UK. I agree with Schiff (1996, p.134) who regards the Hebrew language as a constant providing the link to the "Jewish past and to Israel" and is a "unifying force in Jewish life". I also agree with Kaplan who warned more than sixty years ago that when Hebrew becomes a foreign language for Jews, they will cease to live Judaism as a culture and no longer have an intimate experience with Jewish life (in Berdichevsky, 1998, p.112).

It is for these reasons that I advocate the integrating of Biblical and Modern Hebrew in the teaching and learning of Hebrew. My research revealed that Hebrew plays a significant role in connecting with aspects of the learners' Jewish identities, which manifested itself in the use of the 'Jewish' language by the children and their connections with Israel.

The Hebrew root letter system became the vehicle for the integration and required the teachers to learn new skills and teaching approaches in order to impart them to the learners. Using root letters as the route to integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew proved to be an easy and effective way for both teachers and learners.

How can I ensure that my research contributes to the field of Hebrew pedagogy? I have recently presented the findings and recommendations of my research at an annual conference in Research in Jewish Education. I will shortly be submitting my findings to *Pikuach* and to the Partnerships for Jewish Schools[64] and proposing further development of my practice in other Jewish primary schools. Furthermore, since the completion of my project the question of Hebrew teaching in the United Kingdom is gaining momentum. In June a conference exploring the future of Hebrew learning in the UK has been organised by Cambridge University and the World Zionist Organisation[65], to which I have been invited to present my findings on the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew as a way

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[64] Partnerships for Jewish School (PaJeS): provides services, support and strategy to Jewish schools across the UK. This includes supporting school infrastructure, training and recruiting the next generation of teachers, creating curriculum and providing professional development, and developing school leaders http://www.pajes.org.uk/about-pajes.php (accessed 29 May 2016).

[65] World Zionist Organisation: founded at the initiative of Theodore Herzl at the First Zionist Congress which took place in August 1897 in Basle, Switzerland. One of the organisation's mission statements is to expand Zionist education including Hebrew language instruction http://www.wzo.org.il/Mission-Statement (accessed 29 May 2016).

to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew in the UK. The conference will be attended by academics working in the field of Hebrew pedagogy, but I will be the only one presenting on the integration between Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

Undertaking Action Research

Undertaking an Action Research project is both complex and challenging. It demands sophisticated design, organisation and implementation. Drawing upon different aspects of my personal and professional experience enabled me to successfully bring my project to fruition.

To give the reader an understanding of how I was able to successfully achieve this AR project, I return to my six *Subjective I's* - the *Hebrew Enthusiast*, the *Hebrew Pedagogue,* the *Jewish Educator,* the *Empowerer and Nurturer,* the *Research Community Builder* and the *Perpetual Voyager*, my six states of being through which I approached and conducted the project. I will also demonstrate how undertaking this AR project has influenced and impacted upon my own personal and professional development.

The *Hebrew Enthusiast*

First and foremost, my love and passion for the Hebrew language was the driving force for this research. It kept me invested, excited and focused throughout the process. My deep connection with Hebrew helped me overcome the many obstacles I encountered along the way. When I felt unsure of my next steps and when I doubted my ability to complete the task, I would remind myself of why I was doing this research – to share my enthusiasm of the Hebrew language with the teachers and children. My love of Hebrew sustained me throughout this journey.

The *Hebrew Pedagogue*

My love for the Hebrew language transformed into action and I embarked on a career in Hebrew pedagogy that has spanned twenty-five years. This doctorate is the pinnacle of my achievement in Hebrew pedagogy so far. My years of experience in Hebrew teaching and learning thoroughly prepared me for undertaking this AR project. I learned that trusting the teachers' pedagogic abilities was paramount for the project to succeed. They knew their students best and they needed to modify the integrated framework that we designed to suit their own and their children's needs. I was reminded that translating a lesson plan into practice required adaptation. I was aware that all three teachers needed the time and space to be accustomed to a new way of thinking about and teaching Hebrew. I also learned that it was important to fight for what I believed in. For example, I wanted the learners to first hear the Hebrew text before seeing it which was not at first

endorsed by one of the teachers. I persevered, as I knew that the children would benefit from this, as it would enhance their language acquisition skills. Above all, my time with the teachers taught me to listen carefully, re-assess and communicate my needs, and find a common path to move forward.

My interactions with the learners re-acquainted me with how young children acquire language and what they required in order to make sense of their worlds. I learned that humour played a great part in the language acquisition process as well as the importance of previous knowledge in language learning. I was reminded of the fact that children are capable of acquiring new skills easily and that as adults we are more wary of taking on new challenges. Their capability was demonstrated by their understanding of the function and role of the root letters, identifying the root letters in different Hebrew words and making connections to both Biblical and Modern Hebrew.

The *Jewish Educator*

I brought twenty-five years' experience in Jewish education to the research process. My knowledge of educational change management theory and practice, and facilitation skills enabled me to galvanise a high functioning team of teachers. Each teacher had different strengths and weaknesses and I was required to find the best way to work with each one. The teachers' participation in the research project impacted positively upon their personal and professional development as they were empowered to embark on change, to step out of their comfort zones, to see the teaching and learning of Hebrew differently and to learn more about the Hebrew language.

With regard to the learners, my many years of teaching young children and knowing their cognitive abilities helped me work successfully with them during the focus group sessions. There were times, however, when I pitched my questions at the wrong level or used difficult concepts and language and they taught me to find another way to explain myself. I was able to confidently bring the children back to task when they were not concentrating or were behaving in an unruly manner. I was able to move between different roles – that of teacher when I needed to explain some concepts, that of facilitator when I listened to their conservations and that of researcher, asking them specific questions related to the research.

The *Empowerer and Nurturer*

Undertaking the AR project required that I bring my experiences and expertise as Hebrew pedagogue and Jewish educator to guide me in my role of researcher. I drew upon Fullan's (1991) theory of educational change as the framework in which to conduct the

intervention. I ensured that I included the three elements he deems are necessary to ensure that meaningful and sustainable takes place and I took the necessary time to embed each of them. I understood the importance of spending time with the teachers in creating an environment conducive in which to conduct the research. This was a process of empowering and nurturing the teachers. I was conscious that conducting AR can be complex and challenging and I was determined to be highly organised so that I could keep the project in check. The cyclical nature of AR demanded this organisation and I communicated frequently with the teachers and the Head teacher, not leaving anything to chance. I was in control of the process and requested help as necessary.

In short, I 'owned' the process which helped the research to run smoothly and on time. I utilised my leadership skills by anticipating problems and dealing with them promptly. If I felt that the teachers were feeling over burdened, I met with them and listened to their concerns and found a way to alleviate their workloads. The success of the AR did not happen by chance, but rather by hard work, strong leadership and organisational skills. I was always aware of the responsibility that lay on my shoulders – to myself, to my place of work, to the university and most of all to the teachers and children of Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School.

The *Research Community Builder*

Another reason for the success of the AR project was that I enabled and encouraged the teachers to be my co-researchers. We sought a common vision and we embarked together on positive change in the teaching and learning of Hebrew. I gave them the space to reflect upon their personal and professional development, to challenge themselves and to enhance their growth as practitioners. I empowered them to become agents of change. The AR would not have been successful had we not become partners in the research endeavour. Again, all the preparatory work that I had undertaken before the AR stage of the research was crucial to the success. I also learned a great deal about myself during this time. For example, when I listened to the recordings after an interview or a focus group session, I realised that I spoke too much, spoke over the teachers at times and always wanted to fill in the quiet moments. As the research progressed, I was aware of these shortcomings and endeavoured to talk less and listen more. I believe I still have a way to go in improving my listening skills.

The focus group sessions gave the learners the opportunity to reflect upon their new skills and knowledge and the questions I posed enabled them to voice their opinions and to share their thoughts about Hebrew learning. I was in a very privileged position to see how the learning that took place in the classroom was impacting upon them. I appreciated the

fact that these seventeen children had benefited from participating in the research and that their knowledge and skills had increased beyond that of their classmates due to the extra time spent with me.

