Volunteer perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' self-regulated learning and scaffolding it

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the study was to explore volunteers' perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' self-regulated learning skills (SRL) and the scaffolding strategies the volunteers use to support SRL in a learning club for adult Finnish language learners organized by a third sector operator in Finland. In addition, the purpose was to deepen the understanding about the relationship between SRL and scaffolding in this particular context. This study draws from the social-cultural understanding of learning.

The study was conducted as a qualitative case study, and the data consisted of semi-structured, thematic interviews of four volunteers. The data was analyzed through qualitative, abductive content analysis. Pintrich's (2004) framework of SRL and van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) scaffolding framework were used to guide the analysis of the data.

The findings indicated that the volunteers had perceived various SRL skills in all areas of the Pintrich's (2004) framework, although findings in the areas of behavior and context were scarce. Similarly, the study confirmed van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) scaffolding framework. In addition, conversation as scaffolding strategy was found.

The findings both validated and expanded upon previous understandings of SRL and scaffolding in the context of adult Finnish language learners. The findings suggest that the perceived SRL and scaffolding response are mostly in balance. However, the inconsistent balance in places indicate that the provided support might not always be tailored to the learner. Additionally, especially conversations as a scaffolding method need further study. The findings of this study can be used in the volunteer training in the future. They may as well inform practitioners working with adult Finnish language learners.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, scaffolding, adult language learner

TIIVISTELMÄ

Huitula, Emilia. 2022. Vapaaehtoisten näkemyksiä aikuisten suomen kielen oppijoiden itsesäätelevästä oppimisesta ja sitä tukevista pedagogisista keinoista. Kasvatustieteen pro gradu -tutkielma. Jyväskylän yliopisto. Kasvatustieteen ja psykologian laitos. 89 sivua.

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli tutkia vapaaehtoisten käsityksiä aikuisten suomen kielen oppijoiden itsesäätelevästä oppimisesta ja vapaaehtoisten käyttämistä pedagogisista keinoista sen tukemiseksi sekä syventää ymmärrystä itsesäätelevän oppimisen ja pedagogisten keinojen välisestä suhteesta.

Tutkimus toteutettiin laadullisena tapaustutkimuksena ja tutkimusaineisto koostui neljän vapaaehtoisen teemahaastatteluista. Aineisto analysoitiin laadullisen, abduktiivisen sisällönanalyysin periaatteita noudattaen. Pintrichin (2004) itseohjautuvan oppimisen viitekehystä, sekä van de Polin ja kumppaneiden (2010) pedagogisten keinojen viitekehystä käytettiin ohjaamaan aineiston analyysia.

Tutkimuksen tulokset vahvistivat Pintrichin (2004) itsesäätelevän oppimisen viitekehyksen, vaikkakin tulokset käyttäytymisen ja kontekstin osa-alueilla jäivät vähäisiksi. Vapaaehtoiset myös käyttivät kaikkia van de Polin (2010) kuvaamia pedagogisia keinoja ohjauksessaan. Näiden keinojen lisäksi keskustelut pedagogisena keinona olivat suuressa osassa ohjausta.

Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että itseohjautuva oppiminen ja sen tukeminen ovat suurimmaksi osaksi tasapainossa. Vapaaehtoiset saattavat kuitenkin tarjota tukea paikoin intuitiivisesti arvioimatta ensin oppijan tarpeita. Lisäksi erityisesti keskustelut tukemisen keinona vaativat lisää tutkimusta. Tutkimuksen tuloksia voidaan hyödyntää vapaaehtoisten koulutuksessa ja ne voivat antaa tietoa aikuisten suomen kielen oppijoiden kanssa työskenteleville ammattilaisille.

Asiasanat: itsesäätelevä oppiminen, sosiokulttuurinen oppimiskäsitys, aikuinen kielenoppija

CONTENT

1 INTRODUCTION

Adult Finnish language learners represent a fast-growing group attending to adult education in Finland. Although there is no available data on the exact number of adult Finnish language learners in Finland, statistics can provide facts about the total number of adult immigrants. In 2020, there were over 343 000 adults with a foreign background in Finland, and the number has increased by around 25 percent since 2014 (Statistics Finland 2022). The constant increase in the total number of adult immigrants will most likely rise the number of adult Finnish language learners in the future. The need to pay attention to adult Finnish language learners' learning and its support is crucial.

The adult Finnish language learners have usually immigrated to Finland, and the support for immigrants' learning and overall integration has been stated in the law. Although the authorities have the main responsibility for the integration of immigrants (Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä 1386/2010), various government actions have taken a stance on the volunteers' and third sector actors' role in the promotion of immigrant integration. The Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration states that the local-level authorities shall develop integration as multi-sectoral cooperation, involving for example associations and organizations (Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä 1386/2010). Additionally, the Finland's Council of State (2021) has released a government report on the need to reform integration. In the report it is stated that the impact of integration promotion can be enhanced by strengthening the role of the third sector. Third sector operators can provide flexible and low-treshold services, thus supporting the agency and participation of immigrants (Finland's Council of State, 2021).

One way of supporting the participation of immigrants, or more precisely, adult Finnish language learners, is through education and support of learning. The use of self-regulated learning (SRL) skills, a process, in which a student metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally participates in their own learning (Zimmerman 1989), has been found to benefit learning in multiple ways. The previous literature on SRL is wide. For example, in the context of language learners,

studies have found a link between SRL strategies and learning outcomes (e.g. Chen, 2011; Chien, 2012).

However, the development of SRL cannot be assumed to be a process that occurs without assistance. The development of SRL initiates from social interaction and only later becomes internalized (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997). Here the presence of a more competent person is necessary for the development process. The more competent person can be a teacher, but also some other instructor. In Finland, the role of the third sector has traditionally been strong (Pirkkalainen et. al., 2018), and the work of the third sector and volunteers has been recognized as a valuable resource in the immigrant integration process (Kotoutuminen.fi, 2021a). Thus, volunteers in Finland work closely with adult Finnish language learners in the Finnish third sector associations and provide their assistance in, for example, homework clubs (Kotoutuminen.fi, 2021b).

One way of providing help is scaffolding. In scaffolding, the more competent person supports learner in the zone of proximal development (ZPD), where the learner is able to complete a learning task with the assistance of a more experienced person, but which would not yet be possible without assistance (Van Lier, 2013). The ultimate goal of scaffolding is learner autonomy and agency, so that the learner would be able to complete a task without assistance (Van de Pol et. al., 2010). This notion creates a link between scaffolding and SRL. Scaffolding has been studied among language learners before, for example Mahan (2020), McNeil (2012), Dong (2017) have studied scaffolding strategies in the context of content and language integrated learning, and Walqui (2006) in a second language learner (SLL) setting. In the Finnish context, more precisely among adult Finnish language learners, Suni (2008) and Strömmer (2017) have investigated scaffolding Finnish as a second language.

Though language learners have already been addressed in studies concerning SRL and scaffolding, still the studied population is quite homogenous, and the studies rarely address the two concepts together. Most of the above mentioned studies on SRL and scaffolding take place in either primary, secondary, or postsecondary setting, and thus also the scaffolding providers have been profes-

sional teachers. Research on scaffolding adult language learners' SRL in non-formal, non-professional educational context is scarce. Adult learning can be distinguished from children's learning for example by looking at motivation, the role of previous experience and self-direction (Knowles et. al. 2005), and thus the studies on children's SRL and scaffolding do not provide complete insights about the issue. Adult learning differs from other learners in fundamental ways and that is why research concerning adult Finnish language learners' SRL and ways to scaffold it is needed. Drawing from a social constructionist perspective, this study aims to address that gap by interviewing volunteers on their perceptions about adult language learners' SRL and the volunteers' efforts to scaffold those skills.

2 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ADULT LEARNER

The field of adult education consists of multiple theories, in which adult as an autonomous and self-directed learner seems to be in the center (Knowles et. al., 2005; Brookfield, 1986). Adults are seen as a highly heterogenous group, whose great source for learning are their previous experiences (Knowles et. al., 2005; Lindeman, 1961; Merriam et. al., 2007). Given this, learning seems to be strongly connected to the adult's own reality, and individual differences in learning are emphasized. An adult learner can also be characterized as a voluntary learner, whose learning is internally motivated by a need in real life (Knowles et. al., 2005; Lindeman, 1961). Despite these characteristics, comprehensive, generalized statements about adults as learners cannot be made, as learning varies with culture and personality, for example (Brookfield, 1986). The aforementioned list of characteristics is also not exhaustive, nor is it intended to be. These selected characteristics can, however, help understand adult learning as a phenomenon. Three characteristics of self-directed learning, motivation and the role of experience are discussed in more detail below.

2.1 Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning can be defined as a process in which the learner is in primary charge of planning, carrying out and evaluating of their own learning experience (Merriam et. al., 2007). Knowles et. al. (2005) have suggested that individuals grow towards self-directedness as they mature. However, some scholars have claimed self-directedness being a context dependent characteristic. Adult learners, that in some situations appear highly self-directed and autonomous, can in other situations need, or decide to want extensive assistance (Merriam et. al., 2007). In other words, it should not be concluded that a learner who has been autonomous in some learning situation in the past, would be autonomous in a completely new situation.

Moreover, it has been suggested that four major variables have the most influence in the adult learners' autonomy: their technical skills related to the learning process, their familiarity with the subject matter, their sense of personal competence as learners, and their commitment to learning at this point of time (Merriam et. al., 2007). As for adult Finnish language learners, it should be noted that some challenges in autonomous and self-directed learning might include for example linguistic challenges, differences in the learning culture compared to that of their own country and their current life situation. Planning, carrying out and evaluating one's own work is challenging if one faces difficulties with understanding the main point of the task and what is expected to be learned, and if other tasks in life are prioritized over learning. Hievanen et. al. (2020) reported that teachers of adult immigrant learners have perceived strong heterogeneity in the adult Finnish language learners' autonomy, and that was seen to be due to the different entry level, educational background, age, life situation and health condition.

2.2 Motivation

The inherent question of why adults engage in learning has to do with the underlying motivational factors for learning. As outlined below, motivation is recognized as an important part of SRL. Knowles et. al. (2005) state that from the perspective of andragogy, the theory of adult learning, the assumption is that adult learners are mainly motivated internally; they seek for increased job satisfaction, self-esteem, or quality in life. In other words, they have a need in real life, which learning will fulfill (Knowles et. al., 2005). This assumption considers only the internal, goal-oriented reasons for engaging in learning. In other words, learning is seen as motivating because of the added value to one's life after acquiring a new skill or piece of knowledge. However, it cannot be assumed that adult learners are always internally motivated. Dæhlen and Ure (2009) for example found that low-skilled adults stated more frequently that they have been obligated to undertake training. Besides, Knowles' et al.'s (2005) approach seems to

ignore the social aspects of motivation to learn as well as seeing the learning process valuable per se.

Taking a broader perspective, Houle (1961) has suggested three separate learning orientations for adults: goal-oriented learners, who view learning as a means of achieving some other goal; activity-oriented learners, who participate mainly because of the activity; and learning-oriented leaners, who seek knowledge for its own sake. Later, Boshier (1971) advanced this typology even further and suggested seven categories in his Educational Participation Scale: communication improvement, social contact, educational preparation, professional advancement, family togetherness, social simulation, and cognitive interest.

A consideration that is of particular significance for adult language learners is motivation and learning in relation to additional language learning. Peirce (1995), in the context of foreign language learning, has pointed out that the notion of motivation should be problematized as it does not properly capture the interconnectedness of power, identity, and language learning. In case of adult language learners, regardless of the subject studied, there notion of language learning is always present. Peirce (1995) suggests replacing the concept of motivation with the concept of investment, because it conceives the language learner as having a complex social identity and multiple desires. The adult Finnish language learners can also be seen as having multiple desires when engaging in educative practices in Finland. For them, acquiring new knowledge might mean investing in their multiple identities as parents, future professionals, and members of the Finnish society. The findings of Hievanen et. al. (2020) study indicate, that for many immigrant mothers, participating in learning activities might be important per se, as it enables social participation. Here, the notion of investment is not merely investing in the exchange of information but investing in a learner's social identity (Peirce, 1995). Returning to the needs in real life that Knowles et. al. (2005) suggested as a prerequisite for motivation, adult Finnish language learners might have a need of increased cultural capital, a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which can be realized through employment and the sense of

mastering the Finnish language and being able to communicate better with their children's teachers, for example.

2.3 Experience

The role of experience is another key characteristic of an adult learner. All adults come to the learning situation with a variety of work and life experiences. In any group of adults, there is a wider range of individual differences in terms of background, learning style, motivation, interests, and goals, to name a few (Knowles et. al., 2005). This is particularly true in the context of this study. The background of the learners in the learning club varies, most learners coming from Asian or Middle Eastern countries, and they study in various educational institutes and fields. The learners attend to comprehensive, vocational or third level education, and have a variety of goals and are in different life situations regarding family status, for example.

The variety experiences can be used as a resource in learning and learning activities should emphasize the adults' own experience (Knowles et. al. 2005; Lindeman, 1961). Knowles et. al. (2005) state that adult's self-identity is built on the adult's experiences and thus valuing the adult's experience is also valuing them as persons and vice versa.

Despite the assets previous experiences can provide for learning, experiences can also hinder learning or even prevent it in the future. Dewey (1997) notes that an experience is miseducative if it arrests or disorts the growth of further experience. In the case of adult Finnish language learners, it should be taken into consideration that the previous learning-related, or life experiences in general, might be traumatic and bring back painful memories in new learning situations. For example, corporal punishment is still a lawful and widely used method of punishing students in many countries (Heekes et. al., 2020).

Knowles et. al. (2005) also note that adults as learners might not be as open to new ideas and ways of approaching situations due to their previous experiences. Adults have developed habits, biases and presuppositions that can prevent alternative ways of thinking (Knowles et. al., 2005). Adult Finnish language

learners might, for example, have developed studying habits that are not valued in the Finnish culture and it might prove difficult to challenge either the Finnish learning culture or those habits and find a common understanding about some issues.

As can be concluded, previous experiences shape learning, but it can also be claimed that learning itself takes place in life experiences. Kolb (1984, p. 27) states: "Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience." This notion is the basis of the understanding of learning as a constructivist, social-cultural phenomenon, in which both the learner as an active participate and the wider environment, particularly expert others, have crucial roles. In this study SRL is the lens for better understanding the active role of the learner, as outlined in Section 3, and the role of the wider environment is addressed in Section 4.

3 SELF-REGULATED LEARNING

Zimmerman (1989) has defined self-regulation as an active process, in which a student metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally participates in their own learning. In other words, it includes organizing one's thoughts, feelings and actions that relate to learning. Over time, the research on SRL has expanded to include more aspects of learning. The inclusion of 5 areas: cognitive, metacognitive, behavioral, motivational, and emotional/affective have made the research on SRL more comprehensive and holistic (Panadero, 2017). An important characteristic of SRL is that a learner can perform the learning task confidently on their own (van Lier, 2013). The following two subsections discuss SRL in relation to self-directed learning, and areas of SRL drawing strongly from Pintrich's (2004) framework, which will be used to guide the analysis of this study.

