



# Collaborative Teacher Learning: A summary of cases from the EFFeCT project

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## Introduction

The summary case studies in this report provide accounts of innovative and successful ways of teachers working collaboratively and exercising leadership to enhance their own learning and development and that of their students and the development of practice.

The original full cases were assembled for the European Methodological Framework for Facilitating Collaborative Learning for Teachers (EFFeCT) project. EFFeCT is funded by the European Union, comprises partners from six countries and runs from November 2015 to April 2018. The project aims to improve the policy and practice of teacher learning in innovative ways and to enhance opportunities for teachers' collaborative learning by promoting networking and professional collaboration between teachers, teacher educators, researchers and other educational stakeholders.

The project partners comprise: Tempus Public Foundation (Hungary); University of Jyväskylä (Finland); National Centre for Education (Latvia); National Institute for Continuous Professional Development (Czech Republic); University of Hertfordshire (UK); Mary Immaculate College (Ireland). All partners were asked to submit cases of good practice. A wide variety of cases, 22 in all<sup>1</sup>, were submitted. They include innovative initiatives within single schools, professional development and collaborative programmes involving multiple schools, the use of alternative pedagogies, the application of peer-group mentoring programmes, innovations in pedagogical development in a university and an innovative practitioner-run MEd. Cases described good practice on a school, local, regional and national level.

Within the EFFeCT project, the following characteristics were used to identify the practice of effective collaborative teacher learning:

- participative professionalism – practice which reflects a participatory or democratic model of professionalism that includes co-leadership by teachers and other stakeholders, mobilisation of their knowledge and expertise, and pro-active interpretation and enactment of policy
- deep level collaboration - involving a cohesive culture, a strong group identity, mutual support and the creative development of innovative and holistic ways to support the learning and development of children and families
- equity - advancing equal opportunities for learning, mutual respect, participation and equal opportunities for learning, and lessening unjustified socio-economic inequalities and their negative effects
- deep learning - a holistic understanding of learning that encompasses different aspects of development (cognitive, emotional, social, skills and so on) as well as the capacity for thinking critically and independently

These characteristics, together with facilitators and barriers to collaboration, are used as an organising framework in the summary case studies presented here.

The methodologies for studying the cases encompass both qualitative and quantitative approaches and include analysis of existing sources of data, interviews, arts-based data generation and observations carried out specifically for the EFFeCT work, surveys, and analysis of internet sources. Two of the countries (Finland and the UK) used a nested case study

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<sup>1</sup> One of the Latvian cases is divided into two (L1a and L1b) for the purpose of summarising.

approach in which the cases as parts of a larger whole have an integrity and meaning through that identity, over and above the individual characteristics of each case.

The original case studies as assembled by the EFFEeCT partners have been summarised in this document. The authors of this document have also added some critical commentary where appropriate at the end of each summary (in the 'Commentary' section), to contribute to the learning arising from the cases themselves. These summarised cases have been prepared for use in the UK national workshop within the EFFEeCT project, to take place in September 2017, and to be available as a resource to stimulate critical discussion around how to support the continuing development of teachers' collaborative working.

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## Finland (F1 – school level)

### Paedeia-Café Finland

(Based on the full report authored by Matti Pennanen and Mika Risku)

#### Context

The report explains that each of Finland's four cases relate to the Finnish model for peer-group mentoring (PGM) developed for teachers' professional development and well-being at work. It is constructed on the principles of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration and aims at establishing equity and deep learning. Funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the PGM model is coordinated and disseminated in a collaborative network ('Osaava Verme') between the teacher education institutions and the teacher education departments of universities in Finland.

#### **Paedeia Café Finland**

Paedeia Café Finland is a result of the European PAEDEIA (Pedagogical Action for a European Dimension in Educators' Induction Approaches) project established to build bridges between teacher education and working life, and to develop practices for supporting new teachers' transition to working life. Denmark, Finland, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey participated in the project and local induction programmes called Paedeia Cafés were set up and piloted in Finland, Sweden and Turkey.

#### Methodology

The case studies are based on a literature review of the studies which were conducted by the projects of University of Jyväskylä or its affiliated partners. The discussion under 'Deep Learning' in the report refers to findings being based on preliminary analysis. Findings from work by Korhonen (2015) are cited along with student teachers' experiences of participating in Paedeia Café.

#### Practice

The PGM model is a process of collaborative self-development through peer-group mentoring in which teachers work in small groups (four to eight teachers) on a voluntary basis, meeting monthly for around two hours, to discuss work-related issues and experiences concerning everyday life in schools and issues that teachers are struggling with. Every group has a trained, designated mentor. The PGM model:

- is based on the theoretical principles of socio-constructivist learning theory; dialogue and narrative identities; peerness and professional autonomy
- is a process in which learners construct knowledge in social interaction on the basis of their previous experiences and knowledge
- involves mentors who work collaboratively with mentees, switching between guiding the discussion, advising, giving constructive feedback, being silent and learning, so that group members work as co-mentors and co-mentees for each other sharing their experiences and expertise in meetings

- involves dialogue as an interactive relation where participants construct meanings and interpretations together by verbalising their concepts, experiences and mind-sets
- emphasises the value of personal experience
- involves less and more experienced group members being equal participants

Paedeia Café Finland aims to reduce the 'practice shock' experienced by new teachers when they start teaching. It also enables experienced teachers involved to challenge themselves to reflect on their work and teaching practices.

It combines peer-group mentoring meetings with school level collaboration between pre-service teachers (students) and in-service teachers (teachers in working life). It is available as an elective course for students completing their advanced studies in the teacher education department in the University of Jyväskylä., Students seek a teacher who would work as a pair in a small project conducted in the teacher's school. The pair is responsible for planning and implementing the project, which can be anything from a subject period to school camp as long it is related to teacher's work, and participate together in PGM-meetings (with other pairs) to discuss and reflect on their experiences.

### *Participative professionalism*

The report suggests that Paedeia Café Finland helps to develop participative professionalism in two ways by:

- promoting school level (professional) collaboration between student teachers and teachers in working life
- enabling shared (professional) conversation with participants in the peer-group mentoring meetings.

Based on student teachers' feedback, the benefits of Paedeia Café lie in the social interaction and conversations which can promote the reflexive components of expertise and distribution of sociocultural knowledge, also understood as tacit knowledge.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The analysis discussed in the report shows four stages to the experience of the Paedeia Café which constitute a nested hierarchy or a progression in which the elements of the first part are incorporated in the next, and so on. The four stages are:

- *coffee break* - the interaction that focuses on catching up, chatting and unwinding, familiarising the participants to each other
- *peer-support* - activities where participants share emotional feelings, as well as provide and receive emotional support and encouragement
- *identity construction* - participants are focusing on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their professional selves; explicating their values, principles and philosophies; and locating themselves in their personal histories and future plans
- *professional community* - participants critically examine their practices and provide solutions that are formed constructively; everyone is equal to share their expertise in groups and advice is not of the mandatory type; instead everyone can take the advice which suites them best individually

This progression is identifiable in other applications of PGM, though the emphasis on each stage may differ according to location, group aims etc.

The depth of the collaboration appears to be constituted through the interconnected stages identified by the researchers. These would seem to give practical expression to a sense of identity and cohesion in the collaboration and an experience of collaborative development that is more profound than discrete and disconnected events seeking to promote collaborative development.

### *Equity*

Analysis of the equity aspect of this case is approached through a framework articulating three levels of relationship: existential (as human beings); epistemic (distribution of knowledge); and juridical (roles as prescribed by law and regulations). There is epistemic asymmetry in the Paedeia Café (the mentor is more experienced), but the epistemic relationship is also shifting between persons based on their experiences and knowledge. Also there is juridical asymmetry (e.g. the teacher has full responsibility for pupil safety).