The *Perpetual Voyager*

The personal and professional development that I have undergone during this research project cannot be underestimated.

From a personal perspective, I have come face to face with my shortcomings, fears, strengths and weaknesses. I have learned to be resilient and to find different ways to get to my destination when faced with barriers and obstacles. I have had to deal with and overcome many moments of frustration and feelings of being overwhelmed with the sheer size of the task before me. I have learned more about human nature and our capacities for learning and progress.

From a professional and research perspective, I have a much more in-depth understanding of the Hebrew language, its development and on-going evolution. I have been exposed to new writers, academics and different writing genre that will impact upon me in my professional work. I now have experience in initiating and implementing an educational intervention by working in partnership with stakeholders in the field. I now have experience in conducting a large-scale and complex piece of educational research.

What I have learned most of all is that learning is never-ending and that the end of one journey is the beginning of another.

6.6 Final Thoughts

It has been a tremendous privilege working with the teachers and children at Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School. The school, under the leadership of its Headteacher, opened its heart to me at the very beginning. Together we were able to undertake ground-breaking Hebrew research and I cannot thank everyone enough for accompanying me on this voyage.

It is my hope that I have succeeded in imparting to the reader that Hebrew is indeed the *living breath of Jewish existence* and that integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew is a viable and significant way to enhance the teaching and learning of Hebrew.

We have approached journey's end.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE BEAUTY OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE

It is my hope that my passion for the Hebrew language has shone through in the unfolding of this research project. The more I delve into the language, the more I discover its beauty and possibilities.

I would now like to share an example that for me encapsulates this beauty by offering a short excerpt of a biblical poem. The poem is from *Shir hashirim*, the *Song of Songs*, one of the *megilot* or scrolls that are part of the Hebrew Bible. The scroll consists of eight chapters and its writing is attributed to King Solomon. *Shir hashirim* is considered a timeless allegory of the relationship between God and the People of Israel, in terms of the love between a man and a woman. According to Maimonides[66], the highest form of relationship between a human being and God is the relationship based on love. Maimonides continues: "Just as when a man loves a particular woman, he cannot remove her from his thoughts, with just such intensity should a person love God". The scroll is traditionally recited on Passover, the Jewish holiday that celebrates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. It is appropriate to read this scroll at this time as *Passover* is the 'festival of spring', the holiday of the return of life, of creativity, to the world. Its theme is love, the rebirth of which is also symbolized by spring.

I chose this poem not only because of its timeless beauty but also because the majority of the words are still used in Modern Hebrew today. Furthermore, King Solomon featured in one of Gila's lessons, when she was teaching the root letters for the word peace. Within the word Solomon (***shl**om*o in Hebrew) are the root letters for peace, ***shal**om*.
(It would not, however, be appropriate to share this poem with children).

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[66] Maimonides: His full name was Moses ben Maimon; in Hebrew he is known by the acronym of Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, *Rambam*. He was born in 1135, in Córdoba, Spain. To avoid persecution by a Muslim sect, Maimonides fled with his family, first to Morocco, later to Israel, and finally to Egypt. His major contribution to Jewish life remains the *Mishneh Torah*, his code of Jewish law. His intention was to compose a book that would guide Jews on how to behave in all situations just by reading the *Torah* and his code, without having to expend large amounts of time searching through the *Talmud*.
https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/Maimonides.html. (Accessed: 19 February 2016).

My lover drew back his
hand from the latch,
and my heart beat wildly for
him.
I rose to let my lover in;
my hands dripped with
myrrh,
my fingers flowed with
myrrh
upon the handles of the
bolt.
I opened to my lover,
but he had slipped away
and gone.
My soul longed for his
words!
I looked for him, but could
not find him;
I called to him, but he did
not answer me.

דּוֹדִי שָׁלַח יָדוֹ מִן הַחוֹר,
וּמֵעַי הָמוּ עָלָיו.
קַמְתִּי אֲנִי לִפְתֹּחַ לְדוֹדִי,
וְיָדַי נָטְפוּ מוֹר,
וְאֶצְבְּעֹתַי מוֹר-עֹבֵר
עַל כַּפּוֹת הַמַּנְעוּל.
פָּתַחְתִּי אֲנִי לְדוֹדִי -
וְדוֹדִי חָמַק, עָבָר.
נַפְשִׁי יָצְאָה בְדַבְּרוֹ!
בִּקַּשְׁתִּיהוּ וְלֹא
מְצָאתִיהוּ,
קְרָאתִיו וְלֹא עָנָנִי.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Scanned Copies of Teachers' Lesson Plans, Student Work Sheets and Hand-Written Observational Notes of Lessons Taken by Author

Integrated biblical Hebrew to modern Hebrew LESSON PLAN

YEAR: 3 TEACHER: ישראל Autumn Term Weeks 9 Thursday 12th March

Focus New voc./structure	Learning Objectives	Introductory Activities	Core Activities	Resources
Text: Genesis Chapter 37 verse 10 וַיְסַפֵּר אֶל-אָבִיו, וְאֶל-אֶחָיו, וַיִּגְעַר-בּוֹ אָבִיו, וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתָּ: הֲבוֹא נָבוֹא, אֲנִי וְאִמְּךָ וְאַחֶיךָ, לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֺת לְךָ אָרְצָה And he told his father, and to his brothers; and his father told him off, and said to him: 'What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers bow down to you?'	LO – To learn how Joseph's dreams saved his life.	Review what was learnt last time **What does root letters mean?** Show the word הַחֲלוֹם **What are the root letters in this word?** Show root letters ח.ל.ם **Can you remember any words that have these root letters?**	Talk through the IWB and the meanings of the story. Chn retell the story in their own words. LA to draw a story board about the story. (JoAnn Myers Observing Thursday 12th March @ 2pm Thursday 12 March at 14.05pm, followed by focus group http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/8232/jewish/Chapter-37.htm Genesis Chapter 37 verse 10 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתָּ:	Children circle 2 words with same root letters link to Ivrit words Point out lint that biblical Hebrew and Ivrit have same words Sing song learnt in year 2 **Plenary** What have you learnt about root letters so far? Follow up

On hearing these dreams Jacob also questioned Joseph.
And he rebukes him by saying....

מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלָמְתָּ

'What is this dream that you have dreamed?'

Where is the root words? What are the root letters?

Write it on your w/b's.

What connection does this root word have to Ivrit?

Biblical Ivrit

חֲלוֹם

חֲלֹמוֹת

ח.ל.ם

Modern Ivrit

חָלוֹם שֶׁהִתְגַּשֵּׁם

שֶׁחֲלוֹמוֹתֶיךָ

12/3/15

Observation - Suzy - 24 kids

Look at L.P.
and I can find a link between biblical
Hebrew אמצ

S: what did you do in Hannan's lesson —
which root letters.
for 3 נ ד

3 נ ד

what does learn
it mean?
what word connects it to in Biblical
— המצא bosh

נזו המצא? חכם.

Connection to H's lesson.

Review

Showing direct collaboration with IVRIT
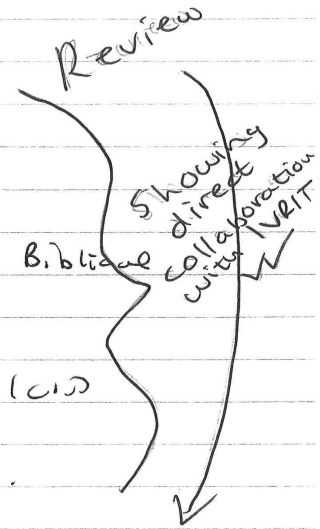
kids: same root letters
3.נ.ד < 3נד ..
.. ?נד

— Great little intervention

Back to Joseph:

Story of Joseph →

Coat → in אמצא   נאיד
Colour →   3קע
                    kids don't know.