3.1 Self-regulated learning in relation to self-directed learning

One of the characteristics of an adult learner, self-directed learning relates to SRL in many ways. Grow (1991) has developed a widely cited model of staged self-directed learning. In relation to language learning, Nakata's (2010) framework for teaching self-regulation to English language learners (ELLs) has much in common with Grow's model. On the first stage of Grow's (1990) model, the learner is highly dependent on the author and needs extensive assistance. In Nakata's (2010) framework the first stage called is preparation and at that stage the teacher takes a great responsibility by directing the learners in learning activities. On the second stage of Grow's (1990) model, the learner becomes more interested and motivated but still lacks the knowledge of the subject matter and thus needs extensive assistance. The learner that has reached the third level has already acquired both the basic knowledge and skills of the subject matter and they also view themselves as being able to deepen their knowledge with a good guide. Nakata's (2010) second stage, referred to as developmental stage, resembles Grow's (1990) Stages Two and Three in that goal setting, and assisting with the development of learning strategies are emphasized. Finally, on the fourth stage

of Grow's (1990) model, the learner is able to plan, execute and evaluate their own learning with or without the help of an instructor. Adults are then, to a great extent, expected to responsible of their own learning. Nakata's (2010) Self-regulated Stage is the final stage, the teacher provides learners with much less support and instead provides many opportunities for SRL. These conceptualizations also share similar characteristics with the concept of zone of proximal development suggested first by Vygotsky (1978) and later also by van Lier (2013), whose understanding of ZPD is one of the main theoretical concepts of this study, and which will be elaborated in the section 4.1.

According to Saks and Leijen (2014), the difference between the concepts of SRL and self-directed learning lies in several areas. First, self-directed learning originates from adult education, whereas self-regulation from cognitive psychology. Second, as originating from adult education, self-directed learning is practiced mostly outside traditional school environment and includes designing learning environment as well as planning learning trajectory. SRL, on the other hand is mostly practiced in school environment, which often includes teacher-set tasks. Finally, self-directed learning is a broader, macro-level construct, whereas SRL is a narrower, micro-level construct, which concerns processes within task execution (Saks & Leijen, 2014).

In the context of this study, a narrower, micro-level construct of SRL is explored. This is because almost all adult Finnish language learners that participate in the learning club are also enrolled in different levels of formal education and participate in the club to complement their learning. This means that the learning tasks completed in the club are most often teacher-set and the do not include much designing of the learning environment. The activities in the learning club also operate in the micro-level, which concerns processes within task execution rather than planning a learning trajectory. The following subsection outlines the areas of SRL.

3.2 Areas of self-regulated learning

As outlined above, SRL is widely studied concept. However, most SRL models share four assumptions (Pintrich, 2004). First, learners are seen as active agents constructing meanings, goals, and strategies for learning. Second, learners can potentially monitor, control and regulate their learning especially in the areas of cognition, motivation, and behavior.

Third, there is a goal or a criterion against which performance is being measured in order to assess whether the learning process should continue as it is or if change is needed (Pintrich, 2004). Self-regulated students thus engage in a process that includes three to four phases: first, they set goals, then they apply strategies and monitor the process to achieve those goals, and if needed they control their learning by switching a learning strategy. Finally, they self-evaluate the performance for further improvements or a more challenging task (Do-Hong et. al., 2015).

The final assumption, according to Pintrich (2004) is that contextual and personal characteristics are mediated through self-regulatory activities, resulting performance. In other words, the characteristics of a learner as well as the learning environment shape achievement, but through the learner's self-regulation of their cognition, motivation and behavior (Pintrich, 2004). In the context of language learning, van Lier (2010) has been focusing on learner's agency in the environment. According to his ecological perspective to learning, learner's agency is one of the core concepts. Learners need to employ agency to make significant progress, set objectives, and pursue goals (van Lier, 2010).

There are several models of SRL that have gained much attention, some of which include Zimmerman's (2005) cyclical phases model, Boekaerts' Dual Processing Model (Boekaerts & Cascallar, 2006) and Efklides' (2011) Metacognitive and Affective Model of SRL. For the purposes of this study, Pintrich's (2004) model of SRL is applied. Pintrich (2004) divides areas for regulation into four categories: cognition, motivation/affect, behavior, and context. Each categories include four phases: planning, monitoring, controlling and reflecting. The following four paragraphs explain the four key dimensions of Pintrich's (2004) framework.

Regulation of cognition refers to "the activities, tactics, and strategies that students engage in to plan, monitor, and regulate their cognition" (Pintrich, 2004, p. 392). First, in the planning phase, the learner is assumed to set a goal for their learning and activate prior knowledge about the subject, as well as engage in metacognitive knowledge to adapt or change their cognition. Second, the learner is assumed to monitor their learning and if needed, make adaptive changes to achieve their goal. Third through cognitive and metacognitive activities, learners engage in to adapt and regulate their cognition. This is seen as cognitive control and regulation, which includes the actual selection of strategies to learn, solve problems and remember. Finally, the reactions and reflections about the learner's performance can be part of their attempts to regulate their learning (Pintrich, 2004).

Regulation of motivation / affect refers to planning, monitoring, controlling, and reflecting motivation and affect. In the planning phase, a learner makes judgements about their motivational and affective beliefs, such as goal orientation, self-efficacy, task value, and personal interest in the task (Pintrich, 2004). Next, Pintrich (2004) states that learners can monitor their motivation and affect and when not satisfied with it, they can attempt to control them through coping strategies, such as positive self-talk, increase extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, or the task value of a learning task. The emotional reactions might arise as a response to the outcome once the learning task is completed and the learner might then reflect on the reasons for the outcome (Pintrich, 2004).

Table 1

Phases and areas of SRL (modified from Pintrich, 2004, p. 390)

Areas for regulation				
Phases and relevant scales	**Cognition**	**Motivation /Affect**	**Behavior**	**Context**
Phase 1 Forethought, planning, and activation	Target goal setting Prior content knowledge activation Metacognitive knowledge activation	Perceptions of task difficulty Task value activation Interest activation	Time management planning Effort planning	Perceptions of task Perceptions of context
Phase 2 Monitoring	Metacognitive awareness and monitoring of cognition	Awareness and monitoring of motivation and affect	Awareness and monitoring of effort, time use, need for help	Monitoring changing task and context conditions

Phase 3 Control	Selection and adaptation of cognitive strategies for learning and thinking	Selection and adaptation of strategies for managing motivation and affect	Increase/decrease effort Persist, give up Help-seeking behavior	Change or renegotiate task Change or leave context
Phase 4 Reaction and reflection	Cognitive judgments	Affective reactions	Choice behavior	Evaluation of task Evaluation of context

Regulation of behavior in Pintrich's (2004) model starts with time and effort planning. The learner is thus expected to schedule learning and make judgements about how much effort is put in a learning task. Then, the effort and time use should be monitored, and if needed, adjustments should be made by taking control of the situation by increasing or decreasing effort or ask for help (Pintrich, 2004).

Regulation of context is probably the dimension to which an individual learner often has the least control over (Pintrich, 2004). However, a learner can, to some extent regulate the context where learning is taking place. Schunk (2010) notes that the learner can make perceptions about the features of the learning environment that help or hinder learning and monitor them, and make the context more conductive for learning by for example negotiating the task requirements or reducing distractions. The ability to direct the course of circumstances is part of human agency (Usher & Schunk, 2018).

These four components provide a quite comprehensive picture of the learner's role in SRL. The development of SRL should not be addressed as fully independent processes in the four areas, but rather interdepending on each other when guiding learner's thoughts and actions. Also, the concept of self-regulation, originating from cognitive psychology, seems to underestimate the role of a more expert other in the process of learning SRL skills. Still, Usher and Schunk (2018) note, that most self-regulated skills are not formed on their own. Rather, personal, behavioral and environmental factors all affect the development of self-regulation (Usher & Schunk, 2018). Development of SRL is dependent on the outside resources, for example assistance of more capable persons. Also, Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) suggest that the development of SRL initiates from social interaction and only later becomes internalized. Here, the presence of a more competent person is necessary for the development process. Additionally, Jones

(2019) states that SRL can be activated with help of an instructor. Instructors can facilitate learner's development of new learning and thinking strategies, which can be added to the learners' self-regulated skills (Jones, 2019). The development of SRL is thus aligned with the social-cultural understanding of learning, which also forms the theoretical base of this study. The following Section covers social-cultural understanding of learning in more detail.

4 SOCIOCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNING

In the current study, the development of adult learner characteristics as well as SRL skills are understood as processes, which are mediated by the learner's involvement in social interaction. It is assumed, that with the help of a more experienced person, the learner is able to draw from the characteristics and develop SRL skills. Thus, the role of a more experienced person in the learning process is seen as crucial. "Until internalization occurs, performance must be assisted" (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990, p.177).

According to the constructivist understanding, learners construct knowledge through social interaction with others (Dewey, 1997; Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1999). One of the major scholars on the constructivist field in education was Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory suggests that learning is mediated by social interactions. He suggests that all forms of higher human cognitive and emotional activity are mediated by social processes (Vygotsky, 1978).

The previous chapters have discussed the general characteristics of an adult learner as well as SRL skills. The development of SRL skills cannot be assumed to be an automatic process, but rather the development of these skills can be seen as drawing from the learner's characteristics and contextual support. This section discusses the contextual support by introducing the concepts of ZPD and Scaffolding.

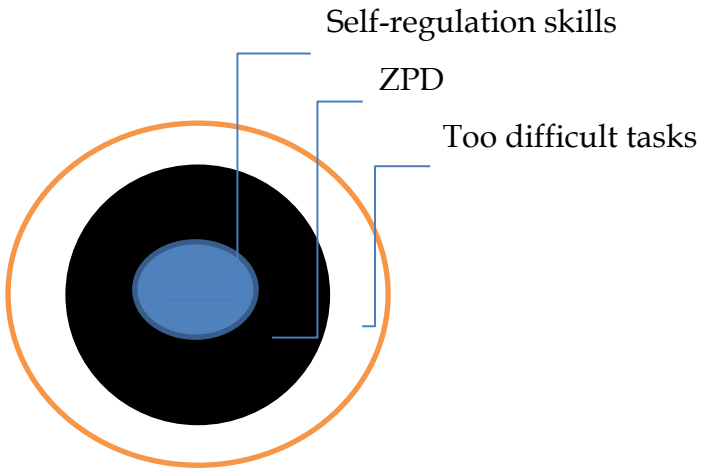
4.1 Zone of proximal development

One of the key components of Vygotsky's (1978) cognitive and social theory is the notion of Zone of proximal development (ZPD). ZDP is defined as "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).

Van Lier (2013), has a adopted a slightly different understanding of ZDP. He suggests that the things a person can do on their own are referred to as the area of self-regulated action. Beyond that area there is a range of skills and actions available with assistance. The zone in which these skills lie, is referred to as the ZPD. Finally, anything beyond that area is not yet available for learning (van Lier 2013). Thus, ZPD refers to the zone that lies between the actual stage of a learner's development and the stage in which a completion of a certain learning task would not be possible even with assistance (See figure 1). In this study, the concept of ZPD is understood similarly as van Lier's (2013) definition of ZPD.

Figure 1

ZPD (adapted from van Lier, 2013, p. 190)



Van Lier (2004) has also taken a broader perspective and expanded the Vygotskian understanding of the ZPD. He adds that the most important criteria for language learning is the combination of access and engagement (van Lier, 2004). First, the learner needs access to the information in the environment. After having access, the learner should be engaged in meaningful activities, and only through the meaningful engagement can language learning occur. During this process, the learner might need assistance to be able to internalize and use the information (van Lier, 2004). That is the point where availability of a more experienced person can be seen as important.

In the context of this study, the adult Finnish language learners participate in the learning club, and it is expected that with the help of a volunteer instructor they would be able to complete the learning tasks they could not complete on their own. In other words, learning in the learning club is expected to take place in the ZPD. Although originally applied to children's learning, the ZPD can also be applied to adult Finnish language learners. Van Lier (2013) has extended the notion of ZPD to make it more applicable namely for adult language learners. He suggests that productive work within the ZPD can be realized by using a variety of sources: assistance from more capable peers or adults, interaction with equal peers, interaction with less capable peers, and inner resources such as knowledge, experience, and memory. In the case of this study, the resources can be drawn from all four sources. Inner resources are always present in learning situations, and as the volunteers are not expert in the fields, which the adult Finnish language learners are studying, it depends on the situation whether the instructor is more capable, equally capable, or even less capable of completing the task at hand. Although the volunteers are expected to offer assistance mainly in the Finnish language, still in many cases help in content learning is present. In that case, the volunteers might have even less substance knowledge than the adult Finnish language learners. In the next section, it is discussed through which strategies the assistance can be provided within the ZDP.

4.2 Scaffolding

Whereas the ZPD refers to the area in which a learner is able to complete the task with assistance, Bruner's (1986) notion of scaffolding refers to the actual ways in which the assistance can be provided (Bruner, 1986, as cited in van Lier, 2013). The ultimate goal of scaffolding is learner autonomy, so that the learner would be able to complete a task without assistance (van de Pol et. al., 2010). In other words, it could be concluded that scaffolding can potentially aid the development of SRL skills as well.

4.2.1 Features of scaffolding

Van Lier (2004) has described the features of pedagogical scaffolding in the context of language learning. He suggests that continuity, contextual support, intersubjectivity, contingency, handover/takeover, and flow are the central features of pedagogical scaffolding. **Continuity** means that the tasks are repeated with variations, and that they are also connected to another. With **contextual support**, the learners are able to access means and goals in a variety of ways and the environment is safe and encourages exploration. **Intersubjectivity** means that mutual engagement is established, and there is non-threatening, encouraging participation. **Contingency** is in balance when the task procedures are adjusted and also depend on the actions of learners. **Handover/takeover** means that as the learner's skills increase, the more experienced person should be ready to hand over increasing parts of the action to the student. Finally, **flow** in scaffolding occurs when skills and challenges are in balance (van Lier, 2004).

Van de Pol et. al. (2010) distinguishes scaffolding means and scaffolding intentions. Scaffolding means refer to *how* scaffolding is taking place (eg. modeling, questioning), whereas scaffolding intentions refer to *what* is being scaffolded (van de Pol et. al., 2010). In van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) model three scaffolding intentions are distinguished: cognition, metacognition and affect. Any combination of scaffolding means and intention can be combined, so that through for example modeling the teacher can scaffold affect by providing reasons for why learning something is important or scaffold metacognition through modeling strategies for learning the key idea (Brophy, 1999).

Scaffolding as a pedagogical practice is a multilayered strategy. At least three levels are present: a macro level, where scaffolding is embedded in, for example, a curriculum; the level of the activity, where scaffolding takes place in a particular activity; and finally, the micro level, where scaffolding takes place in interaction (Walqui, 2006). This study focuses on the interactional level of scaffolding, where the more experienced other decides from moment to moment when to offer help and encourage. During interactional level of scaffolding, especially intersubjectivity from van Lier's (2004) features of pedagogical scaffolding mentioned before is of paramount importance (van Lier, 2014). Additionally,

with handover/takeover the more experienced other ensures the activity is neither too difficult nor too easy (van Lier, 2014).