The importance of 'small acts' is highlighted in the report. In the Paedeia Café the aim is to relate pre-service and in-service teachers as peers to each other. This type of peerness or equity can be supported through small yet important acts, such as using appropriate titles, or using language which builds the trust and respect in teachers' collaboration. An example is a student teacher being called not a trainee but a 'co-teacher'.

### *Deep learning*

The key aim of the Paedeia Café is to help develop the learning required to be ready for the practical work of being a teacher. Preliminary analysis of the peer-group mentoring meetings of the Paedeia Café show promising results for student teachers' professional development, according to the report. There are indications of positive transformations with student teachers becoming more *self-confident* and *ready*. Researchers have been able to recognise and describe transformation in three levels:

- *cognitive* transition from not knowing to knowing
- *operational* transition from lacking ideas and tools to being knowledgeable and well-equipped; and
- *emotional* transition from self-doubting to confident, from lacking courage to being encouraged.

The case study report concludes that the Paedeia Café meetings have definitely been a place of empowerment where student teachers are not seen as novices who are empty-handed or without any resources or know-how, but as highly resourced young teachers. They leave the meetings more resourceful than when entering the meetings.

## Facilitating factors

No facilitating factors are explicitly highlighted by the author of this case. However they would

seem to include the government funding of PGM and the support and collaboration involved in working through the European PAEDEIA (Pedagogical Action for a European Dimension in Educators' Induction Approaches) project from which the Paedeia Café arose.

## Barriers

No barriers were discussed by the author of this case.

## Commentary

The interest of this case is enhanced by its being related to a wider model of practice (PGM) with a strongly developed framework of principles, modes of activity and a foundation in literature and research. Certain aspects have parallels with the HertsCam Network (cases UK1-UK5), such as the emphasis on collaborative learning between practitioners, the value that all (including less experienced) practitioners bring to dialogue and learning and the focus on everyday issues in school life in the regular meetings (akin to the HertsCam's starting with teachers' identifying a specific problem they would like to address). There is also the nested nature of the Paedeia Café in the PGM model and of the stages identified under 'Deep Level Collaboration': a complex process of mutually supportive elements is apparent.

The process of the Paedeia Café is a practical expression of participative professionalism. With regard to learning, the affective or emotional aspect of learning is featured equally to the cognitive. We can see both the *qualification* (knowledge and capabilities required for practice) and *socialisation* (learning to become a group or community member) aspects of Biesta's (2009) dimensions represented. Identity construction is identified as an important part of the process. These findings accord with the affective reframing and collective identity construction highlighted in the HertsCam case studies.

The promotion of reflexivity mentioned under the discussion of participative professionalism might indicate some development of Biesta's *subjectification* dimension of learning (developing as an individual with some independence of the communities into which the person is socialised). It would seem to be an outcome of the PGM and Paedeia Café approach which is a practical expression of participative professionalism, though generally the *subjectification* dimension of learning appears to be less strongly represented in the report.



## Finland (F2 – local level)

### Peer-group mentoring as teacher induction

(Based on the full report authored by Matti Pennanen and Mika Risku)

#### Context

The report explains that each of Finland's four cases relate to the Finnish model for peer-group mentoring (PGM) developed for teachers' professional development and work well-being, which is constructed on the principles of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration and aims at establishing equity and deep learning. Funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the PGM model is coordinated and disseminated in a collaborative network ('Osaava Verme') between the teacher education institutions and the teacher education departments of universities in Finland.

#### Peer-group mentoring as teacher induction

This case study draws attention to an essential characteristic of the Finnish educational system, namely the decentralisation of the decision-making. This makes the municipalities and schools powerful decision-makers and thus capable, according to the report, of responding to the needs of their surrounding communities. However, it also means that schools do not have a formal statutory system for inducting new teachers and there are great differences between schools and municipalities in how induction is given, with over half of school having no formal induction process and unnecessary uncertainty being created for new teachers. The Finnish Network for Teacher Induction was established (funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture for 2010-2017) to create a systemic and consistent support to induct new teachers using the PGM model.

#### Methodology

This case is based on qualitative analysis. The Finnish Network for Teacher Induction 'Osaava Verme' has collected quantitative and qualitative data from the mentors and mentees since 2010 with an online questionnaire. This quantitative data were analysed with factors based on the European Commission's support model and comparisons made between general education teachers and vocational education teachers.

#### Practice

As noted in case F1, the PGM model is a process of collaborative self-development through peer-group mentoring in which teachers work in small groups (four to eight teachers) on a voluntary basis (meeting monthly for around two hours) to discuss work-related issues and experiences concerning everyday life in schools and issues that teachers are struggling with. Every group has a trained, designated mentor. The report explains that the PGM model:

- is based on the theoretical principles of socio-constructivist learning theory; dialogue and narrative identities; peerness and professional autonomy
- is a process in which learners construct knowledge in social interaction on the basis of their previous experiences and knowledge

- involves mentors who work collaboratively with mentees, switching between guiding the discussion, advising, giving constructive feedback, being silent and learning, so that group members work as co-mentors and co-mentees for each other sharing their experiences and expertise in meetings
- involves dialogue as an interactive relation where participants construct meanings and interpretations together by verbalising their concepts, experiences and mind-sets
- emphasises the value of personal experience
- involves less and more experienced group members being equal participants

The report indicates that mentoring is conceived in Finland as *collaborative self-development*, as opposed to seeing it as *supervision or support*, examples of which are found in other countries with which Finland has been compared. The precise practice was not described in the report.

#### *Participative professionalism*

The discussion in the report cites the growing significance of socio-constructivist and socio-cultural theory and how, on this basis, mentoring can be conceived as the active construction of knowledge in a social environment. The idea of a uni-directional flow of communication from mentor to mentee is replaced by fresh conceptualisations that include co-mentoring, mutual mentoring, collaborative mentoring, peer collaboration, critical constructivist mentoring, dialogical mentoring and reciprocal mentoring, together with mentoring practices that use structures based on group formations often referred to as group mentoring, peer mentoring, mentoring circles and peer-group mentoring. It seems to be implicit to the discussion in this section that the peer-group mentoring approach adopted in Finland reflects the participative model of professionalism.

#### *Deep level collaboration*

The discussion argues briefly a case for the 'socio-cultural approach of mentoring' and concludes that so far the experience of peer-group mentoring in Finland has provided indications of slow cultural development from an individualistic culture towards a collegial school culture.

#### *Equity*

The equity aspect is analysed from the viewpoint of the relationship between new and established teachers. They have the same formal qualification and role - i.e. an equal standing - as compared with the accreditation model in systems not built on a culture of responsibility and trust. In the accreditation model, the inductee (the 'candidate teacher') has a deficit position and the accreditation process (which moves them from that deficit position) represents a transmissive model of mentoring.

The report explains that there are difficulties in ensuring new teachers get the social support they need:

- In growing cities (except capital region) new teachers might end up being substitute teachers or in fixed term contracts for several years (missing out on receiving induction because they are not in permanent positions).

- There is reluctance to seek support and ask for help: teachers have a long tradition of being independent and there may be fear that asking for support is seen as weakness or inferiority.

The formal position of equity between new and established teachers is highlighted, but some important practical factors that may lead to inequalities are highlighted too. The discussion states that the PGM principles are designed to enable substitute and fixed-term teachers to participate in the meetings (in order to mitigate one of these factors).

### *Deep learning*

Survey data from teachers involved in the peer-group mentoring for teacher induction indicate positive responses - in particular, providing information to support their work, supporting them in their professional development, strengthening their professional identity, enabling them to cope better in their work, generating ideas for developing their work community, and improving their collaboration skills.

The affective or emotional aspect of learning is indicated as well. Substantial majorities indicated that peer-group mentoring for teacher induction had made them more excited about their work and had given them self-confidence.