These are great little interventions!

שלוש של בקא כל 3?

הפרשנו! ← מחלו.

Child: I know what the line is → to colours in Joseph's coat.

Suzy tells the story of Joseph → and his 2 dreams.

On tables:
have a losh at the sheets – 1 between 2.

" את החלום ספר לכם הפרשת? "
Kiera read this perfectly!

(can you connect the Eng words to the Hebrew

Child: החלום = the dream ✓✓.

another child: iswhat ← את

What is , הכל ?

Like : את הכל
את (על)?

Exercise: try + circle the root letters
from החלם
which N do we for root letters?
✓ good guidance through
Q

Use the N in the middle.

Song: חלום יוסף

Same song they sing with Hannah.
Excellent connection!!

Q: What is the main word that you keep saying in the song.

Child: חלום

What does it mean?   dream.

On IWB and on w/sheet.

                          Biblical
        modern   _____
חלום החדש   החלומות
                     חלום
'fe חלום

            ↑
Circle the root letters in these words!

Carries on telling story of Joseph in Egypt.
Pharoah's dreams....
(brings in חלום → to remind them what
 this means)
    7 years -
What's seven in אצבע 1) GOOD IVRIT
   שבע!   אצבע!)   linker ✓

214

חבתא איך ↗ ④

After S tells story. She asks kids to
work in pairs to retell the story with
guidance & notes on IWB.

Notes to myself: kids def know ROOT
Letters! They can work them out
generally.

' did some very good small
links throughout כלל , נא , כּסף
colours ,

She needs to go back to the modern
H. usages of תודות etc.

To end: Back to the IWB
connections to Bib + עברית

Same words in both.
What has happened to ישׁנה
✓
added letters to make
It that I dreamed.
Mazel explains that we add prefixes
+ suffixes to make diff. words.

← טי
says טי I cnt .

215

Integrated activity

Modern Hebrew to Biblical Hebrew

Integrating *Gilas'* text into the integrated B and M Hebrew design

Term 4 – 2014/2015 Yr 3 class

Text: made up text / the infinitive verb – to eat.
Activity

1. Children are first to *listen* to the text: Read out loud by *Gila*. Whilst listening children write down any words or phrases they *recognise and/or understand.*

2. Children *listen again* to text, but now *with the text in front of them* and they write down any *further words or phrases they recognise and/or understand*

3. Teacher asks the children *what* they have understood.

4. We will *focus on a key word* from the text: to eat. I will write it on the board. Can you think of other words that are similar to it?

5. The children will work out what the *three root letters are. I will write them on the board.*

6. Together, the children *create new/other words/phrases* from these roots.

7. I will make the *link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew* *by showing them verses from the Hagaddah on the mitzvah of eating matza and maror. Also how G-d tells us about kashrut and in Parashat Noah how he tells Noah to gather food before the flood.*

8. Children will get a copy of all the verses. Circle or highlight the words that come from the shoresh

9. Jewish studies: what do we eat on different chagim and why? Ppt and worksheets.

10. *Plenary:* teacher sums up orally what has been learnt in the lesson.

11. *Reflection* group.

Gila + Gila
Child
did it as a roleplay

עִידָן: שָׁלוֹם שִׁיר.

שִׁיר: שָׁלוֹם עִידָן. מַה שְׁלוֹמְךָ?

עִידָן: מְצוּיָן, תּוֹדָה רַבָּה. מַה אַת אוֹהֶבֶת
לֶאֱכוֹל?

שִׁיר: אֲנִי אוֹהֶבֶת לֶאֱכוֹל פַלָאפֶל עִם חוּמוּס
וְסַלָט בְּפִיתָה.

עִידָן: מְצוּיָן! גַם אֲנִי אוֹהֵב לֶאֱכוֹל פַלָאפֶל עִם
חוּמוּס בְּפִיתָה, אֲבָל לֹא סַלָט.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל
אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל
אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר.

מה נשתנה

מַה נִּשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
מִכָּל הַלֵּילוֹת?

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִים
חָמֵץ וּמַצָּה
הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה, הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
כֻּלּוֹ מַצָּה.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת
אָנוּ אוֹכְלִים שְׁאָר יְרָקוֹת
הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה, הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
כֻּלּוֹ מָרוֹר.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אֵין אָנוּ
מַטְבִּילִין אֲפִלּוּ פַּעַם אַחַת
הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה, הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
שְׁתֵּי פְעָמִים.

שֶׁבְּכָל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין
בֵּין יוֹשְׁבִין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין
הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה, הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה
כֻּלָּנוּ מְסֻבִּין

א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן, לֵאמֹר אֲלֵהֶם.

And G-d spoke to Moses and Aaron,

ב דַּבְּרוּ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, לֵאמֹר: זֹאת הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכְלוּ, מִכָּל-הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶץ.

Speak to the children of Israel to say: These are the animals that you may eat from all of the animals on the land.

וְאַתָּה קַח-לְךָ, מִכָּל-מַאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֵאָכֵל, וְאָסַפְתָּ, אֵלֶיךָ; וְהָיָה לְךָ וְלָהֶם, לְאָכְלָה (פרשת נח)

And you shall take, from every food that can be eaten, and you shall gather to you, and it will be for you and them to eat.

① Gila   [Hebrew text]

SONGS   [Hebrew text]

[Hebrew text]

favourite.

[Hebrew text]

Excellent links) natural

[box: [Hebrew]] written by:

root letters!

② [Hebrew text]

Recap   first

(ROLE-PLAY v creative!)

rosh = [Hebrew]

G: All the [Hebrew] we learnt this
year. Review:—   excellent !!!!

[Hebrew] — [Hebrew]
[Hebrew] — [Hebrew]
[Hebrew] — [Hebrew]
where we live   — [Hebrew] (unusual)
child → [Hebrew] → we live.
[Hebrew] — girls.
[Hebrew]
[Hebrew]
Sometimes where can we find in

Biblical & Modern Hebrew — ⟩ makes
We "link" it together. quick
link to
BH & MH

" Listen to Yosef and I do the role-play
Write what you understand when you listen-y
write it in E or H that's oh! "
Take pencil —

    child → Idan → beautifully read
    9 → יה

G: "Listen the first time
    then tou we'll do it again"
    Read 3 times.
" Can you share anything with us?"

" פ׳דל "
" ן׳3ח "
" ך׳כלך "
What did ~~Ed~~ Idan ask Shir
Child: "What do you like to eat."
Gila: remember we're working on the
        infinitive.

How do you feel having the script before
you
⇒ "more confident"
  What did you understand with script?"
      ~~אני~~ "How are you?"
  "אופק׳ת"

Boy: translates; Shir's sentence →
"... ... אוכל בשביל אוכל"

Q: What does it mean → Idan's sentence.
but not Salad!

Q: <u>אוכלת</u>

what does it mean?

Do we know other words that are similar to
אוכלת?
What did we learn before the infinitive
Q: "I eat ..."
child: אני אוכל
אני אוכלת
how to turn into plural?
"we eat ..."
what do we add to eat at end.
אנחנו אוכלים

<u>for girls!</u>   "אוכלות"
↓
kid found this quiet diff

Q: קיפול קיפול tuck your chairs in +
come to carpet.

Q: look at me + tell me אוכלת means
to eat
who would say: אני אוכלת אוכל
" אני אוכל את האוכל

G: Can you find שרש of these words.
which 3 letters always appear.
Child: <u></u>

$$ ש . ר . אכ $$

Never a vowel in the שרש.
   usually not, usually only letters
   except for ואר -

Let's find that שרש in the) direct
Siddur / Torah.   ) link

Can you think anywhere where god
   tells us what we can / can't eat /
   Certain בד where it's a ברכה

kid: <u>קרבנות</u>
      את אוכל ידע קרבנות?
      Dairy

kid: also!   פסח

<u>Gila</u>: what must we eat on פסח?
      there's a blessing

<u>Child</u>: אכל

<u>kid</u>: אכל עוד יד?