There are some challenges to consider when scaffolding takes place on an interactional level. For example, unpredictability can pose a challenge to teachers on the interactional level of scaffolding, as they are expected to support students spontaneously and with unpredicted problems (Many et al., 2009). The volunteers taking part in the learning club are not only faced with this challenge, but they are also not often pedagogically trained. There are, however, many scaffolding strategies that can be introduced to volunteers, regardless of their professional backgrounds. The following subsection introduces some of them.

4.2.2 Scaffolding strategies

Many scholars have provided frameworks for interactional scaffolding strategies. Gallimore and Tharp (1990) have suggested the use of six strategies for support: modeling, instructing, questioning, contingency management, feeding back, and cognitive structuring. They have applied the suggestions to the context of children's teaching but derived the strategies from various contexts (Gallimore & Tharp, 1990). Also Van de Pol et. al. (2010) have provided a framework for analysis of scaffolding strategies. The framework includes feeding back, questioning, hints, modeling, instructing, and explaining. **Feeding back** involves providing the students with information regarding the student themselves or their performance. **The giving of hints** refers to the strategy of giving clues or suggestions to help the student proceed with the learning task. **Instructing** refers to the teacher telling the students how something should be done, while in **explaining** the teacher provides more detailed information or clarification. **Modeling,** on the other hand, refers to imitating how something should be done, for example by demonstrating a particular skill. Finally, in **questioning**, the teacher asks students questions that require an active linguistic and cognitive answer (Van de pol et. al. 2010). In this study, the analysis of the scaffolding provided by the volunteers will be guided by van de Pol et. al's (2010) framework.

As this study aims to explore scaffolding strategies used in a context of adult Finnish language learners, it is worth highlighting literature that has explored scaffolding practices in similar contexts. Scaffolding practices have been studied in a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and English as a second language (ESL) contexts by for example Walqui (2006) and Mahan (2020). Walqui (2006) provided six main types of scaffolding: modeling, bridging, contextualization, building schema, re-presenting text, and developing metacognition. The following six paragraphs refer to Walqui's (2006) scaffolding types. Additional relevant literature is discussed in the paragraphs as well.

Modeling as a scaffolding type is based on demonstration. First, the more experienced other walks the learner through the task by showing how it should be done and only after that the learner is expected to perform the task. Also, Mahan (2020) refers to modeling in her framework, although she includes modeling under the category of metacognition. Mahan (2020) introduces modeling as an example to scaffold metacognition. Modeling can be used by for example showing learners how a task should be solved or providing examples of tasks. Also, Walqui (2006) emphasizes that metacognitive strategies should first be carefully modelled before learners try them on their own.

Bridging draws from the assumption that language and new concepts can be learned only if it is built on the previous knowledge. For example, activating the learner's previous knowledge in the beginning of the task is a useful bridging method. Additionally, establishing a personal link between the learning task and the learner's personal life is another bridging method (Walqui, 2006). This notion also aligns with Knowles et al.'s (2005) adult learning theory, where strong emphasis is on the adult learner's previous experiences. In addition, Mahan (2020) highlights the importance of previous knowledge in her scaffolding framework. It is assumed, that the learners come to the learning situations with the knowledge, skills, and experiences that they have acquired in their native language (Dong, 2017).

In **contextualization**, supportive materials are used to aid the understanding of the content. If the learner does not understand the linguistic information, the instructor can use nonlinguistic material to aid the understanding (Walqui,

2006). Also Mahan (2020) as well as Van Lier (2013) have emphasized the value of the contextual support in scaffolding. Access to means and goals should be made available in multiple ways (Walqui, 2006). Supportive materials help learners construct the understanding of often complex academic concepts through multimodal means, and these means could include for example the use of visual aids, graphic organizers, use of body language, sounds, ICT aided learning, and film clips (Ball, 2018; Mahan, 2020).

Schema building refers to the scaffolding action where the instructor aids weaving new information into pre-existing structures of meaning (Walqui, 2006). For example, when completing a reading assignment, the instructor may ask the learners to skim the text by noting headings, illustrations, and charts. By doing this, the students will start to understand the main points of the topic and how the text is organized (Walqui, 2006).

Re-presenting text is another scaffolding type, that can be useful for additional language learners. Walqui (2006) defines that when asked to re-present the text, the learner is asked to transform the linguistic constructions from one genre to another. For example, the learner might only get the main points from a historical essay but might be able to re-present the article as a play in small groups (Walqui, 2006).

Developing metacognition is the final scaffolding type described in Walqui's (2006) approach. Metacognition has been defined through four major aspects: the ability to consciously apply learned strategies while learning; awareness of the strategies available and the ability to choose the most appropriate one; monitoring, evaluating and adjusting performance while learning; and evaluating performance and planning for future performance based on evaluation (Walqui 2006). Explicit teaching of learning strategies develops learners' metacognition (Walqui, 2006). Also Tharp and Gallimore (1988) have pointed out the development of learner's metacognitive skills in their framework of scaffolding. Fostering metacognition fosters learner's autonomy (Walqui, 2006). Thus, prompting learner's metacognition through scaffolding can be seen as one of the core elements of this study, as it connects the two major themes of this study: SRL and scaffolding.

Other relevant scaffolding types include those described by Mahan (2020) that add to Walqui's (2006) types. The types Mahan (2020) describes, draw from Maybin et. al.'s (1992) work and has been developed in ESL / English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms.

Task-solving strategies include the scaffolding strategies that aim to help learners complete a specific learning task (Maybin et. al., 1992). The use of *discourse* as a scaffolding strategy can prompt learning and asking questions might serve as a scaffolding strategy. Van de Pol et. al. (2010) have also included questioning in their framework of scaffolding. However, the type and quality of questions should be paid attention to. Long & Sato (1983), as cited in Mahan (2020) have divided the questions into two categories: *display questions* and *referential questions*. Display questions are questions that the teacher knows an answer to (e.g., *When is Finland's independence day?*), whereas to the referential questions (e.g. *Why do you think the protagonist became hesitant?*) the teacher does not know the answer to. Referential questions give more space for creative language use and aid comprehension, as the questions invite reflection (McNeil, 2012). Display questions can be seen as interaction that impose 'recitation script', also known as Response-Feedback (IRF), which should be differentiated from scaffolding (Walqui, 2006).

Another way to use discourse in scaffolding is to build upon learner's talk in the follow-up of learner's responses. McNeil (2012) has collected various studies and synthetized three common features of teacher follow-up talk, which are *reformulation*, *repetition*, and *elaboration*. In *reformulation*, teacher listens to the response and answers by modeling appropriate language or reasoning. When the teacher *repeats* the response, they acknowledge the contribution and make it accessible for the class. When asking for *elaboration*, the teacher asks for justification or extension of the answer, or the teacher extends the student's answer themselves (McNeil, 2012).

As stated above, the analysis of this study will be guided by van de Pol et. al's (2010) framework of scaffolding. The framework includes feeding back, ques-

tioning, hints, modeling, instructing, and explaining (van de Pol et. al. 2010). After the analysis, the connections between the findings and Walqui's (2006) as well as Mahan's (2020) scaffolding concepts are discussed in the Discussion section.

5 RESEARCH TASK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to explore the volunteers' perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' SRL skills, and the scaffolding strategies the volunteers used to support SRL.

The study has two specific research questions:

1. What observations have the volunteers made on the adult Finnish language learners' SRL skills?

2. What scaffolding strategies do the volunteers report using in their efforts to support SRL?

6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

6.1 Philosophical foundations

There are three fundamental elements of research that guide the action of a researcher: ontology, epistemology, and philosophical perspective (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Moon and Blackman (2014) describe that ontology addresses the question of what exists, while epistemology seeks answers to the question of how knowledge is created. It is claimed that ontology and epistemology are inseparable, while philosophical perspectives stem from the previous two (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Thus, the three fundamental elements of research can be understood as essential for each other's existence. The following paragraphs briefly state the researcher's philosophical foundations.

Philosophical perspective can be understood as a system of ideas that a community of researchers share to generate knowledge (Fossey et. al., 2002). In other words, the paradigm chosen depends on the researcher's way of looking at the world. Research paradigm structures the approach to research by influencing the researcher's knowledge creation and how meaning is derived from the collected data (Moon & Blackman, 2014). The scientific-philosophic background of this study draws from social constructionism. Studying of multiple realities that are constructed by different groups of people are of interest of constructionists, as well as the implications of those constructions for people's lives and interactions (Patton, 2015). This study aims to investigate the interaction of the adult Finnish language learners and volunteers in their efforts to work together in the ZPD and construct meaning.

When designing research, it is of paramount importance to be conscious of the **ontological perspectives** of the research. In other words, addressing the question of what exists in the world from which we can collect knowledge, is needed. Qualitative research in general is often concerned with the meaning of concepts and it accepts that different people might come up with different meanings for a certain concept (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). In ontological terms, qualitative research can be understood as relativist. Accordingly, the ontological foundations of this research lie on the relativist tradition, which holds that reality is relative

and constructed in the mind of a human (Moon & Blackwell, 2014). The research questions of this study seek to understand the volunteers' perceptions about the formation of ZPD, and working on the ZPD together with the adult Finnish language learners. The research questions reflect the relativist ontological understanding of science, in which the aim is to give value to individuals' insights. Thus, there is not one true reality but individuals that experience their unique reality at a given time and place (Moon & Blackman, 2014).

The **epistemological foundations** of this study are inspired by the subjectivist and idealistic epistemology. Subjectivist epistemology relies on a pluralistic understanding of reality and holds that knowledge is constituted by how people perceive and understand reality (Moon & Blackman, 2014). Thus, people engaging in a certain social phenomenon give meaning to it, and the unobserved knowledge is considered as valid (Terman, 2011). Smith (1983), for his part argues that the key thought of idealism is that what exists is mind-dependent. In the case of this study, the volunteers' perceptions are interpreted through subjectivist epistemology, as the researcher "is also engaged in social construction, as opposed to objectively depicting reality" (Patton, 2015, p.122).

6.2 Qualitative approach

The nature of this study is qualitative. The term qualitative research can be understood as an umbrella term for a variety of approaches to and methods for studying social phenomena (Saldaña, 2011). Qualitative study can be defined through several characteristics. It is often rich and holistic in nature, and it focuses on lived experiences of an individual (Tracy, 2013). Additionally, qualitative study tends to rely on interpretation, and it is personalistic and situational (Stake, 2010). The main phenomena studied in this research, *volunteers' perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' SRL* and *scaffolding adult Finnish language learners' SRL*, are understood as qualitative phenomena, because the aim is to holistically explore the volunteers' perceptions in situations where they have observed SRL, and on the other hand supported the development of it through scaffolding.

The research strategy of this study corresponds best the characteristics of a qualitative case study. Saldaña (2011) states that a case study is a research strategy that focuses on a single unit, such as on one person, group or organization. Due to its' precise focus, it is suitable for in-depth examination (Saldaña, 2011). In this study, the focus is on a certain group of a certain organization: volunteers of a certain NGO, participating in a certain activity. The purpose of this study is not to develop arguments that would be applicable to other situations per se. Rather, this study seeks to explore the volunteers' perceptions in order to develop better practices for volunteer training and professionals that work in the field of adult language learners' education.

6.3 Research context and participants

6.3.1 Research context

The study was conducted in an NGO called Paremmin Yhdessä ry (Better Together ry). Better Together ry fosters the well-being of immigrants through public advocacy work, consultation of stakeholders and direct support. The key support areas of the organization include supporting immigrants in educational and employment issues, as well as in social well-being.

Better Together ry supports immigrants, or as in this study referred to as adult Finnish language learners, in educational issues through a learning club called "Opitaan Yhdessä" (Let's Learn Together). Volunteers and learners gather, depending on the Covid-19 -situation, either in person or online to work on the learner's learning tasks. Each learner is matched with a volunteer and together with the assistance of a volunteer start completing their learning tasks.

Before participating in the activity, each volunteer undergoes a brief training, where the responsible employee of Better Together ry introduces the volunteer the activity and its general practices. The training emphasizes the importance of promoting the learner's agency. The ultimate goals of the Let's Learn Together -activity are enhanced Finnish language skills as well as improved agency. In other words, with the help of a volunteer, the language skills will improve and the learners will also become less dependent on the constant help of a volunteer.

It is also emphasized that the volunteers do not need to be experts in the fields the learners are studying. Rather, they should help in the development of the learner's Finnish language skills by discussing the topics and helping to form written sentences, for example.

The adult Finnish language learners that participate in the activity come from various ethnical and educational backgrounds, and their age varies from 18 to around 45 years. The vast majority participates in formal schooling, in basic education, vocational education or higher education. In rare cases, some might come even if they are not in formal schooling but want to learn Finnish.

6.3.2 Participants

The four participants of this study were chosen through purposeful sampling. In purposeful sampling, the data is chosen so that it fits the research questions, goals and purposes (Tracy, 2013). In this study, the purpose was to conduct online interviews with volunteers that had volunteered in Better Together ry's Let's Learn Together -activity. The participants of this study were found with the help of Better Together staff by looking at the participant list of 2020 and 2021 volunteers. The ones that had been participating regularly at some point during those years were contacted. In addition, they were invited to participate in the study because of their diversity of experience and background. That is why also one person with only little experience was recruited. The goal of recruiting a diverse group was that it would provide a more in depth and varied insights related to adult Finnish language learners' SRL skills and SRL scaffolding strategies.

After finding the participants, they were contacted via email. The email included a consent form (see Appendix 1) and a privacy notice (see Appendix 2). after reading both documents, participants were asked to respond to the email "I consent", which confirmed their agreement to participate in the study. Finally, online interviews were held. An overview of the participants' background is shown in the table 1 below. Detailed, but possibly useful information about the participants (e.g. professional background) is not included in the table to ensure

the anonymity of the participants. This decision is elaborated and justified in more detail in the section 6.6.

It is worthy to note the relationship between the researcher and the interviewees in this study. The researcher knew two of the interviewees beforehand, which might have influenced the views the participants provided in the interviews, potentially positively as well as negatively. Also Hirsjärvi et. al. (2013) point out that it is typical for the interviewees to answer in a socially desirable way. The ethical considerations will be further elaborated in the section 8.2.

Table 2

Overview of the participants

	Experience in Let's Learn Together -group	**Activity**
Volunteer 1	12 months	2h/week
Volunteer 2	7 months	3h/week
Volunteer 3	18 months	2h/week
Volunteer 4	2 months	1h/week

6.4 Research process

The data for this study was gathered through synchronous mediated interviews in October 2021. Synchronous mediated interviews occur via technological media, such as telephone or internet (Tracy, 2013). Tracy (2013) notes that through mediated interview a researcher can reach participants that would otherwise be unavailable. In the case of this study, the ongoing Covid-19 -pandemic would have possibly prevented some of the interviewees' participation in the study had it been conducted face to face. The use of online interviews did not pose any health risk and was thus a justified choice.