## Facilitating factors

The report did not explicitly refer to facilitating factors. However, these would seem to include the government funding of PGM and the Finnish network for Teacher Induction. There are also benefits of peer-group mentoring for teacher induction which address the problems facing mentoring in Finland (summarised under 'Barriers' below):

- its cost-effectiveness, reducing its cost and addressing the problem of finding enough teachers to act as mentors
- its sustainability, as group mentoring could be organised even if changes occurred in the group composition

In addition, certain features of the Finnish system mentioned in the discussion of 'Equity' might also be cited as facilitating factors. The Finnish education system is built on the culture of responsibility and trust and teachers are self-directed and less regulated compared to other countries. Instead of inspection and standard-based systems, the Finnish system relies on teachers' professional autonomy and their professional ethics to cultivate acceptable and sustainable professional practices. In other systems, the inductee (the 'candidate teacher') has a deficit position and the accreditation process (which moves them from that deficit position) represents a transmissive model of mentoring.

## Barriers

The report did not explicitly refer to barriers. However, the discussion under 'participative professionalism' indicates problems that influenced the development of peer-group mentoring for induction:

- the high resource requirements of one-to-one mentoring
- the difficulty of finding enough teachers for mentors' training programmes to match up with the number of mentees
- regional differences in Finland which made one-to-one mentoring unsustainable.

Factors leading some teachers to miss out on induction through the less formal approach of peer-group mentoring for induction are highlighted in the discussion on equity:

- new teachers who are not in permanent positions (e.g. acting as substitute teachers or in fixed term contracts for several years).
- reluctance to seek support and ask for help for fear that that this may be seen as weakness or inferiority.

## Commentary

It seems to be implicit to the discussion that the peer-group mentoring approach adopted in Finland reflects the participative model of professionalism. With regard to learning, both the *qualification* and *socialisation* aspects of Biesta's (2009) learning dimensions are represented in the benefits indicated in the feedback, including the affective or emotional aspect of learning.

The formal position of equity between new and established teachers is highlighted, but some important practical factors that may lead to inequalities are highlighted too. The discussion states that the PGM principles are designed to enable substitute and fixed-term teachers to participate in the meetings (in order to mitigate one of these factors).

## Finland (F3 – regional level)

### Central Finland as learning region

(Based on the full report authored by Matti Pennanen and Mika Risku)

#### Context

Each of Finland's four cases, as the report explains, relate to the Finnish model for peer-group mentoring (PGM) developed for teachers' professional development and work well-being, which is constructed on the principles of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration and aims at establishing equity and deep learning. Funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the PGM model is coordinated and disseminated in a collaborative network ('Osaava Verme') between the teacher education institutions and the teacher education departments of universities in Finland.

#### **Central Finland as a Learning Region**

In Finland, school education is provided by many small municipalities. The report explains that their small size is challenging for supporting professional development, exacerbated by their autonomy and the reduction in funding for education over the last decades. Government funding for in-service training has increased (through the Osaava project) and part of the funding was made available only for consortia of municipalities in order to establish regional level collaboration to support small municipalities, create synergy and provide platforms for more extended collaboration in the regions.

#### Methodology

It is stated at the start of the report containing the cases that the case studies are based on a literature review of the studies which were conducted by the projects of University of Jyväskylä or its affiliated partners. The Central Finland Osaava Network has carried out surveys of the needs of in-service training for teachers, school leaders and directors of local provisions of education in order to guide its work, and presumably these results have helped in evaluating the work of the Network. However, details are not given of how the survey data underpin conclusions in the report.

#### Practice

As explained in relation to cases F1 and F2, the PGM model is a process of collaborative self-development through peer-group mentoring in which teachers work in small groups (four to eight teachers) on a voluntary basis (meeting monthly for around two hours) to discuss work-related issues and experiences concerning everyday life in schools and issues that teachers are struggling with. Every group has a trained, designated mentor. The PGM model:

- is based on the theoretical principles of socio-constructivist learning theory; dialogue and narrative identities; peerness and professional autonomy
- is a process in which learners construct knowledge in social interaction on the basis of their previous experiences and knowledge

- involves mentors who work collaboratively with mentees, switching between guiding the discussion, advising, giving constructive feedback, being silent and learning, so that group members work as co-mentors and co-mentees for each other sharing their experiences and expertise in meetings
- involves dialogue as an interactive relation where participants construct meanings and interpretations together by verbalising their concepts, experiences and mind-sets
- emphasises the value of personal experience
- involves less and more experienced group members being equal participants

The Central Finland Osaava Network comprising all the municipalities in Central Finland was established to apply for the new resources from the State Regional Authorities, to manage the funding and to enact the goals of the national Osaava Project. In 2010 a steering group (including a representative of the University of Jyväskylä) and a coordinator was set up. With in-service training funding from The Finnish National Board of Education, a provincial level professional development programme was established in 2011 for directors of local provision of education, school leaders and school management teams. The programme is still continuing. Its goal is to support the individual and system level pedagogical leadership so that sustainable professional development structures, processes and practices could be established, maintained and developed for teachers' collaborative learning at the school, municipal, regional and provincial level. The programme also established a collaborative learning model for the directors of local provisions of education, school leaders and school management teams.

All professional development in The Central Finland Osaava Network has been based on surveys of the needs of in-service training aimed at teachers, school leaders and directors of local provision of education. The latest survey was conducted in the spring term 2016. The focus of the work at the time of writing the report was supporting the 2016 national core curriculum reform to be enacted in Central Finland.

Targeted central government funding has helped to steer the municipalities towards collaborative working. It is worth noting that the model that frames the professional development work (PGM) is managed by the same network that manages the funding. This could have benefits in terms of coherence and in making decisions about how funds should be used.

#### *Participative professionalism*

The report simply states that whether the in-service training is organised at the provincial, regional, municipal or school level, it uses collaborative learning methods, though the forms vary considerably. It is assumed implicitly that the commitment to collaborative learning methods reflects the participative model of professionalism.

#### *Deep level collaboration*

The report describes Osaava Network's approach as one that follows the Fourth Way Model as defined by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009). There is building from the bottom, steering from the top and efforts to provide support and pressure from the sides. Surveys and participatory leadership structures, processes and practices enable actors' agency to form a resource at the organisational levels. Meetings (of the Central Finland Osaava Network steering group, directors of local education, school leaders and school management teams) enable this resource to be modified into structures, processes and practices to provide both professional and strategic development in a sustainable manner. As a result, several kinds of professional

learning communities as well as municipality-to-municipality and school-to-school networks have been created. The goal of the strong helping the weak has become reality in many ways and at several levels. The brief summary given in the report highlights the bottom-up and top-down approach and how meetings at different levels harness individual agency to form a diverse variety of collaborative learning communities.

### *Equity*

Analysis of the equity aspect is analysed from the viewpoint of regional parity and parity between municipalities. The Osaava Network is able to examine and support regional parity within Central Finland as well as take into consideration various regional, municipal, school-based and individual needs. Feedback reveals that especially the smaller municipalities benefit from the approach, which is an aim of the Osaava project.

The regional perspective of the Osaava Network appears to aid the examination and reduction of geographical inequalities. Other aspects of equity are not addressed in the report.

### *Deep learning*

The report states that the Osaava Network has been able to establish sustainable structures, processes and practices for collaborative learning for teachers, directors of local provisions of education, school leaders and school management teams in Central Finland. It also states that the collaborative learning appears to meet the needs of the provincial, regional, municipal, school and individual level.

## Facilitating factors

No facilitating factors are explicitly highlighted by the report. However, the funding given to promote professional development and collaboration between municipalities could be seen as a facilitating factor.

## Barriers

No barriers were discussed by the report. However, the small size of municipalities, plus their autonomy and declining funding for education, were cited as problematic factors - though as noted the targeted funding acts in some respects to overcome these.