<u>Gila</u>, There's blessings!

<u>   </u>

Gila put up two blessings from the book that we read from מגיד.

"בסוך ...... אל אלוקי א̈נ"

↓

What do you think it means?

Do you think אלוקי is from this ברכה?

Children: Yes!!

Child got → eat Matzah

G: God commanded us to eat מצה. Why מצה + not לחם?

Child: Told the story...

Second blessing: "אלוקי אדונ̈י ....."

Child → commands us to eat bitter herbs

Here we link modern Hebrew to Biblical.

~~Author~~ From אלוקינו! circle the word אלוקי.

G: I want to show you more –
In the book of ויקרא → Book of Leviticus Book of Torah. How many books of Toran
Child: 5! Correct.

G: I found a verse:

<u>Leviticus</u>
'Speak to children of Israel.... These are
the animals that you may eat.....".
What is God telling us—
‏כרס‎ → child.

Put your hands up when you hear
word from este ‏סכ‎ ..→ most kids put
"‏אוכל‎"   up their hand.
Happens tell them a lot → all about
‏כשר‎ ‏נשד‎ .

"‏כשרות‎" — Noah's ark.
When God tells Noah about flood →
many instructions → details of the
size, who can go in, animals.
God also tells Noah what food to gather
into the ark.

"Why do we have to eat kosher?" Child.

(Creates
interest
to JS)

G: Big, big question → Mrs Cohen can
tell you.

How many words from this verse had
the ‏כ‎ "‏ר‎"!! yes!

G: now you can find all the words
with this ‏כ‎ Highlight them
<u>Worksheets</u> 2 sheets each.

Are you finding the words from the same roots.

What is the shoresh from today?

רוכ

Summary: 9 goes over the אפור

for אפ רוכ

We are linking our Hebrew)

to Hagadah Torah etc.

How fantastic ~~it~~ this is!!

APPENDIX B – LETTER TO PARENTS

14 October 2014

Dear Parents

My name is Jo-Ann Myers and I am a doctoral candidate at Middlesex University. My chosen topic of research is Hebrew teaching, an area in which I have been involved professionally for many years. Clore Tikva has kindly allowed me to undertake my research with Year 3 children during the academic year 2014/2015 with the full support of the Headteacher and the Governing Body.

This letter is to provide you with some information concerning my research.

My research is aiming to link the teaching of Biblical Hebrew in Jewish Studies classes with Modern Hebrew in the Ivrit classes in order to impact positively on the children's general attainment in Hebrew.

I will be working very closely with the Year 3 Jewish Studies and Ivrit teachers over the period of the academic year. This work will involve my observing lessons and conducting follow-up interviews and discussions with the teachers.

I will also be forming a small focus group of randomly invited children and their parents whom I will ask to work with me in a more concentrated manner. You have the right to not participate in this if you are invited.

I can assure you that all material and data gathered will be anonymised and your child's identity will not at any time be revealed.

This is ground breaking research in the field of Hebrew teaching that will benefit not only your child but all children studying Hebrew in many different contexts. It is a wonderful opportunity for Clore Tikva to be part of it at its very beginning. I am very happy to discuss the research in more detail with anybody who would like to know more. Please contact me via the school.

I really hope that you will be happy for your child to participate – your support is very much valued and appreciated!

If however, for any reason, you are **not** happy for your child to participate in the focus group, please indicate this on the attached sheet.

Thanking you in advance and kind regards,

Jo-Ann Myers

Jo-Ann Myers
Return slip for Hebrew Research at Clore Tikva 2014/15

I would prefer for my child **not** to participate in the focus group.

Name of child: ………………………………………………………………………………………….

Please return this to the Headteacher.

Thank you

APPENDIX C – RESEARCH ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

Academic years/months/types of activity							
2012/13							
Jan 2013 Contact with Headteacher		**April 2013** Meeting Lesson observations Lesson observation		**May 2013** Meeting Report Lesson observation Meeting Lesson observations		**June 2013** Assembly observation Lesson observation Lesson observation	
2013/14							
Oct 2013 Meeting	**Nov 2013** Curriculum design Meeting Meeting Meeting	**Dec 2014** Curriculum design	**Feb 2014** Curriculum design Meeting Meeting	**March 2014** Meeting	**May 2014** Conference	**June 2014** Meeting Meeting Meeting Meeting Meeting	**July 2014** Meeting
2014/15 and 2015/16							
Sep 2014 Meeting	**Oct 2014** Pilot lesson observations Feedback/Interviews	**Nov 2014** Meeting	**Dec 2014** Lesson observations Focus Groups Feedback/interviews Teacher reflection sheets	**March 2015** Lesson observations Focus Groups Feedback/interviews Teacher reflection sheets	**June 2015** Lesson observations Focus Groups Feedback/interviews	**July 2015** Feedback/interviews	**Oct/ Nov 2015** Teacher reflection sheets

APPENDIX D – FIRST MEETING WITH TEAM

Meeting with Headteacher, Jewish Studies and Hebrew Staff
at Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School
4 April 2013, 12pm

Outline

1. **Introductions and thank you:**
    a. For meeting with me today during your break – really appreciate it

2. **Brief background of me**

3. **My area of research**

4. **How this might develop** – through **Action Research** (give out separate sheet)

5. **What am I asking of you?:**
    a. It is a big ask, but hopefully it will be exciting, different and rewarding and ultimately it will help you to improve on practice and ultimately impact on the children's Hebrew language learning
    b. Time
    c. Participation
    d. Openness
    e. Dialogue
    f. Collaboration
    g. Training
    h. Observations
    i. Interviews
    j. Reflection time
    k. Discussion

6. **Next steps:**
    a. Summer term:
        i. Observe classes so that I can get an understanding of the topics etc being taught
        ii. Meet with the teachers separately or together
        iii. Reflect

7. **Questions/queries/concerns?**

8. **Action Research** - Brief overview
(Sources: Hitchcock & Hughes (2003) *Research and The Teacher* and Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2001) *Research Methods in Education*)

It is a strategy of educational research.
It is a process that includes trying out particular ideas in practice as a means of improvement and increasing our knowledge of the curriculum as both form and content.

Purpose:
1. To plan, implement, review and evaluate an intervention designed to improve practice
2. To empower participants through research involvement and ideology critique

3. To develop reflective practice
4. To promote equality democracy
5. To link practice and research
6. To promote collaborative research

Focusing on:
1. Everyday practices
2. Outcomes of interventions
3. Participant empowerment
4. Reflective practice
5. Social democracy and equality
6. Decision-making

Key terms:
1. Action
2. Improvement
3. Reflection
4. Monitoring
5. Evaluation
6. Inattention
7. Problem solving
8. Empowering
9. Planning
10. Reviewing

Characteristics:
1. Context-specific
2. Participants as researchers
3. Reflection on practice
4. Interventionist – leading to solution of "real" problems and meeting "real" needs
5. Empowering for participants
6. Collaborative
7. Promoting practice and equality
8. Stakeholder research

The How:
1. AR involves a cyclical approach
2. The cycles of an AR project will involve:
   a. Identification of a problem/are for improvement/issue
   b. Collecting information
   c. Analysing/reflecting
   d. Planning action/intervention
   e. Implementing
   f. Monitoring outcomes

APPENDIX E – REPORT TO BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF CTJPS

Report to Education Committee of Board of Governors, Clore Tikva Jewish Primary School

Doctoral Research

My name is Jo-Ann Myers. I am a Doctoral candidate in Professional Studies at Middlesex University. I am currently in my third academic year and the area of my research is Hebrew teaching and learning.

I approached the Headteacher in the hope that I would be given access to conduct my research at Clore Tikva. I chose Clore Tikva as I have a long standing association with the school when I acted as a Hebrew consultant from Leo Baeck College and I felt that Clore Tikva would be an excellent choice in terms of accessibility and willingness to participate in the research. I was delighted to be welcomed into the school in order to conduct my research and this report serves as an update of my progress so far.