Mediated interviews, however, provide mediocre nonverbal data (Tracy, 2013). To ensure the availability of non-verbal data, interviews for this study

were conducted by using online video call. In this way the researcher and participant could constantly see each other without having to meet in person. After all, however, the focus in this study is on the content of the speech, not on the non-verbal data, and finally only the manifest content of the interviews was used in the analysis.

An interview guide (see Appendix 3) was used in the data gathering process. The purpose of the interview guide is to stimulate the discussion, but not to dictate it (Tracy, 2013). Most of the questions of the interview guide were strongly initiated by the organization, but minority of the questions were also invented by the researcher. The same prepared questions were asked from each volunteer, but room was left for follow-up questions and free discussion, which makes the interviews semi-structured (Tracy, 2013). The original interview questions were divided into four sections. The first section addressed background information, and the second included questions on the observations the volunteers had made on the adult Finnish language learners' study skills. The third section aimed at addressing the volunteer support: what strategies they had used to support the adult Finnish language learners' study skills and self-direction. The final section addressed how the volunteers had experienced the support provided by the organization. Only the first three sections were included in the final analysis. It is important to note that the types of scaffolding described in Section 4 were not considered when conducting the interviews. To conduct the interviews, Better Together provided the researcher with the structure and aims.

All interviews were recorded with consent of the participants (see Appendix 1) to enable the later transcription and careful analysis. The interviews were anonymized in the transcription phase. The total data set contained 74 pages in 1.5 line spacing and 12 size font, Book Antiqua. The data was collected and stored in the researcher's personal laptop's hard drive, which is protected by a password.

6.5 Data Analysis

Due to the qualitative approach and the nature of the research questions, this study is best analyzed through qualitative methods. According to Flick (2014), data analysis is the central step in qualitative research. The aim of qualitative data analysis may be to describe a phenomenon. Additionally, the analysis may focus on comparing cases and the similarities and differences between them while simultaneously taking account the context. In general, qualitative data analysis can be understood as classification and interpretation of linguistic material and making implicit or explicit dimensions of the material (Flick, 2014).

In this study, qualitative data analysis was chosen because of the in-depth nature of the interview data. Studying perceptions is a phenomenon most easily accessible and holistically understood through using qualitative analysis methods. The aim is to gain more insight about the volunteers' perceptions on SRL and scaffolding strategies and categorize the findings. Finally, the aim is to provide the NGO an overview about how the two are connected, which will act as a tool to improve volunteer training. Focusing on both, the analytical categorization and making an overview by synthetizing the categories is also supported by literature. Kiviniemi (2018) notes that in the analytical approach, the data is classified systematically into categories. To make the research coherent, it is as well important to draw a synthesis, which supports the whole dataset (Kiviniemi, 2018).

Qualitative analysis is an umbrella term for many analysis methods. In this study, the data was analyzed through qualitative content analysis method. Qualitative content analysis provides the researcher with new insights and increases the understanding of a particular phenomenon (Krippendorff, 2013). Furthermore, content analysis makes it possible to distil words into fewer content-related categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). The focus is on the characteristics of language as communication and the attention on the content of the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Qualitative content analysis can be further divided into inductive and deductive analysis. Inductive analysis, in which the categories are derived from the

data, is suggested if there is only little previous knowledge about the phenomenon, whereas deductive analysis is used to test a pre-existing theory (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this study, the analysis was done abductively by combining the inductive and deductive analysis methods. Abductive analysis is partly empirical observations of a social world and partly a set of theoretical propositions, a back-and-forth process of the two (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014).

The analysis of this study was done by combining the inductive and deductive analysis instructions of Elo and Kyngäs (2007). Elo and Kyngäs (2007) have divided the analysis process into three major phases: preparation, organizing, and reporting. The inductive and deductive analysis processes differ in the organizing phase, so that in inductive analysis the categories emerge from the data and in deductive analysis the categories are based on already existing frameworks (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). The theoretical propositions, that is, the deductive features come from the already-existing vast literature on SRL and scaffolding. Pintrich's (2004) model of SRL provided the main categories of this study (Cognition, Motivation, Behavior and Context), and a scaffolding framework by van de Pol (2010) informed the formation of scaffolding codes. Combining these two concepts under the same framework added the inductive part to the analysis. A detailed description of the process is reported in the following paragraphs.

The first phase of the qualitative content analysis process is preparation. Elo & Kyngäs (2007) suggest starting with choosing the unit of analysis and deciding whether to analyze the latent content or the manifest content. Latent content analysis considers not only the speech, but also silence and non-verbal cues, for instance (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). In this study, only the manifest content was analyzed, and a raw data unit was a transcribed interview of a participant. The last step in the preparation phase is to obtain an understanding of the data as a whole (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). The analysis was carried forward by reading the transcript multiple times to get a thorough understanding of the whole. After reading the transcribed text multiple times, the final decision about the unit of analysis was made. The raw data units were further divided into units of meaning (Elo &

Kyngäs, 2007), and they became units of analysis in this study. The length of the units varied from less than a sentence to quarter of a page in transcribed text.

The second phase is organizing phase, which is different in inductive and deductive analysis process. Here the analysis process of SRL is being reported first, following the description of the analysis process of the scaffolding strategies. Finally, the final stage of the analysis process, synthetizations of the two is reported.

The organizing of data with regards to SRL was initially analyzed by applying deductive methods. Deductive organizing of data includes developing a structured analysis matrix and coding data according to the predetermined categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). This was followed by highlighting the units of meaning in the transcribed text and coding them according to categories found in Pintrich's (2004) model of SRL (see Table 1) and Schunk's (2005) overview of SRL. The procedure of coding was repeated multiple times to ensure that as many units of meaning as possible were found. The units of analysis that did not discuss concept of SRL were left out of the analysis at this point.

Table 3

Example of coding with reference to SRL

Original unit of meaning	**Code**
Goes through and relistens lessons or parts of them and so on… (V4)	Rehearsal
And then he/she often copied those texts like… He/She copies the text on their own file to get a picture of what's what. (V4)	Reorganizing information

Next, codes from the transcripts along with the original units of meaning were collected into a new document. Then, the codes were collapsed into subcategories and further generic categories according to Pintrich's (2004) model and Schunk's (2005) conceptualizations. Table 2 illustrates the categorization process.

Table 4

Example of categorization of SRL according to Pintrich (2004) and Schunk (2005).

Code (Pintrich, 2004, p. 390; Schunk, 2005)	**Subcategory** (Pintrich, 2004, p. 390)
Rehearsal Reorganizing information	Cognitive control

Table 5

Example of further categorization of SRL according to Pintrich (2004).

Subcategory (Pintrich, 2004, p. 390)	**Main category** (Pintrich, 2004, p. 390)	**Final category**
Cognitive planning Cognitive monitoring Cognitive control	Cognition	Adult Finnish language learners' perceived SRL skills
Motivational planning	Motivation	

Once the analysis of SRL was finished, a structured analysis matrix for scaffolding strategies was developed according to the categories found in van de Pol's (2010) framework. The units of meaning that contained those strategies were highlighted and coded according to the structured analysis matrix. One additional code that was not included in the analysis matrix was also added, by following the principles of inductive content analysis. Elo & Kyngäs (2007) note that aspects that do not fit in the pre-existing categories can form additional categories, based on the principles of inductive analysis. The code was named conversations. This marked the first inductive step of the analysis process. The categorization of scaffolding was not taken further at this point. Table 3 illustrates the coding process of scaffolding.

Table 6

Example of coding scaffolding

Original unit of meaning	**Code**
If there comes up something puzzling I say something like "would the slides have an answer to this" or "do you have some notes" or if that person has previously talked about the subject I bring it up by saying something like "you were just thinking about that subject. Would that be any help on this?" (V4)	Hints
We discuss what should be learned. (V2)	Conversation

Next, SRL and scaffolding strategies were looked simultaneously and in relation to each other. This added the inductive method to the analysis and moved it to the phase of abstraction (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). More precisely, the scaffolding-related codes were paired with the SRL codes. The aim was to discover, which area of SRL was aided through which scaffolding method. A synthesis of the relationship between the adult Finnish language learners' SRL and volunteers' scaffolding response was thus developed. It was discovered, which areas of SRL the volunteers were scaffolding and which areas were possibly ignored. Table 4 illustrates the pairing.

Table 7

Example of pairing the codes of SRL and scaffolding

SRL code	**Scaffolding code**
Rehearsal	Hints
Reorganizing information	N/A

Finally, the overview of the scaffolding strategies was included in the four main areas of SRL.

Table 8

Overview of scaffolding strategies in relation to the four areas of SRL

Areas of SRL (Pintrich, 2004, p. 390)	**Scaffolding**
Motivation	modeling, feedback,

Cognition	conversation, instructing, modeling, questions, hints, explaining
Behavior	modeling
Context	N/A

6.6 Ethical Considerations

There are several ethical considerations to be made during the research process. The purpose of the ethical considerations is to assure the safety of the research participants (van Deventer, 2007). A study can be considered as ethically conducted when it is based on the obeyance of good scientific practices. This research followed the ethical principles developed by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK) (2019). The following two general ethical principles concern this study: respecting of the dignity and autonomy of human research participants and conducting the research so that research does not cause significant risks, damage or harm to research participants. In the present study, the previous principles were taken into account throughout the research process.

After finding initially interested research participants, the TENK ethical principle of respecting of the dignity and autonomy of human research participants was followed. The participants were sent detailed information about the nature of the study (Appendix 1) along with the participant consent form (Appendix 2). They were also informed about their right to withdraw from the study anytime if they wanted. This guarantees the autonomy of the research participants.

The second principle, conducting the research so that it does not cause significant risks, damage or harm to research participants was taken care of by anonymizing the interview transcripts and retaining the data safely. Accordingly, van Deventer (2009) notes that ensuring the privacy in terms of confidentiality and anonymity is of paramount importance. As the number of the volunteers in the NGO in question is relatively small, also the professional background of the participants was removed. The research was conducted by interviewing volunteers

that have been active at some point during the year of 2021, thus they did not need to necessarily be active during the time the interviews were conducted. This decision was also made to make it impossible to identify individuals from the final paper.

7 FINDINGS

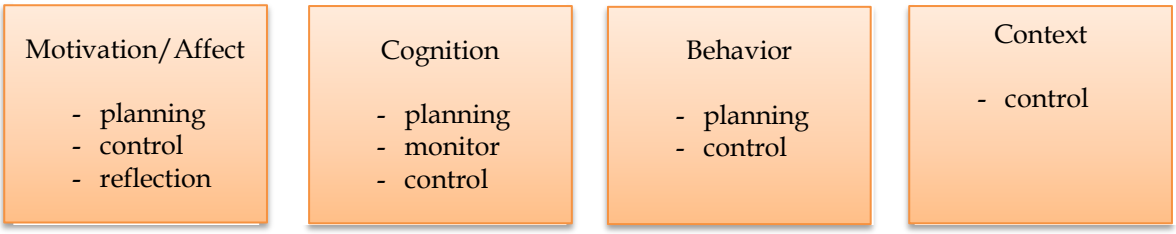
Through the analysis, four main categories have been found. To make the findings easier to read, each main category has been divided into four subcategories of planning, monitoring, control, and reflection, by applying Pintrich's (2004) model presented earlier in this study.

In most cases, each category and subcategory include volunteers' perceptions regarding the adult Finnish language learners' SRL, and states scaffolding strategies that volunteers reported using to support the development of SRL in that particular area. By including these two actions it is easier to see how the volunteers' perceptions of the students' learning process informed their actions as the 'more expert other'. The harmony of this relationship is addressed in the Discussion section.

The headings below the subcategories (e.g. motivational planning) are titled according to the SRL codes. If no SRL was perceived in a subcategory, the codes are named after the scaffolding strategy used to scaffold the subcategory in question (see e.g. motivational control).

Figure 2

Structure of the presentation of the findings



In the presentation of the findings, direct, translated citations from the interviewed participants are used. To distinguish between the four volunteers, an abbreviation V and a number was given to each participant. E.g. V1= Volunteer 1. Most of the citations were modified so that some unnecessary parts of the sentence have been removed. That was marked with the following sign "…". Some volunteers provided answers to multiple categories within one sentence, but only the part suitable for the category in question was included in the citation and the rest was removed by using the same sign of "…" Additionally, some unnecessary

words that are common in spoken language such as "well" (Finnish: "tota") or "like" (Finnish: "niinku") are removed from the citations to make them easier to read. Finally, in one quotation, a reference to the question that was asked right before the quotation took place was marked in parentheses in the beginning of the quotation. This was done to enable the reader to understand the context better.

7.1 Motivation/Affect

In Pintrich's (2004) model, motivation is seen as crucial for learners' SRL. Perceived low SRL in the area of motivation can be supported through the actions of a more expert other and that is where scaffolding of a volunteer is needed. The findings of this section outline the volunteer perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' motivational SRL, as well as the volunteer scaffolding responses in that area. The findings are divided into three sections of planning, control, and reflection according to Pintrich's (2004) model. The section of monitoring was left out, as there was no reference to SRL or scaffolding in that area.

7.1.1 Planning

In this subsection, findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of motivational planning are reported. Due to the absence of reported volunteer scaffolding, evaluation of the need of scaffolding and suggestions of scaffolding behavior are discussed.

Table 9

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in motivational planning

Perceived SRL	**Reported volunteer scaffolding**
Interest	N/A
Task difficulty	N/A
Task value activation	N/A

Interest

Three volunteers reported high interest among the learners in general, which was reflected in the way the learners talked about their fields and how they wanted to develop their knowledge and skills further.

> It's like (he/she) wants to learn about it and wants to succeed in their studies and to know more, get more knowledge and expertise. (V2)

> Many appeared to have a will to make progress and learn more. (V3)

> They have that will and interest already so that was all right for one. And they talk about their field of study with such enthusiasm. (V4)

There was no indication in the data that volunteers would have scaffolded interest. The findings do indicate that the perceived already existing high interest among the adult Finnish language learners might have led to the situation where there was no need to scaffold the area of interest. Referring back to van Lier's (2013) model (Figure 1), the learners might have already been past the ZDP and entered the area of self-regulated action, where assistance of a more capable person is no longer needed.

Task difficulty

One volunteer reported having identified task difficulty judgements. They described how helping was more effortless when the learner had a perception about the task difficulty.

> It's easy… if they already have a view about what is challenging or what they can do, it is easy to help when you know where your help is needed. (V2)

Only one volunteer made a comment about having perceived task difficulty judgements, which suggests that there might be a need to scaffold this area. However, no volunteer reported having scaffolded task difficulty judgements. This issue is further addressed in the discussion Section.

Task value activation

One volunteer reported having perceived many different types of task value activation when working with various adult Finnish language learners. Some appeared to draw the value more from intrinsic sources, seeing learning as a tool to be able to do something useful, whereas the others from more extrinsic sources. They were for example in search for good grades. In extreme cases, the learner would think they are learning something completely useless.