## Commentary

Various positive outcomes of the regional-level project are briefly set out: more equity between municipalities and engagement of individual agency which is harnessed in the form of structures and processes that include diverse learning communities that facilitate collaboration and are sustainable.

## Finland (F4 – national level)

### National collaboration on Osaava Verme Network

(Based on the full report authored by Matti Pennanen and Mika Risku)

#### Context

The report explains that each of Finland's four cases relate to the Finnish model for peer-group mentoring (PGM) developed for teachers' professional development and work well-being, which is constructed on the principles of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration and aims at establishing equity and deep learning. Funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the PGM model is coordinated and disseminated in a collaborative network ('Osaava Verme') between the teacher education institutions and the teacher education departments of universities in Finland.

The Osaava Verme network is regarded as exceptional in the Finnish context as it involves all the university teacher education departments and the vocational teacher education institutions in Finland.

#### Methodology

It is stated at the start of the report containing the cases that the case studies are based on a literature review of the studies which were conducted by the projects of University of Jyväskylä or its affiliated partners.

#### Practice

As set out in cases F1, F2 and F3, the PGM model is a process of collaborative self-development through peer-group mentoring in which teachers work in small groups (four to eight teachers) on a voluntary basis (meeting monthly for around two hours) to discuss work-related issues and experiences concerning everyday life in schools and issues that teachers are struggling with. Every group has a trained, designated mentor. The PGM model:

- is based on the theoretical principles of socio-constructivist learning theory; dialogue and narrative identities; peerness and professional autonomy
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- involves mentors who work collaboratively with mentees, switching between guiding the discussion, advising, giving constructive feedback, being silent and learning, so that group members work as co-mentors and co-mentees for each other sharing their experiences and expertise in meetings
- involves dialogue as an interactive relation where participants construct meanings and interpretations together by verbalising their concepts, experiences and mind-sets
- emphasises the value of personal experience
- involves less and more experienced group members being equal participants



### **The Osaava Verme Network**

Every partner has a member in the network's steering group and often the steering group meetings involve many others who work as co-ordinators or educators in units' peer-group mentoring programmes. The steering group is usually a forum to exchange ideas and experiences of the enactments of peer-group mentoring practices, discuss the mentor training programmes and plan how to disseminate and sustain the PGM-network in future. The report suggests that the network has been useful in sharing good practices, providing constructive solutions and also to plan regional collaboration to avoid overlapping practices. Collaboration has become more and more significant as the financial frame from the Ministry of Education and Culture is closing at the end of 2017 and the network should find ways to concentrate efforts to sustain the development and dissemination of peer-group mentoring in the future. The years 2016 and 2017 are critical from the perspective of sustainability as mentoring should be conjoined with the structures in municipalities and in educational consortia. Since the case study was written up, funding has been extended.

#### *Participative professionalism*

The Network is presented (implicitly) as constituting a process of participative professionalism. It is described as a kind of "expert organisation" which is uniquely able to organise a dialogue between the different actors in the educational field and inform policy debates (specifically planned legislation on education). In relation to the development of teacher education, it carried out a survey and formed an external expert panel that included 65 experts, 21 of whom belonged to the Osaava Verme Network, representing teacher educators from the vocational sector and universities, researchers, teachers, students, principals and education providers, human resource and personnel development experts, and labour market organisations, as well as eight international experts from Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK, and the US. The expert panel's report proposed a comprehensive reform of teachers' in-service training system.

The Network embodies at a national level a participative model of professionalism - in this case spreading beyond teaching to include a variety of stakeholders.

#### *Deep level collaboration*

The report doesn't explicitly address the depth of collaboration. It appears to have depth nevertheless in that it has a strong sense of its necessity (we might say it has a clear self-identity), resembles peer-group mentoring in its practice, was established in response to the government Osaava Project and has a commitment to deep-level commitment.

#### *Equity*

There is an awareness in the Network of the need to tackle inequities. The focus of this concern is regional differences. Steps were made to ensure that the Swedish-speaking minority in the Finnish population were catered for in the development of the mentoring programme. The report acknowledges that the language is just one example of the regional differences in Finland and the Network is trying to make itself conscious of the many other regional peculiarities. These other regional differences are not specified.

As with the regional case study, there is a concern with inequalities between areas of the country. Other aspects of equity - such as ethnic or gender differences - are not addressed in the report.

### *Deep learning*

The report highlights the way in which, at the national level, the Network operates as a learning environment for participants. The steering group resembles peer-group mentoring meetings, where:

- partners talk about what they have been doing in their regional work, how they have organised their mentoring activities and what the situation in their region is
- ideas are generated that other regions can use or adapt
- problems or challenges that partners have not been aware of are revealed
- ways are found of solving problems, often leading to collaborative action.

The working of the Network at the national level appears to exemplify collaborative learning, though the basis for this conclusion is not given.

### Facilitating factors

No facilitating factors are explicitly highlighted by the report. However, the central government funding given to the network has been crucial.

### Barriers

No barriers were discussed by the report. However, it looks as if the transition from central government funding will be a challenging time.

### Commentary

The working of the Network at the national level appears to reflect a model of participative professionalism, a commitment throughout to deep level collaboration which results in harnessing individual agency so as to form a diverse variety of collaborative learning communities, a concern to address regional inequities, and a realised intention to engage in active collaborative learning. The data or evaluations on which these descriptions of the Network's achievements are based are not given, however.

Latvia (L1a – school level)

## Collaborative Teacher Learning at Broceni Secondary School

(Based on the full report authored by Inta Baranovska and Aija Tuna)

### Context

Broceni Secondary School used to be the largest school in the Saldus district in 1998-2008 with approximately 600 students. In 2009, the School became the leading organisation in the development of education strategy for the newly established municipality. Broceni Secondary school used to have separated Latvian and Russian language of instruction streams, but now integration has taken place. The school has developed long-distance learning programmes including the one serving students from Latvian families living abroad. The school has been active in different national projects and education innovation for improving teaching in general and in specific subject areas, such as social study curriculum development, environmental studies, citizenship education, global/development education etc. During such long-term projects, teachers' cooperation skills and motivation to engage in team work have increased significantly.

However, not all teachers have been involved in the implementation of projects and therefore the level of experience, attitudes towards change and cooperation has varied. It was decided that cooperation with other secondary schools outside the municipality was needed to provide wider potential for intellectual and professional growth.

### Methodology

The case study's approach is described in the report as obtaining 'information on good practices' concerning the 'field of collaborative teacher learning' by 'the analysis of available literature and internet resources.... as well as telephone interviews with Olita Ļitvinova, (OL) Deputy Director in the field of education, and Laura Miķelsone, (LM) history teacher and education specialist of Broceni Municipality'.

### Practice

The School has worked as an Innovative Experience School (IES) since its engagement in the national programme "Improvement of Quality of Teaching in Natural Science, Mathematics and Technology Subjects" and the project "Maths and Natural Sciences" in 2005. The report explains that IES works at several levels and changes can be characterised by changes in the performance of:

1. students, who become more active participants,
2. teachers, who more effectively use modern teaching methods and technologies, professionally reflect on their work and analyse it, share their experience with teachers of other schools
3. school management, which leads change in the learning process.

Activities take place both in the form of teacher collaboration at the school level and in the form of cooperation with other schools in the municipality. Five teachers are involved in the IES team of Broceni Secondary School. They are the main initiators and organizers of the activities that take place regarding IES – open lessons, workshops and other activities and events. The IES team jointly chooses topical themes and the target group to organise activities. The “open lessons” are one of the most successful practices as a tool for teachers’ evaluation, qualification and professional mastery. In the IES, a new approach was used, putting emphasis on support and learning, rather than judgement.