After an initial meeting with the Headteacher in January, a first meeting was set up in April with her, the deputy Headteacher, Hebrew Co-ordinator and Hebrew and Jewish Studies teachers. The purpose of this meeting was to outline the specific area of my research, how I intend to conduct the research and what the impact it will have on the school community.

1. **Specific area of my research**

My central question is:
To what extent will integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew in a Jewish Primary School impact positively on children's Hebrew literacy?

2. **Conducting the research**

By working closely and collaboratively with the Headteacher, deputy headteacher, Jewish Studies and Hebrew teachers both together and separately, I plan to design a methodology for integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew within the JS and Ivrit lessons and also within other areas of the school, such as assemblies and general school environment.

The approach I will be using is Action Research. The purpose of which is to:
   a. Plan, implement, review and evaluate an intervention designed to improve practice
   b. Empower participants through research involvement
   c. Develop reflective practice
   d. Promote equality
   e. Link practice and research
   f. Promote collaborative research

(from: Research Methods in Education, Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000)

3. **Impact on the school community**
   i.   I hope the process of undertaking the research in partnership and collaboration with the different stakeholders will be positive.
   ii.   The research will provide the teachers with an opportunity for personal and professional development.
   iii. The outcome, namely a methodology which will be tried and tested, will yield positive results on children's Hebrew literacy and will be implemented within the school. Hopefully, this methodology can then be replicated and used in other Jewish Primary Schools.

Framing the research:
It was decided at the first meeting on the 4th April, that I would be focusing my research on Years 3 and 4. I would spend this summer term just observing JS and Ivrit lessons and having brief conversations with the teachers whenever possible. From next academic year I will start to be design the methodology in collaboration with the teachers and begin to introduce it into the classes.

My progress so far:
I spent two days (22 April and 13 May) observing different Jewish Studies and Ivrit lessons. On the 24 May, I met with everyone in order to give an update of my progress. This included giving feedback on the observations and discussions with teachers as well as sharing some of the opportunities where I felt this integration could happen. Finally, we began to look at the question of what comprises Hebrew literacy and how I might begin to start working on a framework.

Next steps for this academic year:
Dates for observing JS and Ivrit lessons as well as a final catch up session for all members of the team were scheduled.
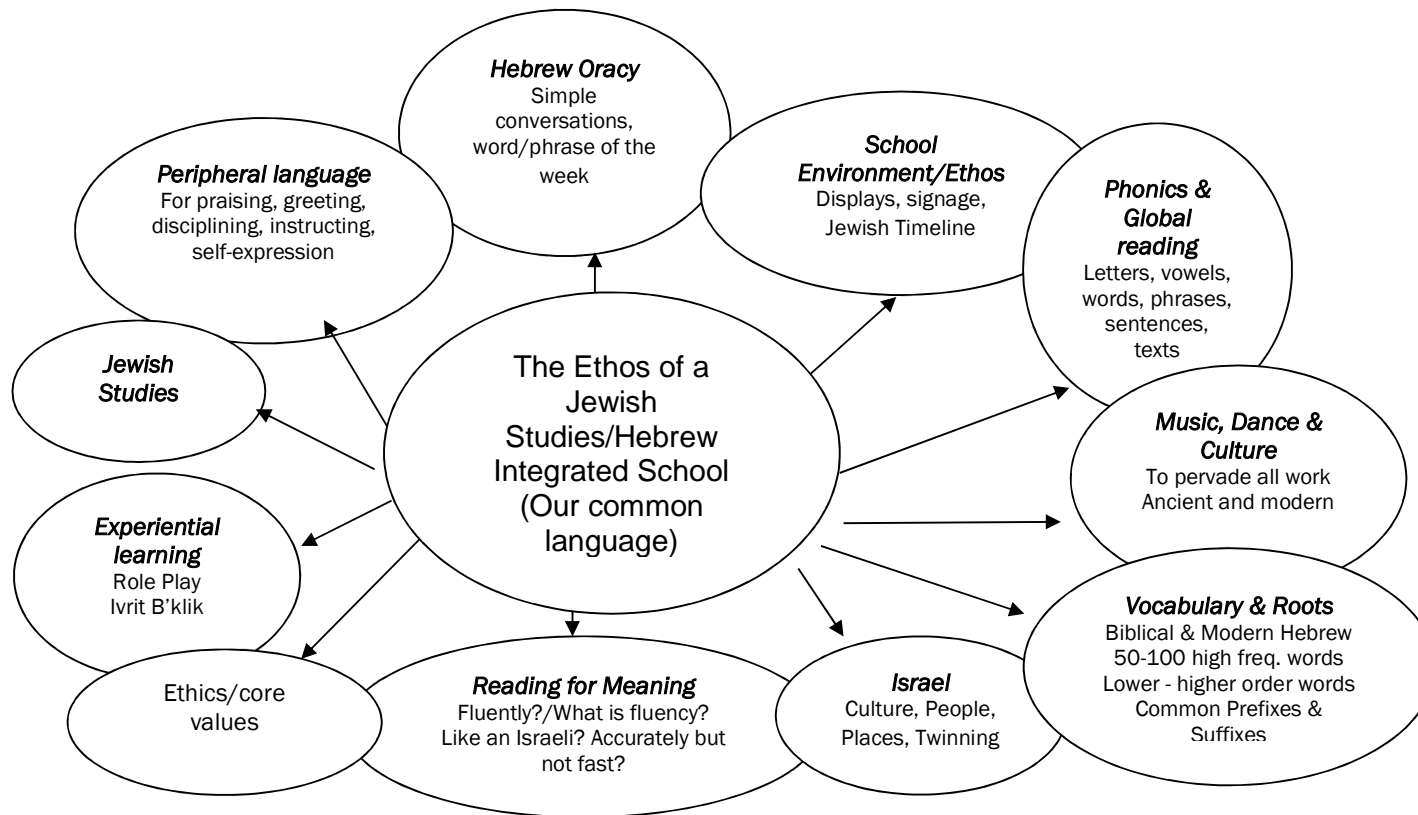
In concluding this report, I would just like to say that I am extremely grateful to Clore Tikva School for allowing me to undertake my research within the school community. I am privileged to be working in collaboration with wonderful teachers who are giving up their time to work with me. It is greatly appreciated.

If you require any further information about any aspect of my research, please do not hesitate to contact me on: jo@taldan.co.uk.

Jo-Ann Myers
28 May 2013

APPENDIX F – THE ETHOS OF A JEWISH STUDIES/*IVRIT* INTEGRATED SCHOOL

Hebrew Oracy
Simple conversations, word/phrase of the week

Peripheral language
For praising, greeting, disciplining, instructing, self-expression

School Environment/Ethos
Displays, signage, Jewish Timeline

Phonics & Global reading
Letters, vowels, words, phrases, sentences, texts

Jewish Studies

The Ethos of a Jewish Studies/Hebrew Integrated School (Our common language)

Music, Dance & Culture
To pervade all work
Ancient and modern

Experiential learning
Role Play
Ivrit B'klik

Ethics/core values

Reading for Meaning
Fluently?/What is fluency?
Like an Israeli? Accurately but not fast?

Israel
Culture, People, Places, Twinning

Vocabulary & Roots
Biblical & Modern Hebrew
50-100 high freq. words
Lower - higher order words
Common Prefixes & Suffixes

APPENDIX G – THREE STAGES OF BACKWARD DESIGN

Three Stages of Backward Design	
1. **Identify Desired** *Results*	- What will the students know, understand and will be able to do? - Learning outcomes - Knowledge - Skills - What is worth learning? - What do the students want to learn? - What is relevant?
2. **Determine Acceptable** *Evidence of Learning*	- How will we know the students have reached the goals/desired results? - What type of assessments? - End of programme performance tasks: **Interpretative tasks**: one way – texts, films, songs, poems, words, concepts, videos **Interpersonal tasks**: Two way – direct oral communications with others, unrehearsed **Presentational tasks**: Rehearsed, revised, using language for a real purpose, different contexts - Other types of assessments and evidence of learning
3. **Plan** *Learning Experiences* **& Instruction**	**What** do I need to do in the classroom to prepare the students for assessment? - Activities, strategies, learning experiences etc. **What** needs to be taught and **how**?