> Is the thing important for their learning or does it need to be completed in order to graduate, do they study for school or for life. It's like do you feel that you are studying something that you never need to know or do you study something important that you can put to use in your future. And well… There are big differences between people on how motivated they are. Is it important that you get your assignments done, is it important that you just get through the course or graduate or are you hungry, like that you want to get good grades, it varies between people. (V1)

There was no indication in the data that volunteers would have scaffolded task value activation. The findings indicate that the generally high task value, whether intrinsic or extrinsic in nature, did not create a ZDP, within which the volunteers could have scaffold this area. According to the available data, it seems that most learners had already gone past the ZPD in this area and entered to the zone of self-regulated action. However, in the cases that the learner thinks they are learning something useless, scaffolding task-value by for example modeling reasons why the learner should invest in learning it, would be a useful means.

7.1.2 Control

In this subsection, the volunteer scaffolding responses in the phase of motivational control are reported. No learner action was perceived in this area.

Table 10

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in motivational control

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
N/A	Feedback

Feedback

Although the volunteers did not report having perceived lack of maintaining motivation, two volunteers still reported scaffolding motivation through feedback, more precisely encouragement, during the learning task.

> Really good, now you should write it just like you have thought it. (V2)

> I told her/him to just write, you handle it and then he/she wrote and then we looked up together what it could be edited into. (V3)

The findings do not indicate whether the volunteer provided feedback at the appropriate moment, but they do indicate that feedback was a scaffolding strategy to support motivation maintenance. This is an issue discussed in more detail in the Discussion section.

7.1.3 Reflection

This subsection outlines the findings of volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of motivational reflection. No perceptions about the learners' SRL were made in this area.

Table 11

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in motivational reflection

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
N/A	Feedback

Feedback

After the completion of the task, the volunteer used feedback to convince the learner that they had performed well.

> Occasionally it is like that there is something that the student has already understood. And then … we discuss mainly about… one could say that you verify the students' image of the job being done and things have gone well. (V1)

The data does not provide information about the whole situation, for example if the learner had affective reactions, for example uncertainty, before the volunteer provided the feedback. The findings suggest that it is worthy to consider to which extent the volunteers are tuned in to the learner's affective reactions and how

well they are able to react to them and provide appropriate and timely scaffolding.

7.2 Cognition

In Pintrich's (2004) model cognition is seen as crucial for learners' SRL. Whereas the high level of motivation perceived by the volunteers suggest that there was little need to support learners in that area, the analysis of cognition pointed to a greater need on the part of the students to receive support in several phases of cognitive SRL. This need in turn created the space for the volunteers to scaffold and contribute to the learning process within the ZPD.

The findings of this section outline the perceived cognitive SRL of adult Finnish language learners, as well as the volunteer scaffolding responses to those actions. The findings are divided into three sections of planning, monitoring, and control according to Pintrich's (2004) model. The section of reflection was left out, as there was no reference to SRL or scaffolding in that area.

7.2.1 Planning

This subsection outlines the findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of cognitive planning. The volunteers described a variety of perceived SRL skills, but also identified challenges related to them. The volunteers used conversational means, explaining, modeling, and instructing to scaffold SRL related to cognitive planning.

Table 12

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in cognitive planning

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
Goal-setting	Conversation
Activation of prior content knowledge	N/A

Activation of prior metacognitive knowledge	Modeling, instructing

Goal setting

One volunteer reported having perceived independent action from the learners' side that dealt with goal setting. In the below example the learner explicitly stated the goals for learning.

> When a student has a clear view on what she/he wants to learn about the assignment or about learning skills it is easier to help. (V2)

According to this statement, some learners were able to set goals for themselves, but it also indicates that some might not, which means that there might have been a need to scaffold this area.

One volunteer reported scaffolding goal setting. The volunteer sought to scaffold this area by having goal setting related conversations. The conversations included negotiations about what should be learned.

> We talk about what should be learned. (V2)

It seems like the learners attending to the learning club differ from another with their SRL skills in this area. At least one learner seems to be already in the area of self-regulated action, while some learners seem to be in the ZPD, not yet able to independently set learning goals. At least one volunteer responded to this through conversational scaffolding means within the ZPD.

Activation of prior content knowledge

One volunteer mentioned having perceived independent activation of prior content knowledge from the learners' side. The learners that attended to vocational school or higher education and have focused subject area seemed to activate prior content knowledge independently.

> (The learners have talked) about the experiences and views regarding the assignments. For example (name) has practical nursing studies and (she/he) has talked about how you confront different people, for instance, and all sorts of things regarding that and then (name) has also been like, if there's an assignment regarding how marketing works or regarding those concepts, for instance, if you have a client, how you act and so on. Things

> regarding their own subject or field. They have some amount of knowledge about the subject, about what's being asked in the assignments. (V4)

Another case in point was observed by the same volunteer. The learner had activated previously learned content knowledge by sketching answers and taking out previously learned material.

> Then (she/he) already makes some kind of a plan before writing and likes to check the slides for facts and concepts regarding the assignment. (V4)

One volunteer also mentioned a potential reason for difficulties in this area of SRL. They pointed out how the activation of prior content knowledge might be easier for the learners that attend to vocational school or higher education, as the studied content is more focused. On the contrary, learning in basic education might be fragmented and result in difficulties to focus.

> Especially in the university of applied sciences or in vocational school the assignments are about what they are studying already or about what they get precise knowledge or know-how in school. Like if a student studies to be a nurse, it is what they constantly study at the school. Therefore, those assignments go pretty well because they already have the knowledge and skills they need in order to do the assignment, and also have the vocabulary… But in basic education, when there are so many subjects, it is so difficult to focus on all subjects equally well, but in technical school and university of applied sciences the focus is in your own field. (V2)

Despite the detection of possible challenge for the development of SRL in this area, the volunteers did not respond to this challenge through scaffolding means.

Activation of prior metacognitive knowledge

Activation of prior metacognitive knowledge refers to declarative knowledge (e.g. learning strategies), procedural knowledge (how to implement the strategies), and conditional knowledge (when and why to use different strategies) (Schunk 2005). Three volunteers reported having perceived adult Finnish language learners independently selecting and implementing several previously learned learning strategies that made studying more efficient. These strategies included independent information-seeking and use of translator, for example.

> They use google translate mainly themselves, so they use it to translate from their native language to Finnish. (V2)

> When they kind of worked independently and were able to seek information and had the ability to do all sorts of things on digital platforms. (V4)

On the other hand, one volunteer also mentioned having perceived lack of prior metacognitive knowledge, which resulted in deficiencies in independent selection and implementation of several learning strategies. Especially the difficulties in information seeking strategies, as well as in reading strategies were mentioned. According to the volunteers, difficulties with learning appropriately were seen to be connected to the difficulties in Finnish language skills as well as to the different learning culture and previous learning background.

> …but Finnish language seems to be the biggest challenge, I mean it is really hard to study appropriately when the language is unfamiliar. And also perhaps when you do not always know where they are originally from, but in Finland studying is surely very different from what they have done before or have they even studied much before? So it probably hard to find the learning skills to fit in the Finnish school system. (V2)

> Finding the right keywords is sometimes very difficult and then the unfamiliar language, Finnish, makes it difficult to come up with the right keyword… Very often or at least occasionally students might just copy the question from the assignment and put it in Google. (V2)

> Language skills make the difference, so it seems that the essential ability is to find the most relevant matter from the assignment. If you for instance have to write a small essay or answer a question, finding the relevant part is difficult in that. But it is surely a language question essentially. (V2)

As lack of prior metacognitive knowledge was perceived, two volunteers reported having modeled metacognitive strategies that could potentially be in the learners' use directly after the modeling is done.

> In cases where we have long text, from which we have to find trivial answers, I have instructed this control F long text online search. So "let's take that piece of that word and start searching it from this long text. (V1)

> There was this thing with somebody that when you write something and a red line shows up below it and when you move your cursor on the word there comes this kind of hand and it suggests these words which would be propositions for spelling. So it comes to my mind that this one student did not know that you could get these options for spelling when you hover your cursor on the word so I told (her/him) about it and (she/he) started using it independently. (V3)

However, only modeling a strategy could also potentially be ineffective or even harmful if the learner does not have tools to use the strategy. As detected earlier by volunteer 2, the adult Finnish language learners experienced difficulties with finding suitable keywords, for example. It is not evident from the data whether

the volunteers 1 and 3 just provided the strategy or if they also supported the learners with how to find good keywords and how to check whether the automatically suggested word is suitable. This issue is further discussed in the Discussion section.

Additionally, one volunteer reported modeling a reading strategy.

> …like searching for information, like how I, myself seek information, that I have been maybe trying to teach, or transmit in a way. And then what I like to do is to pick up the essential part of the text. (V2)

In the above citation, the volunteer explicitly states their aim to transfer the skill of information seeking to the learner. They aim to do it through modeling how to pick up only the most important part from the text. The aim of the volunteer seems to be the learner's internalization of that skill, which would add to the learner's prior metacognitive skills and help in information seeking. In other words, the volunteer seems be guiding the learner from the ZPD to the area of SRL.

In addition to modeling of learning strategies, volunteers reported having used instructive scaffolding by telling the student how they should complete the task at hand. When using instructing as a scaffolding strategy, the volunteer explicitly told the learner what to do.

> So we write whatever that pops into mind about it. What answers the question, of course. And then we sort of start to specify and add more text or correct grammatical errors or something, but maybe it is vital to first get the answer to the question. (V2)

> For one, we have brought up a common page and then I have been instructing like "well look that and that". (V3)

7.2.2 Monitoring

This subsection outlines the findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of cognitive monitoring. The volunteers had perceived SRL in the form of metacognitive judgements but did not explicitly identify challenges regarding SRL in monitoring of cognition. Despite this, they still reported scaffolding monitoring of cognition through conversations and questions. The volunteers used conversational means, modeling, and instructing to scaffold SRL in cognitive monitoring.

Table 13

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in cognitive monitoring

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
Metacognitive judgements	Conversation, questions

Metacognitive judgements

Metacognitive judgements include beliefs about what the learner knows and what is yet to be learned (Schunk 2005). One volunteer mentioned having perceived SRL related to metacognitive judgements. The learner used speech as a means to become aware of what they knew and where they still needed support.

> I remember that there was a lot of it that like (she/he) told what (she/he) wanted to answer on that assignment but sort of needed support on how the sentence was formed. (V4)

The volunteers did not mention having perceived challenges in the phase of monitoring, but still reported scaffolding it through multiple means. Two volunteers aided monitoring of cognition through conversational means. Conversations developed the learner's knowledge about what they knew, that is, metacognition, and helped the learners proceed with the learning task. Also, the volunteers gained valuable information about the learner's learning process through conversations.

> Discussion was a big part of it and from it became clear that (she/he) understood the assignment and had many thoughts regarding the topic and then together we formed a way how to write that into the assignment. (V4)

> Discussion helps. And that you first have said out loud what you want to write. (V2)

This finding highlights the importance of conversations that take place within the ZPD. The findings suggest that starting to write the answer to the learning task straight away might be out of many of the adult Finnish language learners' ZPD, in the zone of too difficult tasks. The adult Finnish language learners seem to hugely benefit from oral discussions before moving on to written tasks.

Another means to scaffold monitoring of cognition was to ask questions. Both closed and open-ended questions were asked by one volunteer. Closed questions were asked to confirm that the learner has understood the task at hand.

> And then I ask them … and if something is unclear. (V2)

By asking this type of question, the volunteer invited the learner to monitor their understanding of the task and make a judgement whether the task is understood or not.

The same volunteer reported using open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were asked in different stages of the learning process, more precisely after the introduction of an assignment, or after finishing a certain subsection of the assignment. Asking open-ended questions was a strategy through which not only the volunteer gained understanding about how the learner had understood the task or information, but also helped the learner to monitor their own learning.

> I ask them how they understand the assignment. (V2)

> I ask them to tell me what came up on top of their mind. (V2)

By asking this types of questions, the volunteer to scaffolded the learners' monitoring of understanding by encouraging them to form a meaning about the learning task.

7.2.3 Control

This subsection outlines the findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of cognitive control. The volunteers had perceived independent SRL of altering a learning strategy when the learner had detected that the learning was not going to a hoped direction. This action was manifested in the independent implementation of strategies such as reorganizing information and rehearsal.

The volunteers did not explicitly identify challenges regarding SRL of cognitive control. Despite this, they still reported scaffolding it. More precisely, they reported scaffolding rehearsal through hints. The volunteers did not mention scaffolding reorganizing of information. The findings suggest that scaffolding of learning strategies that adjust learning might be useful in the attempt to help the

adult Finnish language learners to reach SRL and reach their learning goals independently.

Table 14

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in cognitive control

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
Cognitive learning strategies	Explaining, conversation, hints

Cognitive learning strategies

Reorganizing information

One volunteer mentioned having perceived that one learner reorganized information as a means to control their learning. The learner adapted a learning strategy that helped with understanding of the material. They created an additional document for parts of the text to organize the learning material and gain an understanding about it

> And then (she/he) often copied those texts like… (She/he) copies the text on their own file to get a picture of what the things are about. (V4)

To scaffold reorganizing information, the volunteers reported using explaining and conversations. First, three volunteers reported using **explaining**. Explaining was further divided into three subcategories: use of supportive materials, explaining in a different way and breaking the task into smaller sections.

Three volunteers reported using *supportive materials* while explaining concepts to learners. The use of supportive materials was common especially in math tasks where the aim was to present an abstract concept in a more understandable way.

> We use illustrative pictures quite a bit, for example in geography or maths we have used the pictures so that the task that seems very abstract or also maybe challenging because of the language, becomes more concrete when there is a picture or something that illustrates it better. (V2)

> In math calculations I have sometimes drawn some illustrative pictures on the paper. (V1)

In these examples, the volunteers reorganized the abstract tasks into a more understandable form.

One volunteer mentioned a challenge regarding the use of supportive materials. They described how the use of supportive materials was challenging when working in an online environment.

> With math tasks I was faced with difficulties… It was probably the only subject where I felt that the computer screen was in the way. Like I should have been able to take the blocks and everything, like show in a very concrete manner how a common fraction works. (V3)

Two volunteers reported *explaining the task in a different way* to build the learner's understanding. Four different methods of explaining in a different way were found from the data. (1) finding synonyms for words (2) explaining the whole task in a different way (3) coming up with sentences where the unfamiliar word was used and (4) using learner's experience to explain a concept or phenomenon.

> Try to come up with synonyms or try to come up with sentences where the word or unfamiliar term is used. (V1)

> Well, today for example we were going through bank and insurance related topics with the student. That to the bank you take your own money and you get your own money back from the bank. But when it comes to the insurance company… It can be the case that you pay for an insurance for years hundreds of euros, thousands of euros, and you never get anything back. Or it can be that you only pay for a short time and when an accident happens, you get way more money back than you have ever paid there. (V1)

In the above cases, the volunteers used explaining in a different way to reorganize the information into a more understandable form.

One volunteer reported using the strategy of *breaking the learning task into* as *small units* as needed to aid the learner's understanding.