The report discusses the case under headings of ‘participation’, ‘depth’ and ‘equity’. We relate the discussion in those sections to the EFFeCT project’s four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

Teachers distribute the themes that they would like to share among themselves and each teacher gains deeper knowledge and information about their theme in order to give this knowledge to other teachers in the open lessons or workshops. Olita Ļitvinova admits that the new knowledge and competencies are mostly spread by five teachers but others are involved in exchange trips to other schools: *“(..) at the moment we have rather actively involved primary school teachers and we are not a closed group, anyone can come and be involved. If we ask colleagues something, nobody has ever refused to be involved, to help. Municipality organised a lot of competitions for teachers this year, primary school teachers were especially active to involve, also teachers of physics.”*

There are plans to establish study groups, when each member of the IES team would gather a group of certain teachers, in that way organizing more intense cooperation and mutual learning than is currently the case. These groups will be organised around the identified problems in the school. OL provides an example of this: *“To some extent this study group took place for us with one 7th grade, where there were several problems with student behaviour that disturbed learning process. Then we, teachers of this class, very often came together and worked. This is an example how these study groups could take place. We came together, formulated a problem, which this class had, teachers gave their suggestions how we could work. Two weeks passed, we came together again, discussed the success and failures, what to do further. According to this model any methodological problem could be solved in these study groups.”* This can be seen as a way to widen involvement of other teachers and extend the openness of the core group within the established project.

### *Deep level collaboration*

It is possible to conclude that open lessons are directed to mutual learning both by? the teacher, who shows her/his lesson, and also by those who observe the lesson and participate in the discussion after the lesson. Colleagues comment on methods used, share experience and give suggestions for improvement.

It has been important to make a shift from *criticising* to an appreciative recognition of success; - pointing out interesting moments, and asking for more background information etc. Such an approach to lesson observation in Latvia started with the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking project implemented in late 1990 and early 2000 and the situation has changed from

'open rigidity' towards letting others into the classroom, to openness and willingness to hear colleagues' opinions and suggestions to drive development.

Members of the team have a high sense of duty and responsibility to spread the knowledge they have obtained through collaboration: *"The participation in projects for many years gives a certain duty and also responsibility for it, that investments have been put in us and we have to hand them further. We have to work with other colleagues and share with them what we have learned."*

Team members successfully collaborate with each other and this has developed during many years, because the team has had the same members since the beginning of the IES initiative. They now have similar understanding of goals, an ability to agree on common tasks for further actions and methods to achieve them, to support each other and jointly seek new creative solutions. There are sometimes arguments but they are always successfully solved and so do not create barriers, but help to arrive to the best solutions.

### *Equity*

In the IES events, any teacher can be involved, according to his or her wish to cooperate and gain new knowledge. Usually these are public events and there are no restrictions on participation. Although these events are to a greater extent directed to maths and natural science subjects, OL confirms: *"Anyone is welcome. It is not that only maths or natural sciences, those are the subjects who have started this initiative and so it continues."*

However, not all teachers are eager to participate. Some admit that it is difficult to find time to attend colleagues' lessons as they are busy with their own work. Some, it seems, still need some more direct encouragement from the school administration as a sign that this is what is expected from all teachers. Leaders have observed that the best motivator to join is an opportunity to observe what others do in safe environment followed by participation in more active form. Also students' reactions might be a motivating factor as they compare teaching styles of different teachers and demand more active and meaningful learning processes. Here the process will be supporting a democratic, participatory inclusion of students.

In order to ensure that as many as possible teachers are involved in events organised by the IES team, they very often take place during school holidays or at the end of August - before the beginning of the new school year. Before these events there is publicly available information and any interested person can apply and participate.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

#### *Qualification*

Teachers have been able to learn together to develop their expertise as a professional group. OL states that the most important knowledge that participants get from open lessons are related to teaching methods in the broader sense: *"(..) to look at that lesson deeper, not only in terms of "like", "don't like", "what liked", "what didn't like", but each action is analysed – why exactly this kind of task was given, what was its impact on students, how does the feedback come from students, how are they taught to work in*

*groups, joint cooperation of students, [skills] to defend their opinion. At the moment new competencies are related to, for example, teaching students in the 1st grade to collect data, to gather, to visualize. It was not practiced in 1st grade some time ago. Teachers see that it is possible to do those things also with first graders. It is the education of competences that causes us certain worries that in few years it will begin in the whole of Latvia. We have introduced our teachers to it already and they will be less afraid of the new ideas that will come.”* Thus opportunities to build teachers’ knowledge, skills and understanding through mutual trust and space for cooperation, lead to a beneficial learning culture for students.

### *Socialisation*

Teachers have been enabled to become members of their group, to become socialised within a community of practice. Workshop participants are asked to contribute their own experience, mutually collaborating in order to learn co-constructively from each other. Teachers share their knowledge and experience, good practice examples from their daily work, what kind of learning they have obtained in other workshops or training, and ask each other specific questions etc. Increasing numbers of teachers realize that this informal communication is also extremely valuable part of professional development and require more active workshops and other forms of educational activity.

### *Subjectification*

IES has also implemented activities such as family days and competitions where teachers show some learning episodes or present a lesson with parents, so that they can understand modern pedagogy. Connecting such experience with teachers’ learning has resulted in teachers gradually seeing communication with families and the wider society as beneficial for their profession. They are also able to perceive themselves as professionals required to think critically about goals and processes of such lessons. Within this arena, together with stakeholders, the teacher steps away from formal authority (vertical teacher–student relationship) and becomes more of an expert and interesting personality for other adults, as the report puts it. This participatory and more democratic process raises teachers’ self-esteem and encourages innovative approaches through the process of distributed leadership.

## Facilitating factors

The IES project and the Education Centre of Natural Sciences and Mathematics of the University of Latvia have supported and encouraged school development. This is quite a common feature in long-term national scale projects in Latvia; leading organisations play crucial role in facilitating processes including experience-exchange events etc.

As one more facilitating factor, OL mentions the school environment: *“We have wonderfully equipped classrooms for physics, chemistry, biology and maths. It happened during the first project and at that time Municipality Council was very supportive. We could organize remodelling; municipality improved all of our classrooms and equipped them with furniture. In terms of material things we are very well equipped. Each classroom has multimedia equipment and every teacher can use in their lessons all kinds of materials.”*

## Barriers

The only hindering factor discussed is the heavy workload of teachers that does not allow them to be involved in many activities in addition to their direct teaching duties. OL has hopes for the future that the teacher remuneration model will include paid time for activities that involve professional development: *“We, teachers have big workloads at school and it is rather hard to get involved in additional activities, because any meeting and problem solving takes additional time, which is not often available to us. These are hindering factors. It is planned to implement a new teachers’ remuneration model and we are glad that the time needed for additional activities will be included in the workload and paid. Unfortunately we don’t have it yet.”*

At the same time, this reveals that participation in the projects and professional development activities as well as time for mutual shared learning is still seen as an extra, not as an integral and compulsory part of teachers’ professional development.

## Commentary

The school’s promotion of collaboration between teachers and stakeholders is driving a more participatory culture with an emergent sense of distributed leadership between the practitioners, students, stakeholders and the community. It has developed the school as a resource for community development. All these diverse activities have proven themselves to be very closely connected with teachers’ job and self-perception as teachers, as they both provided opportunities and required constant learning within and outside the formal school setting. Teachers use self-reflection more and more and it helps them to improve their performance. They learn to cooperate and share in a safe, encouraging atmosphere and become resources for each other and less dependent on outside experts who “come, deliver their presentations or workshops and leave”. One of the latest initiatives taking place already for the second school year is regular workshops where teachers from different subject areas work together to identify pockets of opportunities for synergies and enhanced teaching and learning. As an alternative to the concept of professionalism in teaching, the European notion of Social Pedagogy could be very useful in these contexts which include a holistic approach to community.