APPENDIX H – FRAMEWORK VERSION 1

STAGE 1
Established Goals: **G** • To improve the teaching and learning of Hebrew; to impact positively on students' Hebrew literacy through the integration of Biblical and Modern Hebrew • To create possible and appropriate windows of opportunities for integrating Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew • To establish a collaborative planning and working partnership between JS and Ivrit teachers in order to seize these windows of opportunities • For students to receive a coherent understanding of both Biblical and Modern Hebrew • For students to be able to make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew and thus gain greater understanding

Understandings:	Essential Questions:
Students will understand that … • Biblical and Modern Hebrew are part of the same language and are not two different languages even though there are some differences • There are many words and phrases that are present in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew • Their JS and Ivrit teachers are working together to help them achieve and understand this	• Where have I come across/heard/seen this word/concept/phrase before? • What other words/concepts/phrases are similar to this one? • Name a tfila/bracha/din/pirkei avot where you have seen/heard this word/phrase/concept (When in Ivrit lesson) • Name a Hebrew song/text/poem/story/dialogue where you have seen or heard this word/phrase/concept (When in JS lesson) • What does xxx mean in JS context? What does xxx mean in Ivrit context? Eg: the word "mah" – Mah Tovu (JS)/Mah ata rotzeh (Ivrit)?

Students will know…. K	*Students will be able to….* S
• Which specific words/phrases/concepts are present in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew through learning a Biblical & Ivrit text • Certain Hebrew roots in both Biblical and Ivrit texts • Identify key roots of words • Create different words from the key roots • Know the meanings of these words • Identify words/phrases/concepts that are present in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew	

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks:	Other Evidence:

Activity: Simple Biblical (JS lesson) and Modern Hebrew (Ivrit lesson) **text analysis:**
• Meanings of key words/phrases and concepts
• Analysis of roots of these key words/phrases and concepts
• Using these roots, create links to Biblical and Modern Hebrew
Criteria for assessing understanding:
• Ability to know meanings of 1-2/2-3/4-5/5-6 key words/phrases/concepts in each text
• Ability to identify the roots of some of these words/phrases/concepts
• Make 1 or 2 (or more depending on ability) links to either Biblical or Modern Hebrew (depending on the lesson)
	• Peripheral language: greeting, praising, instructing, disciplining, self-expression
	• Games: matching, bingo, etc.
	• Assemblies: picking up on words/phrases/concepts learnt in class
	• Homework:
	    o Choose a Hebrew word/s and show where it appears in Biblical and Modern Hebrew
	    o Choose a Hebrew word/s and find the root and make up more words and show where they appear in Biblical and Modern Hebrew
	
	• Self-reflection/self-assessment of learning:
	    o Did I find this exercise too easy/just right/too difficult?
	    o What would have helped me to make it easier?
	    o What could have made it more challenging for me?
	    o Did I learn something new? What?

APPENDIX H cont.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities: L

What learning experiences and instruction will enable students to achieve the desired results?

Activity:

1. Select a text:
   a. JS – song, tfila, bracha, pirkei avot, middah, etc.
   b. Ivrit – story, song, poem, saying, dialogue, etc.
2. Children are to **listen** (only first) to the text – either read out by teacher or recorded or from YouTube etc. and while listening think/write down anything they recognise or recognise and understand.
3. Listen again to text, but now with the text in front of them/IWB/sheets etc. and do further recognition and understanding of words etc.
4. Identify key words
5. Identify roots of these words
6. Create new/other words from these roots
7. Make links to both Biblical and Modern Hebrew – where do they come across these words in JS (if they are in Ivrit lesson) or in Ivrit (if in JS lesson)?
8. Reflection: (have an easy to use evaluation sheet)
   a. Name something new I learnt today
   b. Was this too easy/just right/too difficult for me? Use smiley faces, unhappy faces?

APPENDIX I – FRAMEWORK VERSION 5

STAGE 1
Established Goals: G

Established Goals:

- **Researcher:**
  - To intervene pedagogically in the way Hebrew is taught in order to impact positively on learners' Hebrew literacy
  - To provide possible, manageable and appropriate windows of opportunities for integrating Biblical and Modern Hebrew within a Jewish Day School context
  - To produce an integrated Biblical and Modern Hebrew programme that is suitable for Jewish Day School contexts
- **Learner:**
  - For learners to understand that Biblical and Modern Hebrew are one and the same language albeit with some differences
  - For learners to be able to make links by identifying root letters, words, phrases that occur in both Biblical and Modern Hebrew and thus gain greater understanding of the Hebrew language
  - After a period of time using the programme, learners will *naturally* make links between Biblical and Modern Hebrew without teacher intervention
- **Teacher:**
  - To establish a collaborative planning and working partnership between Jewish Studies and Ivrit teachers in order to seize windows of integrative opportunities
  - Over time, teachers will *naturally* integrate Biblical and Modern Hebrew into their teaching

Understandings:	**Essential Questions:** (for teachers to ask of learners)
Most learners will understand that … • The Hebrew they learn in JS lessons and the Hebrew they learn in Ivrit lessons have many similarities and are the same language • The vast majority of words (verbs and nouns) in the Hebrew language come from a three-consonant root word that contains the essence of the word's meaning, thus enabling them to become independent learners • These same root letters appear in both the Hebrew they learn in JS lessons and in Ivrit lessons and that these root letters have the same or similar meaning • Their JS and Ivrit teachers are working and planning together to help them achieve and understand this	• Where have you come across/heard/seen this word/concept/phrase before? • What other words/concepts/phrases are similar to this one? • Name a t'filla, bracha, din, pirkei avot where you have seen/heard this word/phrase/concept (when in Ivrit lesson) • Name a Hebrew song/text/poem/story/dialogue where you have seen or heard this word/phrase/concept (when in JS lesson) • What does xxx mean in JS context? What does xxx mean in Ivrit context? Eg: the word "Mah" in "Mah Tovu"(JS)/"Mah" atah rotzeh? (Ivrit)

Appendix I cont.

STAGE 1

As a result of these activities, most learners will know ....

KNOWLEDGE

- The meaning of 2-3 words from a particular JS or Ivrit text

- Which letters of these words are the root letters

As a result of these activities, some learners will know ....

At the lower end:

- The meaning of 1-2 words from a particular JS or Ivrit text

- Which letters of these words are the root letters

At the higher end:

- The meaning of 3-4 words from a particular JS or Ivrit text

- Which letters of these words are the root letters

As a result of this knowledge and skills, most learners will be able to....

SKILLS

- Find 1 (-2) other word that emanates from each root

- Cite 1 (-2) example where these words appear in both a Biblical and Ivrit text

As a result of this knowledge and skills, some learners will be able to....