> The skill of breaking a learning task into as small units as needed, if needed… I feel like I have improved that skill a lot. (V3)

Finally, three volunteers reported using **conversations** as a scaffolding strategy to aid reorganizing information. The goal of these conversations was to aid understanding of the concepts or phenomena at hand. The conversations took place before and after completing the task. Before the task, the volunteer and learner tried to find a *common understanding* about the task at hand through conversational means.

> We give meaning to the task together. (V2)

After the task, comprehension about the phenomenon was aided through *elaborative conversation* about the discovered answer.

> You can improve learning so that in addition to just picking the right answer (from a text) you also discuss the topic and related area. (V1)

Three volunteers saw the **lack of substance knowledge** as a challenge for scaffolding and mentioned a variety of reasons why. Trying to explain a concept that was not so clear to the volunteer either became even more challenging when they tried to explain it in easy Finnish. Additionally, one volunteer mentioned that forming a meaning together became more challenging when the volunteer was unfamiliar with the content.

> She/he would sometimes ask like "what does this mean", for example some concept related to a specific field. So then… like I have no knowledge about the field itself… So when you try to explain in easy Finnish, or as clearly as possible, that is in a way really difficult. (V4)

> If I needed to be able to explain the meanings of things in different words, and when I, myself do not know what the words mean, because I do not have the substance knowledge from a certain field, so that is sometimes very difficult… So it is very difficult to clarify and find a meaning together when I myself do not always know exactly. (V2)

Rehearsal

In rehearsal, the learner had monitored their learning and become aware of what they did not yet know. Then, through controlling of learning, the learner used a strategic method, rehearsal, to gain understanding about the topic. In this case rehearsal included relistening parts of the task.

> She/he goes through and relistens lessons or parts of them and so on. (V4)

The volunteers did not mention having perceived difficulties in this area, but still explained having scaffolded it. Two volunteers scaffolded rehearsal by giving hints. Volunteer 1 controlled the learning situation more by making the learner listen to the same part of the listening comprehension task repeatedly, whereas the volunteer 4 provided only a small hint leaving more space for the learner to figure out the answer themselves.

> We had a listening comprehension task and we listened to a short story and answered questions about it. Well for instance I didn't tell the answers but I made (him/her) listen to the part containing the answer so many times that the right answer was clear to (him/her). (V1)

> If there comes up something puzzling I say something like "would the slides have an answer to this" or "do you have some notes" or if that person has previously talked about the subject I bring it up by saying something like "you were just thinking about that subject. Would that be any help on this?". (V4)

In the latter quotation, the volunteer used the learner's previous knowledge about the topic in their effort to proceed with the task. The use of previous knowledge in combination with providing hints is further discussed in the Discussion section.

7.3 Behavior

In Pintrich's (2004) model behavior is seen as crucial for learner's SRL. The findings of this section outline the adult Finnish language learners' perceived strengths and weaknesses in the area of behavioral SRL, as well as the volunteer scaffolding responses to the perceived strengths and weaknesses. The volunteers perceived SRL in two subcategories of behavioral SRL, in planning and control, and reported having scaffolded behavioral planning. The sections of monitoring and reflection were left out, as there was no reference in the interviews to perceived SRL or scaffolding in that area.

7.3.1 Planning

This subsection outlines the findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of behavioral planning. The volunteers described having perceived SRL in effort planning and time-management. The volunteers did not mention challenges in the learners' SRL in behavioral planning but reported scaffolding time management by modeling prioritization. Effort planning was not scaffolded.

Table 15

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in behavioral planning

Perceived SRL	Reported scaffolding behavior
Effort planning	N/A
Time management	Modeling

Effort-planning

Two volunteers reported having perceived independent effort planning from the learner's side. In one case the volunteer described how the learner did not want to focus on grammar and explicitly stated that in the learning situation. The other volunteer, on the other hand, had perceived opposite behavior. In their case the learner wanted to learn the Finnish language as perfectly as possible.

> Often they say that it doesn't matter if the grammar is poor, that you don't have to pay attention to this. The main concern is to get the assignment done and the teachers will understand. (V2)

> Some of them were very strict about wanting to learn Finnish as perfectly as possible at the same time. (V3)

Both learners stated their plans about how much effort they wanted to put into the completion of the assignment and where they wanted to focus on. It can thus be concluded that they had gone past the ZPD in this area and were able to self-regulate their behavior in terms of effort planning, at least in the tasks in question.

Volunteers did not report scaffolding this area. The data does not uncover whether all learners possessed this skill, as only two volunteers had observed this behavior. If the learners do not self-regulate their effort plans, the volunteers could develop a ZPD around the area of effort planning through for example conversational methods. They could, for example have conversations about how the learner would like to divide the time in the learning session. This would potentially aid the learner's SRL in effort planning.

Time-management

One volunteer described a situation where they had perceived time-management -related SRL and adjusted their own support to match the learner's wishes. In

this case, the learner prioritized the completion of the learning task over grammatical correctness due to tight schedule.

> So if they say they are in a hurry with this assignment. Let's do this assignment and the learner will look into the language later. Then we do just that. (V2)

The same volunteer reported scaffolding time management by modeling prioritization.

> It feels like occasionally they have so much homework and other things to do that you do not have time to adjust little things, so that the important thing is on the paper or on the computer first and then if we have time we start clarifying further. (V2)

The same volunteer also saw the lack of time as an affordance in the development of time-management self-regulatory skills. They felt like a tight schedule could develop the learner's skills in prioritization and in finding the most important part from the task at hand.

> In the homework club they do not usually have time to invest in all the assignments as much as they could. But then on the other hand I think it is a desirable skill that you do not have to be always so precise or as thorough as you can but to be able to find the answer to the question or the essential part of the text and move on. So maybe the hurry or large quantity of assignments per se is not a problem… (V2)

The findings indicate that the context, tight schedule itself, and the presence of the volunteer developed the learner a ZPD. Due to the time-related challenges, the volunteer and the learner were provided an environment to practice prioritization skills.

In contrast to the volunteer 2, volunteer 1 mentioned multiple times time-related challenges that made scaffolding more difficult. The volunteer seemed to have problems with time-management and was not able to scaffold it, which resulted in temptation to provide the learner direct answers.

> When you are in a hurry it is hard not to give ready answers. The tight schedule creates this pressure. And I would rather try to provoke these moments of realization and learning to learn as opposed to mechanical performing of answers because it is a greater benefit for the student. (V1)

7.3.2 Control

This subsection outlines the findings of SRL and volunteer scaffolding response in the phase of behavioral control. The volunteers had perceived independent SRL skills in forms of help-seeking and persistence.

The volunteers did not explicitly identify challenges regarding SRL in behavioral control, and did not scaffold this area. The findings indicate that in this context, SRL in help-seeking and persistence form a prerequisite for the development of ZPD in the other areas of SRL.

Table 16

Perceived learner SRL and volunteer scaffolding in behavioral control

Perceived SRL	**Reported scaffolding behavior**
Help-seeking	N/A
Persistence	N/A

Help-seeking

All four volunteers reported having perceived independent help-seeking behavior from the learner's side. One volunteer noted that the learners often come to the club because the question at hand is not clear to them. In other words, they come to the club to seek help for the completion of learning tasks.

> Why you come to homework club is that for instance you do not fully understand the question. (V1)

Two other volunteers explained how some learners asked for help during learning by asking specific questions.

> If they have concrete questions on for instance how powerpoint works, how you add text or how you add transition… (V2)

> (She/he) asks me if I can explain this a bit clearer and so on. (V4)

The volunteers did not report scaffolding this area. The findings indicate that the learners had already entered the zone of self-regulated action and there was no need to scaffold this area. Initially, the learners participate in Let's Learn

Together -club when they detect they have learning assignments they are not able to complete on their own. Thus help-seeking behavior can be seen as the first step and even a prerequisite for the ZPD to form. In this particular context, if the learner does not seek help by attending to the club, no volunteer-learner interaction occurs.

Persistence

Two volunteers pointed out that all the learners they had encountered were persistent learners. The persistence according to the volunteers, was evident in their willingness to go forward and in the way they spoke to themselves.

> The persistence. What I think, all of whom I have encountered here have had an incredible persistence regardless of the language level they have… They are persistent in learning so that they still keep on going and learning more and then some of them say to themselves that perhaps in ten years they have learned this and know this language better and so on. (V3)

> Both of them for one, although the assignment has felt difficult, have patiently managed to continue doing it nonetheless and dealt with it with the attitude that we will get this done. (V4)

The volunteers did not report scaffolding this area, and the findings strongly indicate that there was no need for it.

7.4 Context

As noted in the previous literature, self-regulating context has is usually the dimension which the learner tends to have the least control over (Pintrich, 2004). However, in Pintrich's (2004) model self-regulation of context is seen as an important aspect. The findings of this section outline the volunteers' perceptions in the area of contextual SRL. The volunteer scaffolding responses were not reported and the findings of this section remained scarce. However, the learner action took place in the phase of contextual control and is presented below.

One volunteer reported having often perceived regulation of context by adult Finnish language learners. More precisely, they explained how the learners often renegotiate the task and give feedback to the volunteer about what to focus on in a task. Thus, the learners modify the contextual affordances, in this case the

support of the volunteer, to better suit their own learning goals. Sometimes this seemed to be in conflict with what the volunteer had learned in the volunteer training. The below quotation illustrates the case and further implications regarding it are discussed in the Discussion section.

> Very often I get feedback from students that, although what I have understood and what in the volunteer training has been instructed that we should teach Finnish language and especially how to write, students still say that it is not that important if grammar is poor, that it should not have to be paid attention to. The main thing is to get the assignment done and the teachers will understand. (V2)

The volunteers did not report any action to support the adult Finnish language learners' contextual self-regulation. This issue is further discussed in the Discussion section.

8 DISCUSSION

This section will summarize the findings and outline the connections between the novel findings and the previous literature on SRL and scaffolding. Next, the limitations and strengths of the study are outlined. Finally, suggestions on further research are provided.

8.1 Interpretation of the findings

The first research question aimed to explore what observations the volunteers had made regarding the adult Finnish language learners' SRL skills, whereas the second research question aimed to explore what scaffolding strategies the volunteers use to support the development of SRL. This section summarizes the findings of these two research questions and discusses the balance between them.

The findings suggest that the four main areas of SRL seem to be interconnected, and it is not meaningful to distinguish them completely. Additionally, the phases of the four main areas (planning, monitoring, control, reflection) are strongly interwoven. Pintrich (2004) also notes that monitoring, control and reaction can occur simultaneously.

Still, this study distinguished between the four main areas and their four subareas. The findings revealed an extensive list of perceived SRL skills in all four areas of SRL, although in the context-area the findings were scarce. The strongest area seemed to be motivation, where interest, task value activation, and task difficulty were observed as skills that characterize SRL. These findings are in line with Pintrich's (2004) framework of SRL.

Learners also seemed to possess multiple cognitive SRL skills, which were manifested through independent goal setting, activation of prior content and metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive judgements, and adjustment of cognitive learning strategies. These findings verify Schunk's (2005) and Pintrich's (2004) conceptualizations about cognitive SRL.

In addition, the learners seemed to manage their time and effort independently, seek help and persist when faced with difficulties. These features add

to behavioral SRL and verify Pintrich's (2004) framework. Moreover, SRL with regards to context was perceived in the learners' aim to adjust the volunteer's support by providing the volunteer with feedback about their support. In Pintrich's (2004) framework such behavior is referred to as regulation of context. According to the volunteer who provided this answer, the volunteer training emphasizes that the volunteers should focus on the instruction of Finnish language and writing, but some learners do not value that as much. Adult learning theory suggests that motivation of adult learner's stems from a need in real life (Knowles et. al. 2005). Also Peirce's (1995) notion of investment suggest that language learners have a complex social identity and multiple desires. These in mind, seems to be beneficial to tuned to the learner's needs and support their autonomy rather that dictate the rules in order to support the motivation. The volunteers can support the autonomy of the learners by encouraging them to regulate the context in which they are learning. This could be done by for example asking for feedback during and after the learning session and adjusting the support according to the learner's wishes.

Although the volunteers made many perceptions on SRL, it still remains unclear whether those SRL skills that some learners possessed, were scaffolded in the interaction with the learners that might not yet have possessed them. A case in point is task difficulty judgements. The findings suggest that some learners were not yet able to explicitly evaluate the task difficulty. As a response, volunteers could use for example questioning as a scaffolding method and stimulate the skill. That would potentially help with other areas as well, such as in time-management planning.

The perceived challenges in SRL concerned mostly the cognitive area. Especially challenges in the efficient selection and implementation of metacognitive strategies were mentioned. Although not directly challenges in SRL skills, the volunteers had insights about the underlying challenges experienced by the adult Finnish language learners that might affect self-regulation especially in the cognitive area. For example, one volunteer saw difficulties in Finnish skills influencing the selection of relevant keywords, thus influencing cognitive planning. Also

lack of content-related focus in basic education was mentioned, as well as different learning culture, which, according to the volunteer perspective, might have resulted in difficulties for the learner to focus on the task and apply appropriate cognitive strategies, thus affecting the planning and monitoring of cognition. It is important to highlight not only the perceived challenges in SRL, but also consider the underlying challenges, as self-regulation might improve if the contextual barriers are recognized (Khrisnan et. al., 2019).

One previous study also recognizes the contextual barriers that might block language learners' self-regulation and reveals similar perceptions as the volunteers did in this study. Khrisnan et. al. (2019) studied young adult ELLs self-directed learning skills and the underlying factors of them through an ecological perspective. They concluded that if the learner has not yet mastered the language through which they are studying, the learner might not be able to allocate sufficient cognitive resources toward metacognitive control, which is essential to self-regulation. Also, the study revealed that learners might not receive adequate instruction from school regarding the use of efficient learning strategies (Khrisnan et. al., 2019). This study was done in the United States, so it cannot be directly concluded that the adult language learners do not receive instruction on efficient learning strategies in the Finnish education system. Still, the volunteers had perceived difficulties namely in the selection and implementation of cognitive strategies.

In addition to the challenges in the cognitive area, one volunteer made a general comment about the task value the learner sets to the learning task. If that is low, the learner might see the learning task as completely useless. Thus, one challenge in the motivational area of SRL was also detected. All in all, the detected challenges were a minority in comparison to the perceived SRL skills. The volunteers seemed to explain the difficulties being mostly caused by language and culture related issues and previous educational background.

As identified challenges concerned mostly cognition, the reported scaffolding was performed mostly in the cognitive area, but also scaffolding of motivation and behavior were reported. All of the scaffolding strategies introduced in

van de Pol et. al.'s framework, feedback, modeling, instructing, questions, explaining, and hints were identified in this study, which validates the framework.

One of the main areas where the volunteers used scaffolding was metacognition-related areas, such as activation of metacognitive knowledge and aiding metacognitive judgements. Modeling was a frequently used strategy, and it was used for example in the activation of prior metacognitive knowledge. Also, Walqui (2006) as well as Mahan (2020) emphasize the importance of modeling in SLL education. One volunteer mentioned modeling reading strategies by showing how to pick up the most important part from the text. However, it did not become evident form the data how exactly this was done.