Latvia (L1b – regional level)

## Collaboration of social science teachers in the field of global education and collaboration workshops at Broceni Secondary School

(Based on the full report authored by Inta Baranovska and Aija Tuna)

### Context

This case study looks at a specific aspect of the story of collaboration teacher learning at Broceni Secondary School, discussed in case study L1a above. It focuses on the collaboration of social science teachers in the field of global education. Not all teachers have been involved in the implementation of collaborative projects and therefore the level of experience, attitudes towards change and cooperation has varied. It was decided that cooperation with other secondary schools outside the municipality was needed to provide wider potential for intellectual and professional growth. Project partners are part of the broad cooperation network. The projects are implemented both by school and by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) established in the school - *Student Parliament of Broceni Municipality* and *Kamols*. During the activities, the collaborative learning took place between teachers from different schools, pre-schools and local stakeholders.

### Methodology

The case study's approach is described in the report as obtaining 'information on good practices' concerning the 'field of collaborative teacher learning' by 'the analysis of available literature and internet resources.... as well as telephone interviews with Olīta Ļitvinova (OL) Deputy Director of Broceni Secondary School in the field of education, and Laura Miķelsone, (LM) history teacher of Broceni Secondary School and education specialist of Broceni Municipality.

### Practice

The main aim of the projects, the report explains, was to develop the school as a resource for community development. Their main activities included workshops of film making to document local history, development of the blog run by local people and historical exhibition, open-doors days in local institutions including other schools, improvement of the school's existing secondary education distance learning programmes, life learning programmes for diverse groups of local people, establishment of e-consultation system for students (which significantly influenced teachers' work and relationship with students), a training programme for junior staff of pre-schools, the establishment of the new NGO Broceni Development Organisation and consultation on the municipal development plan.

Three teachers from Broceni Secondary School and one teacher from Broceni pre-school education institution "Mūsmājas" comprised one of 21 teams of teachers from different regions in Latvia, involved in the project "Global Dimension in Social Sciences Subjects in Formal



Education” in the autumn of 2013. The aim was to promote information, understanding and involvement of Latvian, Estonian, United Kingdom’s and Europe’s societies in the field of global (development) education with specific focus on increasing the awareness among young people about the interdependent world and to support their active engagement in creating fairer relationships in the world.

The report discusses the case under headings of ‘participation’, ‘depth’ and ‘equity’. We relate the discussion in those sections to the EFFeCT project’s four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

The projects show a participatory or democratic model of professionalism, in the way teachers network across the region to share expertise and knowledge. LM states “*global education gives teachers opportunities to teach in more interesting and diverse ways: work interactively, use diverse sources of information, combine emotional and rational aspects, go outside the classroom and welcome guests in classes, develop links between local, national and international.*” Teachers who are new to the project are supported and inducted into the process by the existing members evidencing a co-leadership, mobilisation of their knowledge and expertise, and interpretation of local or national policies.

The team developed good collaboration with pre-schools in the Municipality, and shared knowledge with teachers on the global education approach so that it would be applied to children already at pre-school age and introduced into the education system as early as possible. This participatory approach strengthened mutual understanding among preschool and school teachers and improved transition for children from preschool to school. According to feedback from the participants, participation from across the region provided additional inspiration to continue their work and establish new forms of cooperation and learning. The teams went on experience exchange trips to each other in order to learn and get inspiration for further activities.

Teachers jointly evaluated teaching standards and programmes in order to understand which topics in different class groups overlap and if there are gaps in student knowledge. One issue was around ‘*what are the fields where primary teachers can blame pre-school teachers that students do not have the necessary knowledge and skills*’. The collaborative process not only identified problems but found democratic solutions to alleviate the notion of blame. Teachers who initially were interested purely in improving their knowledge and skills in teaching new content gradually realized that in the course of such a process they improve their competences in a much wider sense, developing their sense of professionalism and self-efficacy.

LM concludes that the members of the global education team are enthusiasts in their field, always ready to support each other and look for new creative forms of working together to develop and broaden the professional field they represent. This core team of teachers is also more open to ask for help and support as they try to solve deeper and more complex questions about teaching and learning and see each other as resources.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The participatory approaches detailed above require a deeper level of collaboration than mere information sharing. This resulted in a more internalised understanding of the goals and processes of learning both for teachers and students. Teams involved in the project obtained

deeper knowledge of content and methods of global education in order to apply them in the learning process and integrate the content and philosophy of global education in Latvian schools. LM defines the school's philosophy and attitude towards joint and collaborative learning: *"Our opinion is that the school cannot stay only at school level; we have to go outside and cooperate with other institutions as much as we can, so that the school 'won't boil in its own juice.'"* The school leadership understands that deep learning is created in partnership across the region as the school cannot develop in isolation. Furthermore, it actively seeks opportunities for collaboration.

When describing the collaborative learning, teachers admit that it mainly happened when teachers from different schools and class age groups shared their experience both about teaching content and teaching methods they use in their lessons and also about possible changes that should be made: *"On the one hand it is sharing experience, on the other hand it is learning. For example, I, as a teacher of secondary school would like a student who comes to grade 10 to know state holidays. Then we all together discuss how it could be achieved by the end of grade 9. Sharing our experiences we learn from each other"*

LM, who is among organisers of the collaborative workshops confirmed that most participants stated it was a very good form of collaborative development. For example, a primary school teacher from Broceni Secondary School states, *"it is important that teachers who work in different schools and teach in different age groups are involved in joint discussions, and listen to each other. It helps teachers to understand that they are not alone with their problems and shows that it is possible to teach differently. If a teacher is satisfied with the workshop, then the new ideas will be definitely use with their students."* This indicates the pedagogical isomorphism inherent in the process – that the effect of the learning/inquiry model transforms the teacher and then is passed on to the children.

### *Equity*

Mutual collaboration, understanding and support are promoted through the equitable ethos of the projects. Any interested person can apply for events for teachers or other target groups. For example, if an event is organised for teachers, the global education team publicly announces the topic and teachers who are interested in it apply. Teachers from Broceni Secondary School especially emphasise that any teacher can participate in any event regardless of teaching age group or subject. Accordingly, it has a positive effect on collaborative learning: *"If we talk more about joint learning, then it is important that all events for teachers take place together for all teachers from all class age groups. We do not separate pre-school or sports school. In all events we all participate together; we all listen to the same lectures, attend the same workshops. It promotes a very good collaboration among colleagues teaching different age group students."* A good example was a course on early year's pedagogy and children's development for preschool teachers' assistants and technical staff. It was highly appreciated by the participants for gaining new knowledge and for raising their self - confidence. Inter-professional collaboration and participation established more equal relationships and cooperation among all staff members in the preschools. As a result preschool teachers' assistants have become active participants in professional development events.

## Deep learning

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

### *Qualification*

The *qualification* function is clearly apparent within the deep level collaboration process. Crucially, the process provides space where knowledge, skills and understanding can be generated that often will change the dispositions of the professionals involved. The growth is charted in terms of deeper thinking that enables forms of judgement rather than merely subject-specific knowledge. Teachers who initially were interested in improving their knowledge and skills in teaching new content gradually realise that they improve their competences in much wider sense.

### *Socialisation*

The *socialisation* function applies strongly throughout these projects as they strengthen the professionalism and expertise of the practitioners involved. One excellent example of this is the developed inclusion of the pre-school assistant teachers within the professional learning community as detailed in the equity section.

*"After municipality meetings where only leaders of education institutions participate, school level meetings are organized for all teachers to inform them what happens in other municipality schools, what problems they have, where they succeed and what kind of support they need. This is a good way of communicating issues important for everybody."*

### *Subjectification*

Teachers become participatory or democratic professionals with a sense of belonging with fellow teachers and other stakeholders. The collaborative process enabled a democratic sense of development which was shared between the practitioners. This in turn developed their ability to see learning occur in more democratic ways. It can be seen that teachers are empowered by engaging with ideas that they are offered and owning them by applying them in their own practice. This sense of fulfilment passes to students.