At the lower end:

- Find 1 other word that emanates from this root (or not)

- Cite 1 example where this word appears in both a Biblical and Ivrit text (or not)

At the higher end:

- Find 2 other words that emanate from each root

- Cite 2 examples where these words appear in both a Biblical and Ivrit text

Appendix I cont.	
Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence	
Performance Tasks:	**Other Evidence:**

Activity:
 Simple Biblical (JS lesson) and Modern Hebrew (Ivrit lesson) **text analysis:**
 • Peripheral language see *****
 • Meanings of key words/phrases and concepts
 • Analysis of roots of these key words/phrases and concepts
 • Using these roots, create links to Biblical and Modern Hebrew
 Small interventions:
 • Teachers plan to teach 1-3 words related to roots
 • Recap at end of lesson
 	
 Criteria for assessing understanding:
 • Ability to know meanings of 1-2/2-3/4-5/5-6 key words/phrases/concepts in each text
 • Ability to identify the roots of some of these words/phrases/concepts
 • Make one or more links (or more depending on ability) to either Biblical or Modern Hebrew (depending on the lesson, ie. if in JS make links to Ivrit and vice-versa)
	• *****Peripheral language: greeting, praising, instructing, disciplining, self-expression (teachers to make explicit links between B & M Hebrew as part of the main task. This will be then used regularly as part of all JS and Ivrit lessons)
	 • Reinforcement and transference of skills:
	   o Games: matching, bingo, etc. (JM to create)
	   o Assemblies: picking up on words/phrases/concepts learnt in class (shared by JS and Ivrit teachers?) – chagim/festivals, eg. Yom Ha'atzmaut
	 Home challenges: every 1-2 weeks?
	     ▪ Choose a Hebrew word/s and show where it appears in Biblical and Modern Hebrew
	     ▪ Choose a Hebrew word/s and find the root and make up more words and show where they appear in Biblical and Modern Hebrew
	 • Self-reflection/self-assessment of learning: JM to conduct
	   o General class assessment (using easy evaluation sheet with smiley faces, light bulbs etc):
	     ▪ Did I find this exercise too easy/just right/too difficult?
	     ▪ What would have helped me to make it easier?
	     ▪ What could have made it more challenging for me?
	     ▪ Did I learn something new? What?
	   o Focus group with randomly selected pupils from each of the 2 classes to talk through the experiences of one activity to explore evidence of learning:
	     ▪ Semi-structured focus groups to test out the content after sessions
	     ▪ Teachers to randomly select 6 children from each of the two classes: mixed gender and ability

Appendix I cont.
Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities: L

What learning experiences and instruction will enable students to achieve the desired results?

Activity:

A. **20 Minute task**
9. Select an existing text:
    a. JS – song, t'filla, bracha, pirkei avot, midda, etc.
    b. Ivrit– story, song, poem, saying, dialogue, etc.
10. Children are to **listen** (only first) to the text – either read out by teacher or recorded or from YouTube etc. and while listening think/write down anything they recognise or recognise and understand.
11. Listen again to text, but now with the text in front of them/IWB/sheets etc. and do further recognition and understanding of words etc.
12. Identify key word/s
13. Identify one root/s of a word/s
14. Create new/other words from this root/s
15. Make links to both Biblical and Modern Hebrew – where do they come across these words in JS (if they are in Ivrit lesson) or in Ivrit (if in JS lesson)?
16. Reflection: (have an easy to use evaluation sheet - use smiley faces, unhappy faces, etc)
    a. Name something new I learnt today
    b. Was this too easy/just right/too difficult for me?

B. **Smaller 2-3 minute class interventions:**
1. Teachers plan to teach 1-3 words that are related to a root, eg. tsedek and revisit these over the next few weeks
2. Teachers to use what they are already teaching/what's in their curriculum
3. At end of lesson ask learners to recap on new words learnt from the root

APPENDIX J – INTEGRATED ACTIVITY: BIBLICAL HEBREW TO MODERN HEBREW

Integrating Suzy's text into the integrated B and M Hebrew design
Term 1 – 2014/2015 Yr 3 class. Text: Bereishit, chapter 1, verse 1

Activity
1. Children are first to *listen* to the text (either read out by teacher/Ivrit B'klik/YouTube etc.): Whilst listening children write down any words or phrases they *recognise and/or understand.*

2. Children *listen again* to text, but now *with the text in front of them* and they write down any *further words or phrases they recognise and/or understand*

3. Teacher asks the children *what* they have understood.

4. Teacher then *focuses on 2 (-3) key words* from the text:
a. Bereishit
b. Bara
c. Ha'aretz

5. The children, with the teacher's help, work out what the *three root letters of each word* are:
a. Rosh, aleph, shin
b. Bet, resh, aleph
c. Aleph, resh, tsadi

6. Together, the children *create new/other words/phrases* from these roots:
a. Rosh Hashanah, Rosh, Rosh Chodesh, Yom Rishon, Rishon Letzion, rishon
b. Boreh pri hagafen, B'ria, Boreh pri ha'etz, bari
c. Eretz Yisrael, Eretz, eretz zavat chalav udvash

7. The teacher now makes the *link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew explicit* by asking the children where they have come across these words (roots) in *Ivrit* and has *examples* to illustrate them:
a. Rosh, aleph, shin:
 i. Rosh ii. Yom Rishon
b. Bet, resh, aleph:
 i. Labriyut
c. Aleph, resh, tsadi:
 i. Ha'aretz ii. Be'aretz iii. Aretz

8. *Plenary:* teacher sums up orally what has been learnt in the lesson.

9. *Reflection* sheet: give out to **all** children at end of activity.

APPENDIX K – INTEGRATED ACTIVITY: MODERN HEBREW TO BIBLICAL HEBREW

Integrating Gila's text into the integrated B and M Hebrew design
Term 1 – 2014/2015 Yr 3 class. Text: Unit 2 of Ivrit B'klik: "My family"

Activity

1. Children are first to **listen** to the text (either read out by teacher/Ivrit B'klik /YouTube etc.): Whilst listening children write down any words or phrases they **recognise and/or understand.**

2. Children **listen again** to text, but now **with the text in front of them** and they write down any **further words or phrases they recognise and/or understand**

3. Teacher asks the children **what** they have understood.

4. Teacher then **focuses on 2 (-3) key words** from the text:
   a. Gadol
   b. Shalom
   c. Ohevet

5. The children, with the teacher's help, work out what the **three root letters of each word** are:
   a. Gimmel, dalet, lamed
   b. Shin, lamed, mem
   c. Aleph, hay, vet

6. Together, the children **create new/other words/phrases** from these roots:
   a. Gedola, godel, gedolim, gedolot, legadel
   b. Mah shlomchem?, ma shlomech/shlomcha?, Shabbat shalom, shalem, mushlam (songs about shalom)
   c. Ohev, ahavti, ahava, "od lo ahavti dai"

7. The teacher now makes the **link between Biblical and Modern Hebrew explicit** by asking the children where they have come across these words (roots) in **JS** and has **examples** to illustrate them:
   a. **Gimmel, dalet, lamed:**
      i. Nes gadol haya sham
      ii. 15 mentions of this root in various states in the book of Jonah –great city, great wind, mighty tempest, exceedingly afraid, big fish, greatest, nobles, exceedingly glad, reared.
      iii. Cohen gadol

   b. **Shin, lamed, mem:**
      Shlom bayit, Shlomo hamelech, Yerushalayim, "Oseh shalom"
   c. **Aleph, hay, vet:**
      Ve-ahavta le-re'acha kamocha, Ahava rabba, Ahavat olam, Ve-ahavta et adonai elohecha be-chol levavcha…,

8. *Plenary:* teacher sums up orally what has been learnt in the lesson.

9. *Reflection* sheet: give out to **all** children at end of activity.

APPENDIX L – FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT

Hebrew Research at Clore Tikva – Suzy's/Gila/Hannah Focus Group Script

Introduction
Hello children. It's lovely to see you and to work with you again. Just to remind you I'm interested in finding out about your experiences in Mrs C's Jewish Studies / Gila's / Hannah's *Ivrit* lessons and I will soon be asking you some questions about your Jewish Studies / *Ivrit* lessons.

Remember there are no wrong answers to the questions I will ask you. I just want to hear what you think or feel about the questions I ask. Also you will not be marked on your answers. Your teachers, your parents and your classmates will not know how you answered any of the questions I will ask. If you have any questions about what I have just said, please raise your hand now.

Great! When I start asking you questions you don't have to raise your hand to answer. But it is really important that I hear *all* your answers. So when you have something to say, please wait until the person talking stops talking or until I call your name.