To add another strategy to scaffold metacognitive strategies, Walqui (2006) has suggested **schema building**. For example, asking the learner to note headings and illustrations will help the learner to gain a basic understanding of the topic (Walqui, 2006). Schema building as a scaffolding strategy in the area of metacognitive strategies might serve as a useful tool for the volunteers in the future. To apply van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) framework, schema building could potentially be practiced by instructing the learner what to look for in the text, for example.

Also **developing metacognition** is emphasized in Walqui's (2006) work. The findings of this study indicate that the volunteers used scaffolding that develops learners metacognition, as they for example used instructing and modeling to develop the activation of prior metacognitive knowledge and asked both closed and open-ended questions to aid the development of metacognitive judgements. Here, Walqui's (2006) concept of developing metacognition was practiced by using several scaffolding strategies from van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) framework, namely instructing, modeling, and questioning.

It can be interpreted that Walqui's (2006) concepts are aligned with van de Pol et al's (2010) scaffolding strategies at least in the area of developing metacognive SRL, but Walqui's (2006) concepts might work on a more abstract level. For example, Walqui's (2006) scaffolding type of developing metacognition included many scaffolding strategies mentioned in van de Pol et al's (2010) framework.

In addition to van de Pol et. al.'s (2010) framework of scaffolding types, the proposed new method of conversational scaffolding was found. Evidently one of

the most used scaffolding strategies among the volunteers was conversations. This study pinpoints the important role of conversations as a scaffolding strategy, but the findings indicate that there was still more to conversations than this study was able to catch. For example, from the interviews it was not clear whether separate strategies (e.g. hints, questions, modeling) were included in those conversations. It can thus be questioned whether conversations deserve a category of their own. It seems that the strategy of conversation could also be divided into smaller units according to the scaffolding strategies found in the previous literature. This idea is elaborated in the following paragraphs.

Conversations' suitability for scaffolding namely adult Finnish language learners' SRL was evident. According to the volunteer perceptions, writing might be very challenging for the adult Finnish language learners. Thus, purely written learning tasks might still be in the zone of too difficult tasks, but the ZPD can be formed by transforming the parts of the written task into a conversation. For example, in the initial stage of completing an assignment, the volunteers reported forming a meaning together with the learners through conversations. This method has been proved useful also previously. Suni (2008) has pointed out the importance of negotiation of meaning in the context of adult Finnish language learners.

McNeil (2012) in the context of ELL education has mentioned use of discourse as a scaffolding strategy. He refers to the strategy of reformulating learner's answer, where the teacher listens to the response and answers by modeling appropriate language or reasoning. This scaffolding strategy seems to share the characteristics of the scaffolding strategy categorized as conversations in this study. However, conversation as a scaffolding strategy in this study might have been a broader concept than just reformulating the learner's answer. This study was still not able to catch a very detailed picture of the conversations, as in many cases it was not clear what exactly these conversations between the learner and the volunteer included.

Despite the lack of preciseness, conversations' role in the development of SRL was evident. This was seen for example in scaffolding the learner's goal-setting. Goal setting seems to develop the learner's metacognition, as through

planning they become aware of what they need to do in order to reach the goal. Walqui (2006) as well as Mahan (2020) emphasized the **developing of metacognition** in their scaffolding frameworks. This can be done by for example introducing learning routines. In this study, the volunteers reported having conversations about the learning goals. However, it was not evident whether this was a strategy practiced regularly. According to the findings, these metacognition-targeted conversations were not practiced by many volunteers. As the literature on SLL scaffolding strongly supports learning routines to scaffold SLLs' learning, the language learners in the context of this study might also benefit from a routine that targets metacognition, such as having a goal-setting related conversation before moving on to the actual task. Conversations as a strategy to realize the development of metacognition is one way of providing the support.

Additionally, the direct quotes from the volunteers describing scaffolding through conversations seem to align with van Lier's (2013) conceptualization of the ZPD (see figure 1). Starting off by having conversations about the learning goals, and during the process aiding the monitoring of metacognitive knowledge by encouraging the learner to speak out loud what they want to write both seem to support the development of SRL. Moreover, van Lier's scaffolding feature of **Intersubjectivity,** which refers to the establishment of mutual engagement and non-threatening, encouraging participation seems to be established in the volunteers' descriptions of conversations as a scaffolding strategy.

This study revealed that the volunteers had perceived difficulties in SRL among the adult Finnish language learners, but in some cases the volunteers did not possess scaffolding strategies to respond to those challenges. According to the findings, the volunteers had detected difficulties with prior content knowledge activation and found it difficult to scaffold prior content knowledge or build on it when they themselves did not possess substance knowledge on the topic. To respond to this challenge, the volunteers could take advantage of the learner's previous experiences for example by asking to recall anything that comes to mind about the topic at hand. This strategy of activating prior content knowledge is called mobilization (Wetzels et. al., 2011). Mobilization might help the learners in their efforts to scaffold activation of previous content knowledge.

This might be particularly beneficial for adult language learners, as one key characteristic of an adult learner is that they draw from previous experiences (Knowles et. al., 2005).

Despite the detected difficulties, in many cases the volunteers did not explicitly mention having perceived difficulties in several areas of SRL, but still reported scaffolding those areas. One possibility is that the volunteers had identified difficulties and the learners' ZPD and adjusted scaffolding according to their capabilities of the learner but did not explicitly report that process. Instead, they explained only the scaffolding process during the interviews. This potential scenario might have been due to the interview guide, as the detected difficulties and scaffolding responses were not asked directly after another. Alternatively, it is also possible that the volunteers had not diagnosed the need for support before providing it.

Van de Pol et. al. (2010) emphasizes the importance of diagnosing the learner's level before scaffolding. Also van Lier (2004) notes the practice of **handover/takeover** as a crucial feature of scaffolding. It was not clear from the data whether the volunteers diagnosed the learners' level before scaffolding or whether they handed the responsibility over to the learner as their skills increased. The possible lack of diagnosis and handover might have resulted in at least two unwanted consequences. First, the volunteers could have provided scaffolding even if there would not have been a need for it. In this case the learner might have already entered the zone of SRL (see figure 1) and was not anymore in need of assistance. It can be asked whether the volunteers in some cases even underestimated the skills of the learner and offered assistance even if they had not detected a need for it. Jones (2019) points out that instructional choices can also be destructive if the learner has already mastered the skill but still receives extensive assistance. A possible example of that is the provision of hints reported in this study. From the interviews it was not possible to conclude whether the volunteer had adjusted the provision of hints to the learner's level. It is possible that the volunteers had underestimated the capabilities of the learner and provided too obvious hints. In that case the learner might have already been within

the zone of self-regulated action and been able to figure out the answer to the question independently or with less hints.

However, an opposite outcome is also possible, as it is not clear from the citations whether the provided hints were insufficient, and the scaffolding took place in the zone of too difficult tasks. This could have also happened when the volunteers reported scaffolding metacognitive knowledge by modeling and instructing study strategies. In many citations it was not clear if the learner had entered the ZPD in that area, or if the volunteer just provided a strategy the learner was not yet able to internalize. As van Lier (2004) has noted in the context of language learning, the learner should be engaged in meaningful activities, and only through the meaningful engagement can language learning occur. It is not clear, whether meaningful engagement took place during the provision of hints, modeling and instructing. The findings indicate that the volunteers might work quite intuitively, which might result in the poor diagnosis of the learners' needs, which, in turn might cause difficulties in the formation of proper ZPD and hinder the development of SRL.

In the case of scaffolding motivation, the provision of feedback during the learning task, regardless of the diagnosis of the need for it, could potentially be internalized as a self-regulatory tool of positive self-talk and thus be available for learner's independent use. For example, saying "good job, you are able to do it" can strengthen the learners efficacy beliefs and once the positive talk is internalized, the learner would not need a volunteer to regulate affect, but through positive self-talk they would be able self-regulate it.

To conclude, the findings of this study indicate that the perceived SRL skills and provided scaffolding are mostly in balance. The adult Finnish language learners possess a variety of SRL skills, but also seem to be lacking especially cognitive SRL skills. As a response, the volunteers use a great deal of scaffolding strategies in their efforts to scaffold especially cognitive SRL, but also motivation and behavior. Conversation as a strategy to scaffold cognition was recognized as an effective tool to scaffold cognition and motivation. However, the partially inconsistent balance between perceived SRL, and scaffolding response indicate that the provided support might not always be tailored to the student, and that the

volunteers might provide the support quite intuitively without addressing the learner's needs first. This is something, that along with the provision of scaffolding strategies should be stressed in the future volunteer training.

The strengths of this study include the comprehensive analysis of adult Finnish language learners' SRL perceived by volunteers, and the analysis of how the volunteers were able to support SRL through a variety of scaffolding strategies. Also, it seems like the specific scaffolding strategies provided by van de Pol (2010) can potentially be included in Walqui's (2006) more broad concepts of modelling, bridging, contextualization, building schema, re-presenting text and developing metacognition.

The study highlights that self-regulation and scaffolding develop interconnectedly, and drawing from both theory and novel findings, provides suggestions on how parts of the scaffolding process in SRL development of adult Finnish language learners can potentially be improved.

8.2 Integrity of the study

The trustworthiness of a study is usually evaluated through the examination of validity, meaning whether the measuring instrument is measuring what it is supposed to measure, and reliability, meaning the reproducibility of the study are on focus (Golafshani, 2003). However, this way of evaluating draws from positivist perspective and is widely used in quantitative studies, and these concepts should be refined to better suit the evaluation of qualitative study (Golafshani, 2003).

According to Hayashi et. al. (2019) the trustworthiness of a qualitative research should focus on the whole process (Hayashi et. al., 2019). Elo et. al. (2014) have also provided a checklist for researchers attempting to improve the trustworthiness of a content analysis study, which is divided into three phases, and concerns the whole research process (Elo et. al., 2014).

Before beginning the data collection, it is important to immerse in the field of research (Hayashi et. al., 2019). The researcher had volunteered in the Let's Learn Together -group for two years before conducting the research, and at the

time of conducting the interviews also worked at the NGO and facilitated the Let's Learn Together -club. As a result, the practicalities of the activity were familiar.

In Elo et. al. (2014) checklist, the first phase of evaluation is the preparation phase, which can be evaluated through three main questions, by looking at the data collection method, sampling strategy, and the selection of the unit of analysis (Elo et. al., 2014). The selection process of the unit of analysis is described in the section 6.4, and the other two are discussed here.

The data collection method of this study was interviews. During the research process it became clear that perhaps combining observations of the sessions and interviews would have provided the researcher with more nuanced understanding of the learner's SRL skills and scaffolding responses than this study was able to catch by conducting solely interviews. Also, Golafshani (2003) notes that engaging multiple methods, lead to more trustworthy construction of realities. However, considering the scope of master's thesis and the time limits, interviews provided the amount of material that was possible to handle in a short time period.

Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2018) note that the previous research experience is relevant to the trustworthiness. Also conducting interviews requires thoughtful planning beforehand (Hirsjärvi et. al., 2013) It should be noted that the researcher had only little previous experience on conducting interviews. Another viewpoint is the assessment of the self-awareness of the researcher, which can be improved by conducting pre-interviews (Elo et.al., 2014). It is important that the questions are non-leading, and easy to understand (Tracy, 2013). One limitation of this study was the absence of pre-interviews. The researcher started sketching the study in early September, and the interviews needed to be conducted in October, so there was not enough time to have pre-interviews and refine the questions. Due to this, some of the questions might have been quite ambiguous and difficult to understand, as noted in some interviews where the interviewee asked the researcher to specify what was meant and definitions for some concepts. The study still had strengths regarding interview conduction. Tracy (2013) notes that good interview questions are open-ended and accompanied by follow-up questions

and probes. The interview guide (see Appendix 3) included only open-ended questions and follow-up questions were included in the interviews by for example by asking the volunteers to give examples on certain situations.

The interview questions were formed according to the organization's wishes, and the researcher had only a partial impact on what was asked. Additionally, the interview questions did not draw from previous literature of SRL or scaffolding, but instead questions about study skills and learning skills were asked. These wide concepts left much room for volunteers' interpretation, and most often mentioned insights concerned cognitive and motivational factors, while observations on SRL related to adult Finnish language learners' behavior and context were few. If the previous literature on scaffolding and SRL had informed the creation of the interview guide, it is likely that there would have been more context and behavior related answers. Regardless of this shortcoming, the questions were still able to catch a considerable number of perceptions on adult Finnish language learners' SRL skills as well as scaffolding strategies used by the volunteers, as presented in the findings.

From the viewpoint of sampling strategy, this study used purposive sampling, and more detailed description and argumentation for the selection of this sampling method is stated in the section 6.3.2. It is important to state the criteria used to select participants to ensure that the transferability to other contexts can be assessed (Elo et. al., 2014). However, Higginbottom (2004) states that in qualitative research the participants are usually chosen based on the methodology and topic rather than the need for generalizability of the findings. Also this study is a case study in a particular organization, and the findings are not directly transferrable to another context. Still, the findings of this study give cues about the relationship between SRL and scaffolding.

Another way of evaluating sampling is to pay attention to the adequacy of the data, which can be enhanced through saturation (Elo et. al., 2014). In saturation, as many interviews are conducted until there is no additional useful information due to saturation (Hayashi, 2019). In this study, the volunteers stated frequently similar observations on SRL and reported using similar scaffolding strategies. Still, many observations and strategies were only mentioned once, so it is

likely that with a larger sample size the number of different observations and reported scaffolding strategies would have expanded. Also, if volunteers for example from different educational backgrounds were included, it might be that they had highlighted different aspects of SRL and scaffolding. Considering all this, it can be concluded that saturation most likely did not occur in this study.

In addition to the planning phase, Elo et. al. (2014) include guidelines to evaluate the trustworthiness of the data organization phase and reporting phase. In this study, efforts have been made to increase the trustworthiness of this study by reporting the data collection and analysis in a detailed manner to enable the reader to follow the decisions that were made during the research process. It is also important to acknowledge that there is always some degree of interpretation when approaching a text, and the researcher has to consider how to confirm the conformability of the study (Elo et. al., 2014). Conformability of findings means that the information that the participants provided, is accurately represented (Polit & Beck, 2012, as cited in Elo et. al., 2014). This was ensured by first providing a direct citation of a participant, followed by a comment, which showed the interpretation of the researcher. The presentation of the original citations can be seen as enhancing the trustworthiness of this study. However, as the original citations were in Finnish, some valuable information might have been lost due to the translation process.

It is recommended to perform the analysis by more than one person to provide stable interpretation of the data (Schreier, 2012). As there study was completed by a single person, this option was not available. However, the researcher did multiple rounds of analysis before the final form of presenting the findings was selected. While doing the analysis, previous literature was revisited to inform the interpretation of the data, following the principles of abductive analysis (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014). This can be seen as having enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings.

8.3 Further study

This study was able to answer the research questions, but still raised multiple considerations for further study. This section outlines the most relevant concerns.