## Facilitating factors

The global education team teacher mentioned two main facilitating factors, the participative professionalism and the leadership culture: *"Firstly, it is the personal enthusiasm of each individual, the desire to learn something new, to change oneself, to follow the new ideas and tendencies and at the same time popularize his/her subject and bring school values outside its walls."* The second important factor, which promotes the success of this initiative, is moral and material support of school management. LM confirms that the leadership of the school appreciates the significance of this initiative and always has provided the necessary support: *"If*

*there are reasonable demands, then they also help financially, find money both for the lecturer and transportation.”*

## Barriers

Teachers are optimistic and do not see significant barriers for the success of the global education team and activities organised in the framework of this initiative. Such factors as limited financial and time resources are seen as ‘only excuses for inactivity’. The only real barrier they mention is “outdated thinking” which leads to orientation only to their subject, which was a common approach in the education system many years ago: *“A barrier probably is that there are still problems to convince colleagues that we don’t teach students only our subject, but something more. (..) Yes, concentration only on their subject. I don’t think that nowadays financial resources could be a barrier, because, for example, it is possible to get materials, the internet is endless and it is only your wish to do it.”*

## Commentary

The sense of a significant shift away from subject specific expertise to a shared enthusiasm for pedagogy is almost palpable. There are elements that indicate this shift is affecting learning for students as well. This has been driven by the values-driven leadership of the school that wants to distribute the ‘treasure’: *“(..) although we (our school or municipality) pay for this lecture, we still invite colleagues. I think that is it an example of successful cooperation that we don’t work only by ourselves, that we don’t sit on our treasure box but share with it.”*

Latvia (L2 – school level)

## Collaborative Teacher Learning at Jelgava State Gymnasium

(Based on the full report authored by Inta Baranovska and Aija Tuna)

### Context

During the last decade, education in Latvia has undergone significant changes and many schools and teachers are interested and involved in this process. Due to the decreasing number of students each year, the ability of schools to change and issues of competitiveness have become increasingly topical. It is important for each school and every teacher and student to be able to find an answer to the following question: how do I know that my school is becoming better and more competitive?

Jelgava State Gymnasium has been chosen as a case study as this school has been active in seeking ways to improve its performance and has the status of state gymnasium. This status makes this school more responsible for learning achievements within the school as well as methodological activities in the school and the wider professional community. It has always been a school with classical traditions but at the same time open to changes and up-to-date approach to the teaching and learning process. The mission of the school is to create a modern learning environment in order to give the students the possibility to acquire competitive education and the potential to enter higher educational establishments and to compete in labour market.

The teachers of the gymnasium have been involved in “Science and Mathematics” project. They have initiated many activities, and demonstrated a great number of open lessons for the gymnasium teachers, as well as other schools in the town, region and country. They are eager to share their knowledge, improve it and be involved in new projects.

### Methodology

The methodology of the case study is described in the report as ‘Action researchers’ with an aim to investigate and analyse professional activities and learning group workshops with five steps:

- 1) Individual writing – reflection on activities during the previous month
- 2) Sharing information about what was written
- 3) Discussions about the received information
- 4) Working time (the issue discussed at the current workshop)
- 5) Tasks for the learning group members till the next workshop

The approach focused on the needs of each teacher with their particular class and was strengthened by an explicit agreement of joint principles: confidentiality, gradual achievement of results, mutual support and collaboration, truth (every conclusion should be confirmed by facts), trust, transparency and a willingness to change. At the same time it is admitted that the picture is not only positive, without hindrances and difficulties. Not all the teachers see the value of the learning groups but as the process goes on there is positive feedback from those who participate in the process the number of supporters is increasing every year. The account confirms that the inner auditors of the teacher learning group were the group members

themselves and states that “*The objectivity level was reached by compiling, evaluating and sharing information about plans in the class and the achieved results. The members of the group evaluated all relevant conditions and their conclusions were not influenced by any external interests. Objectivity was ensured by the work principles chosen by the group.*”

## Practice

The report explains that learning group workshops are the practice discussed in this case study. Here, teachers learned how to apply research to explore their individual issues for improvement, starting with the investigation of the current situation and using observation, compilation of examples, enquiries and interviews. Depending on the chosen field to be improved, they carried out experiments, compiled strategies and structures, fixed results and drafted observations.

Examples of topics for investigation include how to:

- involve all students in work
- plan the teaching material so as not to be in a hurry during the lesson
- work with the students who cannot manage in time
- encourage students to love reading books
- connect literature with history to improve students' understanding
- differentiate work during the lesson so that the students who can do more would benefit from the lesson

The report discusses the case under headings of ‘participation’, ‘equity and ‘learning. We relate the discussion in those sections to the EFFeCT project’s four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

It is indicated that participation was difficult and participants had to help one another to learn. Work in the learning groups did not mean teaching colleagues how to work but it is a way to perfect one’s own professionalism, to be responsible for oneself, and to receive answers to unclear questions through collaboration, to get and to provide support. As the groups consisted of a number of teachers from the same classes, the discussions with colleagues provided many commentaries and supporting advice. The work of the coordinators was especially important at the first workshops of the groups; they did not allow discussions to deviate from the chosen topic, to become verbose; they controlled the timing, but also allowed the group members to discuss the topical issues, developing a leadership and ownership of the process.

It is important that the teachers were able democratically to own the project. They were able to make independent decisions on changes important for them that would directly influence the quality of students’ learning, their feelings in every particular situation, making them confident in their abilities and creativity. The school’s leadership saw the process as democracy in action and as capacity building (Joseph Murphy, 1993) and those involved as a moral agents, organisational and social architects, educators and community members. Such leaders will be able to ensure faithful mutual relations among teachers, other school staff and stakeholders outside the school that would promote a willingness to share both positive and negative experience.

### *Deep level collaboration*

Out of the 'six secrets of change' in Fullan's report (2008), the study details "Secret Two, Connect Peers with Purpose" emphasising that purposeful peer interaction within the school is crucial. The role of collaboration in the process of growth, turning the school into an institution that learns, seems to have been decisive in the study. Twenty-three students from this school have returned as teachers and so have a strong sense of commitment to improvement. Secret Four "Learning is the Work" is connected with the idea that professional development (PD) in workshops and courses is only an input to continuous learning and precision in teaching. The culture of the school supports day-to-day learning of teachers engaged in improving what they do in the classroom and school.

The account of the analysis of the collaboration groups summarises that whilst it is beneficial to organize planning jointly for the teachers of the same area, there is also very successful cooperation among the teachers of different subjects (e.g., history and history of culture etc.). This has a positive effect for the teachers and consequently for the students as well, providing a more holistic and comprehensive understanding. The dialogical nature of the learning is strengthened through mutual observation and analysis of lessons. The teacher then engages in self-analyses and is willing to introduce real change in the teaching process, even despite initial frustration and challenges.

Almost all the teachers had experienced a shortage of collaborative skills between them but gradually admitted that they felt they could discuss their success and failures in the safe and friendly atmosphere. There was nobody to criticise them, just the opposite; they were interested in providing assistance to find solutions to problems. The coordinators saw some of their colleagues with different eyes; they had not known so much about these people, their interests and their readiness to take responsibility and to be leaders. The cohesive culture generated deep collaboration where teachers began to really appreciate the leadership, identities and value of others.

### *Equity*

The teachers who had applied voluntarily to be involved had very different professional backgrounds, expertise and abilities. However, the process allowed the expression of every teacher's personality, highlighting his/her strength and development points. They worked in an accessible, respectful and supporting environment and enjoyed the achievements. The participation, viewpoint and success of every teacher were perceived as achievements of the whole group. During the discussions, everyone had equal rights to express a personal opinion, allowing the expression of doubt, uncertainty and reflection. Therefore each of the participants had equal possibilities to analyse his/her work and to implement pedagogical experiments and innovations. The account describes it as a new beginning for their professional development. It was seen by the group that fairness in the process of teaching and learning is advancement towards achieving equity.