I want you to remember one last thing before we begin. Some of you may agree with some of the answers you hear others saying, and you may disagree with some of the other answers people give. That is absolutely fine, I want to know how each one of you thinks and feels. Are there any questions about this?

Allow couple of minutes.

Great! Now I would like each of you to take the label with your name on it.

Wait a minute or so.

Clarification of terms
I am going to ask you questions about the Jewish Studies / *Ivrit* lesson you have just had with Mrs C / Gila / Hannah. So every time I say **today's** lesson, I am talking about this lesson that you have just had. I may also ask you about some other Jewish Studies / *Ivrit* lessons you already have had with Mrs C / Gila/ Hannah, not just the one today.

Does everyone understand that?

Ok then, here is my first question.

Questions

1. What was Mrs C's JS / Gila's / Hannah's *Ivrit* lesson about today?
   Probe: can you remember the learning objectives?

2. I now want to find out how you found today's lesson.
a. Were there any bits that you found easy to understand?
   Probe: what were these? Why were these easy to understand?
b. Were there any bits that you found hard to understand?
   Probe: what were these? Why were these difficult to understand?
3. What new Hebrew words or phrases did you learn in today's lesson?

4. I am now going to do a short activity with you:
a. Circle the three root letters of these Hebrew words
b. Do you know of other Hebrew words or phrases that you can make using these three root letters?
c. So, what do you think these three root letters mean in general?
d. Do you think it is important to understand the job of Hebrew root letters?
   Probe: why yes? Why not?
e. How does it make you feel working out the three root letters of a Hebrew word?
   Probe: why?
   Probe: Can you each give me one word that describes how you feel when you learn Hebrew?
f. Where else in other lessons, not just in your Jewish Studies lessons, would you come across these Hebrew words or words similar to these?

5. Have you been able to use or recognise any of the Hebrew words you have learnt in Mrs C's Jewish Studies lessons in Gila's or Hannah's Libby's *Ivrit* lessons?
   Probe: can you give me some examples?
   Probe: what does that tell us about Hebrew?

Wrap-up
Unfortunately, we are almost out of time. Let me repeat the main things you gave in your answers.

Member check
I am going to ask each of you how you feel about some of the big issues that we have just talked about. We are not going to discuss these points like we did before; rather, I just want you to tell me your feelings about it.
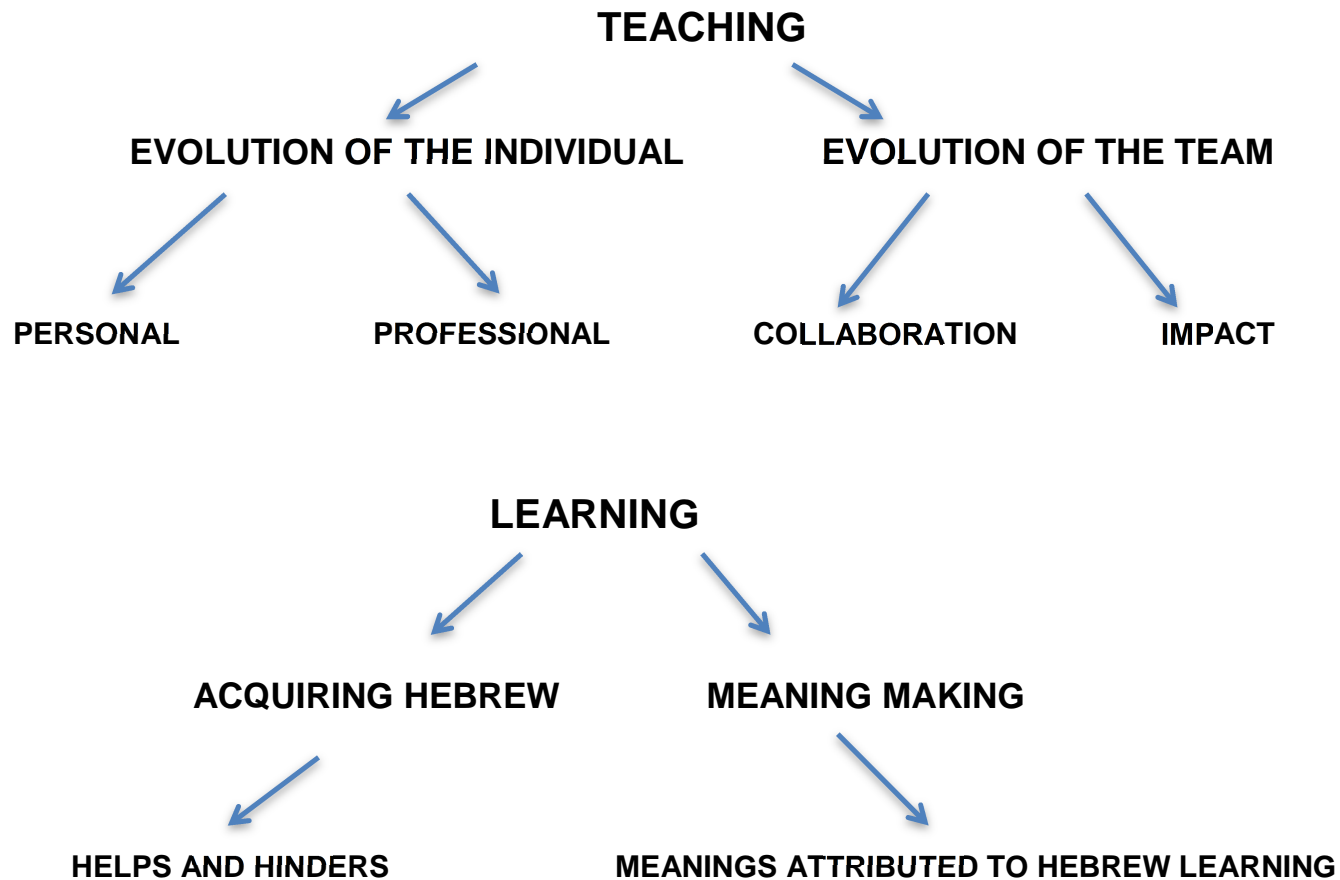
Closing statement
I want to thank all of you very much for coming here and talking with me today. I really enjoyed meeting with you again and your answers really helped me to better understand what Mrs C's Jewish Studies / Gila / Hannah's *Ivrit* lessons are like for you. Again, I want to remind you that your teachers, parents and classmates will not know your answers. Do you have any last questions?

I also want to tell you that this will be the last time I will be meeting with you and I have really appreciated your help with my study.

Ok now please follow me back to your classroom. And thank you again for helping me today.

APPENDIX M – THEMATIC MAP

TEACHING

EVOLUTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

EVOLUTION OF THE TEAM

PERSONAL

PROFESSIONAL

COLLABORATION

IMPACT

LEARNING

ACQUIRING HEBREW

MEANING MAKING

HELPS AND HINDERS

MEANINGS ATTRIBUTED TO HEBREW LEARNING

APPENDIX N – RANGES OF RESPONSES REGARDING HEBREW

POSITIVE				
Proud (20)	Good (9)	Relaxed (3)	Achieved (1)	Fantastic (1)
Like (16)	Love (6)	Good to learn (3)	Opportunities (1)	Alphabetical (1)
Excited (15)	Fun (4)	Amazed (2)	Joyful (1)	Enthusiastic (1)
Easy (14)	Enjoy (4)	Curious (1)	Victorious (1)	Confident (1)
Happy (13)	Accomplished (3)	Surprised (1)	Champion (1)	Thinkable (1)

NEUTRAL				
Don't really know/don't have a reason (3)	Kind of/ish (2)	Quiet (1)	Tired (1)	Normal (1)

NEGATIVE				
Hard (16)	Sad (4)	Struggle (4)	Bored (3)	Embarrassed (2)
Not very good at Hebrew (1)	Nervous (1)	Upset (1)	Scared (1)	