Probably due to the limited number of participants, many subcategories of the four main categories of SRL were not found in the data and that is why they were not included in the findings. However, the missing areas might be very important to highlight in the future studies, as many of these areas have been studied before and found crucial for the development of SRL. For example, the role of efficacy beliefs of the adult Finnish language learner and how that relates to SRL would be a valuable study in the future.

Additionally, the underlying theoretical lens of this study is the social-cultural theory, which understands learning as socially and culturally constructed. In terms of culture and self-regulation, the question of culture in the previous research on SRL has been ignored to a great extension. The theoretical construct of self-regulation is developed in the West and the studies investigating it have used mono-cultural research samples (McInerey & King 2018). Also the participants of this study were all Finnish nationals. For the future studies, participants from various ethnical backgrounds would potentially provide wider perceptions on SRL.

This study has investigated the relationship between the perceived SRL and volunteers' scaffolding response and provided suggestions to improve the balance. In order to provide timely and tailored scaffolding, it is important to be aware and address the potential barriers volunteers experience that are hindering the implementation of proper scaffolding strategies. The future study should address this fundamentally important question.

The last suggestion for future research is to conduct a similar study using different methods. For example, using conversation analysis would provide more detailed data on scaffolding strategies and interviewing and observing the adult Finnish language learners directly would provide a more accurate picture about their SRL skills and scaffolding strategies than this study was able to catch. Especially the role of conversations in the scaffolding process could be investigated in a more detailed manner in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Privacy notice

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

28.9.2021

Tietosuojailmoitus "Vapaaehtoisten kokemuksia maahanmuuttaneiden opiskelu- ja oppimistaitojen tukemisesta" -tutkimukseen osallistuvalle

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista eikä tutkittavan ole pakko toimittaa mitään tietoja. Tutkimukseen osallistumisen voi keskeyttää.

1. **Tutkimuksen nimi, luonne ja kesto**

Tutkimuksen aihe: Paremmin Yhdessä ry:n Opitaan yhdessä -toimintaan osallistuvien vapaaehtoisten kokemuksia maahanmuuttaneiden opiskelu- ja oppimistaitojen tukemisesta.

Tutkimus toteutetaan haastattelemalla vapaaehtoisia heidän kokemuksistaan maahanmuuttaneiden opiskelu- ja oppimistaitojen tukemiseen liittyen. Haastattelut tehdään lokakuussa 2021 ja tutkimusaineiston pohjalta kirjoitetaan pro gradu -tutkielma, jonka on tarkoitus valmistua keväällä 2022. Haastattelut toteutetaan etäyhteydellä Zoomin kautta.

2. **Henkilötietojen käsittelyn oikeudellinen peruste tutkimuksessa/arkistoinnissa**

Tutkimuksessa käsiteltävät henkilötiedot

Tutkimuksessa Sinusta kerätään seuraavia henkilötietoja: haastattelun
video- ja äänitallenne.

Henkilötietojen käsittely on tarpeen tieteellistä tai historiallista tutkimusta
taikka tilastointia varten ja se on oikeasuhtaista sillä tavoiteltuun yleisen edun
mukaiseen tavoitteeseen nähden (tietosuojain 4 §:n 3 kohta).

Tutkimuksessa tietojasi ei siirretä EU/ETA -alueen ulkopuolelle.

Henkilötietojen suojaaminen

Henkilötietojen käsittely tässä tutkimuksessa perustuu asianmukaiseen tutkimussuunnitelmaan ja tutkimuksella on vastuuhenkilö. Henkilötietojasi käytetään ja luovutetaan vain historiallista/ tieteellistä tutkimusta taikka muuta yhteensopivaa tarkoitusta varten (tilastointi) sekä muutoinkin toimitaan niin, että Sinua koskevat tiedot eivät paljastu ulkopuolisille.

Tunnistettavuuden poistaminen

☒ Suorat tunnistetiedot poistetaan suojatoimena aineiston perustamisvaiheessa (pseudonymisoitu aineisto, jolloin tunnistettavuuteen voidaan palata koodin tai vastaavan tiedon avulla ja aineistoon voidaan yhdistää uusia tietoja).

Tutkimuksessa käsiteltävät henkilötiedot suojataan

☐ käyttäjätunnuksella ☒ salasanalla ☐ käytön rekisteröinnillä ☐ kulunvalvonnalla (fyysinen tila)
☐ muulla tavoin

Tutkimuksessa kerättyjä tietoja ja tutkimustuloksia käsitellään luottamuksellisesti tietosuojalainsäädännön edellyttämällä tavalla. Tietojasi ei voida tunnistaa tutkimustuloksista. Tutkimusraportissa on mahdollista käyttää suoria sitaatteja, jotka on pseudonymisoitu (nimet, paikannimet, murteet yms.).

Henkilötietojasi ei yhdistetä muualta saatuihin tietoihin. Kaikissa tapauksissa tietojasi käsitellään luottamuksellisesti.

HENKILÖTIETOJEN KÄSITTELY TUTKIMUKSEN *PÄÄTTYMISEN JÄLKEEN*

Tutkimusrekisteri hävitetään joulukuuhun 2022 mennessä

Rekisterinpitäjä(t) ja tutkimuksen tekijät

Tämän tutkimuksen rekisterinpitäjänä toimii Emilia Huitula, +358407170230, emanhuit(at)student.jyu.fi
Tutkimuksen vastuullisena johtajana toimii rekisterinpitäjä.

Rekisteröidyn oikeudet

Oikeus saada pääsy tietoihin (tietosuoja-asetuksen 15 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus saada tieto siitä, käsitelläänkö henkilötietojasi ja mitä henkilötietojasi käsitellään. Voit myös halutessasi pyytää jäljennöksen käsiteltävistä henkilötiedoista.

Oikeus tietojen oikaisemiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 16 artikla)
Jos käsiteltävissä henkilötiedoissasi on epätarkkuuksia tai virheitä, sinulla on oikeus pyytää niiden oikaisua tai täydennystä.

Oikeus tietojen poistamiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 17 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus vaatia henkilötietojesi poistamista tietyissä tapauksissa. Oikeutta tietojen poistamiseen ei kuitenkaan ole, jos tietojen poistaminen estää tai vaikeuttaa suuresti käsittelyn tarkoituksen toteutumista tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa.

Oikeus käsittelyn rajoittamiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 18 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus henkilötietojesi käsittelyn rajoittamiseen tietyissä tilanteissa kuten, jos kiistät henkilötietojesi paikkansapitävyyden.

Vastustamisoikeus (tietosuoja-asetuksen 21 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus vastustaa henkilötietojesi käsittelyä, jos käsittely perustuu yleiseen etuun tai oikeutettuun etuun. Tällöin yliopisto ei voi käsitellä henkilötietojasi, paitsi jos se voi osoittaa, että käsittelyyn on olemassa huomattavan tärkeä ja perusteltu syy, joka syrjäyttää oikeutesi.

Oikeuksista poikkeaminen
Tässä kuvatuista oikeuksista saatetaan tietyissä yksittäistapauksissa poiketa tietosuoja-asetuksessa ja Suomen tietosuojalaissa säädetyillä perusteilla siltä osin, kuin oikeudet estävät tieteellisen tai historiallisen

tutkimustarkoituksen tai tilastollisen tarkoituksen saavuttamisen tai vaikeuttavat sitä suuresti. Tarvetta poiketa oikeuksista arvioidaan aina tapauskohtaisesti.

Profilointi ja automatisoitu päätöksenteko
Tutkimuksessa henkilötietojasi ei käytetä automaattiseen päätöksentekoon. Tutkimuksessa henkilötietojen käsittelyn tarkoituksena ei ole henkilökohtaisten ominaisuuksiesi arviointi, ts. profilointi vaan henkilötietojasi ja ominaisuuksia arvioidaan laajemman tieteellisen tutkimuksen näkökulmasta.

Sinulla on oikeus tehdä valitus erityisesti vakinaisen asuin- tai työpaikkasi sijainnin mukaiselle valvontaviranomaiselle, mikäli katsot, että henkilötietojen käsittelyssä rikotaan EU:n yleistä tietosuoja-asetusta (EU) 2016/679. Suomessa valvontaviranomainen on tietosuojavaltuutettu.

Tietosuojavaltuutetun toimiston ajantasaiset yhteystiedot: https://tietosuoja.fi/etusivu

3. **Tutkimuksen tausta ja tarkoitus**

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää vapaaehtoisten kokemuksia maahanmuuttaneiden opiskelijoiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemiseen liittyen.

Tutkimukseen kutsutaan osallistumaan Paremmin Yhdessä ry:n vapaaehtoisia, jotka ovat osallistuneet Opitaan Yhdessä -toimintaan vuosina 2020 ja 2021.

Tutkimus ei sisällä tutkittavista seuraavia tietoja: rotu tai etninen alkuperä, poliittinen mielipide, uskonnollinen tai filosofinen vakaumus, ammattiliiton jäsenyys, terveyttä koskevat tiedot, seksuaalinen suuntautuminen tai käyttäytyminen, geneettiset tai biometriset tiedot henkilön tunnistamista varten. Tutkimus ei käsittele rikkomuksia eikä rikostuomioita.

Tutkimusaineisto muodostuu haastattelujen video- ja äänitallenteista ja haastattelulitteroinneista.

4. **Tutkimuksen toteuttaminen käytännössä**

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen kestää noin tunnin yhtenä päivänä.
Tutkimus toteutetaan siten, että vapaaehtoisia haastatellaan lokakuun 2021 aikana Zoomissa.

5. **Tutkimustulokset**

Tutkimuksesta valmistuu pro gradu -tutkielma. Pyydettäessä valmis tutkimus toimitetaan sähköisessä muodossa tutkimuksen osallistujille tutkimuksen valmistuttua.

Tutkimus tuottaa tietoa vapaaehtoisten kokemuksista maahanmuuttaneiden opiskelijoiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemiseen liittyen.

Lisäksi kerättyä aineistoa hyödynnetään vapaaehtoisten perehdyttämisessä maahanmuuttaneiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemiseen Paremmin Yhdessä ry:n Opitaan Yhdessä -toiminnassa. Aineiston pohjalta määritellään koulutustarpeita ja suunnitellaan koulutusta.

Appendix 2 Ethical consent form

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

SUOSTUMUS OSALLISTUA TIETEELLISEEN TUTKIMUKSEEN

”Vapaaehtoisten kokemuksia maahanmuuttaneiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemisesta” -tutkimus

Olen ymmärtänyt, että tutkimukseen osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista ja voin milloin tahansa ilmoittaa, etten enää halua osallistua tutkimukseen. Tutkimuksen keskeyttämisestä ei aiheudu minulle kielteisiä seuraamuksia. Keskeyttämiseen asti minusta kerättyjä tutkimusaineistoja voidaan edelleen hyödyntää tutkimuksessa.

Olen saanut riittävät tiedot tutkimuksesta ja henkilötietojeni käsittelystä. Olen saanut tiedotteen tutkimuksesta tutkittavalle sekä tietosuojailmoituksen.

Olen ymmärtänyt saamani tiedot ja haluan osallistua tutkimukseen.

Allekirjoittamalla suostumuslomakkeen hyväksyn tietojeni käytön tiedotteessa kuvattuun tutkimukseen tutkittavaksi sekä annan luvan kohtiin, joiden kohdalla olen merkinnyt kohdan ”Kyllä”. Jos en ole merkinnyt jotakin kohtaa, se tarkoittaa, että en anna lupaa henkilötietojeni käyttämiseen kyseiseen tarkoitukseen. Voin silti osallistua tutkimukseen.

_____

Tutkimukseen osallistuvan allekirjoitus, nimenselvennys ja päivämäärä (tai sähköinen osallistuvan ilmoitus)

Yhteystiedot:

Emilia Huitula
040-7170230
emanhuit(at)student.jyu.fi

Appendix 3 Interview guide

1) Taustakysymyksiä
- Ammatillinen tausta. Minkälaisia töitä olet tehnyt ja mitä töitä teet tällä hetkellä?
- mitä olet opiskellut?
- Kuinka kauan olet ollut Opitaan Yhdessä -toiminnassa vapaaehtoisena?
- Kuinka aktiivisesti olet ollut mukana?
- Mitä vapaaehtoistyö Opitaan Yhdessä -toiminnassa on sinulle merkinnyt?

2) Oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukeminen
- Kuinka ymmärrät käsitteen oppimis- ja opiskelutaidot?

Havainnot
- olet varmasti vapaaehtoistyössä kohdannut monenlaista. Maahanmuuttajilla on monenlaisia oppimis- ja opiskelutaitoja. Minkälaisiin oppimis- ja opiskelutaitoihin sinä olet kiinnittänyt huomiota?
- millaisia haasteita olet huomannut maahanmuuttaneilla oppimis- ja opiskelutaitoihin liittyen?
- millaiset oppimis- ja opiskelutaidot ovat ilmenneet maahan muuttaneilla vahvoina?
- minkä tyyppisissä tehtävissä oman kokemuksesi mukaan maahanmuuttajat tarvitsevat eniten apua? Miten tuen tarve ilmenee?
- Entä vähiten? Miten tämä ilmenee?

Toiminta
- PYR kannustaa vapaaehtoisia olemaan tekemättä tehtäviä opiskelijoiden puolesta. Millaisia keinoja olet käyttänyt tukeaksesi opiskelijoiden itseohjautuvuutta?
- Millaisia keinoja olet käyttänyt tukeaksesi opiskelijoiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen kehittymistä?
- miten mielestäsi antamasi tuki/ohjaus on kehittänyt maahanmuuttaneiden oppimis- ja opiskelutaitoja? Onko tästä antaa konkreettisia esimerkkejä? (Ovatko esimerkiksi oppineet jonkun taidon sinulta, jota käyttävät nyt itsenäisesti?)
- Mikä oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemisessa on helppoa, mikä vaikeaa?
- Millaista osaamista mielestäsi tarvitaan oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemisessa?
- miten omat oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemisen taitosi ovat kehittyneet vapaaehtoistyön myötä opitaan yhdessä -ryhmässä?
- Miten haluaisit vielä kehittää omaa osaamistasi?
- Millä keinoin koet voivasi kehittää omaa osaamistasi?

Organisaation tuki
- Koetko, että PYR on antanut sinulle tarpeeksi tukea oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemiseen liittyen?
- Millaista tukea olet saanut? Onko tuki ollut mielestäsi riittävää?
- millaista tukea olisit kaivannut lisää oppimis- ja opiskelutaitojen tukemiseen liittyen? Missä muodossa ja missä laajuudessa?
- Millaisena oppimisympäristönä koet Opitaan Yhdessä -vapaaehtoistyön?
- Koetko, että sinun on mahdollista kehittää itseäsi ja omaa osaamistasi toiminnassa?
- Miten hyvin mielestäsi PYRin Opitaan Yhdessä -toiminta mahdollistaa uuden oppimista? Tai osaamisen kehittymistä?
- Oletko osallistunut lisäkoulutuksiin?
- Oletko saanut ohjausta tai neuvontaa tarvittaessa PYRin vastaavalta työntekijältä?

Onko vielä jotain, mitä haluat kertoa?
Ollaan keskusteltu monenlaista, miltä haastattelu sinusta tuntui?