One more aspect was mentioned that is described as 'instructional inequity'. This is where students receive different levels of teacher expertise (<http://edglossary.org/equity/>) or affected by favouritism or prejudice. One of the aims of the learning group teachers was elimination of this issue. The account confirms that the situation has improved but that the process is continuous; the learning process never ends, new challenges arise, new teachers are recruited and they come with their own issues.

The learning group work enhanced equity and addressed perceived power imbalances. It changed the attitude of the teachers towards lesson observation from being one where they are seen as a 'not very pleasant task and experience' to one where there is mutual support and ownership of change. Participation in the groups changed their attitude towards participation of other colleagues at their lessons as they were organised with a different purpose and in a different atmosphere with open-minded discussions, self-confidence and opportunity to tackle problems openly. Teachers often received suggestions for improvements or specific activities that could be useful during particular phases of the lesson. Teachers were eager to invite their colleagues to come and observe how they succeeded with innovations. The coordinators did not interfere in the observation of the parts of the lesson. They helped to substitute the colleagues-observers at their lessons what is very important during the busy school day schedule. Mutual observation of lessons decreased tension. As several colleagues observed in the same parts of the lesson led by the same teacher, the objectivity of conclusions was increased and ensured. This indicates an emergent culture of distributed leadership across the practitioners.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

#### *Qualification*

The analyses of the data obtained showed that the teachers who participated in the learning groups had already changed in disposition. They had become more open and eager to collaborate. The account describes fundamental shifts in learning related to lesson observation as it appears to no longer be an imposed process but it is owned and enthusiastically engaged in for professional knowledge and development in a community of practice.

#### *Socialisation*

The account quotes 'representatives of the school' in highlighting the notion of school culture which has been surfaced within the project: "*we claim that in order to achieve the goals which we have put forward it is essential to think about school culture. In the initial stage we could talk about culture of separation, but our goal was to move towards the culture of integration as it is described in the theory (e.g., Day et al 1993; Fullan and Hargreaves 1992 etc.). We were ready to achieve strong personal and professional relationships, and have commonly held social and moral intentions. We agreed that failure and uncertainty should not be protected or defended but shared and discussed and individual group work simultaneously and inherently valued.*"

#### *Subjectification*

The collaborative learning has enabled the development of teachers as both critical thinkers and as participatory or democratic professionals with a sense of belonging with fellow teachers and other stakeholders. The data achieved for the engagement of students evidences that this faculty has been grasped and developed in others.



## Facilitating factors

The report defines the factors as successful outcomes that justify the school leadership support for the project which has contributed to improve the school's work culture. The report details how teachers help one another emotionally to tackle difficult problems. Colleagues get to know one another better; they can understand a colleague's reaction in a particular situation and can help to find a solution. The learning groups help the teachers fight burn-out.

The colleagues also support one another in the fields of teaching subjects and class management. As it has been emphasised by participants, *“at the learning groups of subject teachers we have no leaders. Each teacher can give his/her input. More experienced teachers can help others with different class management skills, teaching methods and advice on how to use specific methods. The younger colleagues are better at technologies and love to use them at lessons. They support other colleagues in using voting devices, tablet PCs and mobile phones at the lessons. Most of the colleagues are ready to be leaders and successfully do it.”*

One of the main achievements is elimination of tension during the mutual observation of lessons. The teachers have agreed that every teacher will invite a colleague to visit at least one of his/her lessons. Many teachers have invited others to at least 3 - 4 lessons. The situation improves year by year. In 2014/2015, the teachers led 16 open lessons for the teachers from the town and region, 2 open lessons for the gymnasium teachers and there were 12 mutually observed lessons. In 2015 /2016, these figures have significantly changed. Up to April, 2016, there have been 12 open lessons for the teachers from other schools in the town and region, 8 open lessons for the gymnasium teachers and 35 mutually observed and analysed lessons. Skills mastered during the learning group workshops have developed understanding how to observe and analyse lessons. The learning groups also help to create a common understanding about evaluation.

## Barriers

One of the main hindrances at the learning group work is the teachers' heavy workload. Some of the teachers work at several workplaces. It is difficult to find suitable time for all involved teachers simultaneously. It is easier for the subject teacher learning group as it comprises five teachers.

Sometimes at the learning group of different subjects (investigation of own activity), they even have to decline a colleague's participation. In the first year experience it was also understood that it was not good that the learning groups were led by the deputy principals who were supervisors at the same time as *“we assume that in some cases it might be difficult for colleagues to separate the coordinator's functions in everyday work from the coordinator's functions at the learning group”*.

Nevertheless, every year there is only one learning group of different subject teachers (investigation of own activity). There are 6 – 10 participants in it. An active participation the learning group requires much time and strength. You have to look at yourself critically from aside, to evaluate your strong and weak points. Additional work is necessary to compile data, to analyse them and to make conclusions. Some of the teachers prefer attending courses because they are not given additional tasks there.

## Commentary

It is interesting to note the use of the phrase 'competitive' in the initial context description. This may link to the initial negativity in the way lesson observations were viewed. The case also has led to community/region wide dissemination, thanks to improved collaboration skills and willingness to use them. For several years Jelgava State Gymnasium has organised 'subject weeks'; during this time, teachers are invited to present open lessons for their colleagues. Again a key message is that subject-specific learning is being widened to overall collaboration.

Latvia (L3 – local level)

## Collaborative Teacher Learning at Tirza Basic School

(Based on the full report authored by Inta Baranovska and Aija Tuna)

### Context

Tirza Basic School was established by the Municipality Council. It is located in Tirza Rural Territory, Gulbene Municipality. There are no manufacturing companies in Tirza Rural Territory and its economic development is hindered by the lack of asphalted roads. The main economic sectors in the rural territory are farming, logging, woodworking, services and small enterprises. The school and administration of the rural territory are the biggest employers in Tirza.

Tirza Basic School offers education programmes of basic and primary education as well as special education programmes which enable inclusion of children with health problems in the school. The school provides also 'interest education programmes' for children after regular lessons and distance learning programmes for adults, as well as a preschool programme. One hundred and eighteen students attended school in the study year 2014/2015 and there were 21 teachers. The school also offers a 'dormitory and 24hr service' for the group of pre-school children. In the study year 2014/2015 19 students stayed in the dorms and five pre-school children attended 24hr group. These children are mainly from large families with hard living conditions or from families where parents have shift work.

Tirza Basic School was chosen for this research because of the successful experience and cooperation researchers had with this school during the SFL initiative "Change Opportunities for Schools". Projects within the Soros Foundation – Latvia (SFL) initiative "Change Opportunities for Schools" have been especially important. They were implemented in the years 2009 - 2010 and 2012 – 2013 and made a significant contribution to development of school and professional and personal growth of teachers.

### Methodology

The report explains that analysis of literature and internet resources was carried out and two telephone interviews were conducted with the principle, Svetlana Ziepniece (SZ). Information was obtained on several activities, which can be considered as good practice examples on how teachers can learn through collaboration. The report mentions that a "Project Citizen" (Participate and Influence) methodology has been used to identify community problems and possible solutions, to choose the most appropriate solution and to develop action plans.

### Practice

Activities, organised by the SFL for the project teams from all involved schools, always modelled and encouraged setting goals, looking for meaning and reflection on processes and results achieved. This approach was implemented in the school for all teachers and other partners, so through cooperation and sharing, learning became more internalised and sustainable.

Instead of one good example, several examples of activities are described in this report. In its self-evaluation report, the school describes its 'special offers': inclusive education, humane pedagogy, work in projects and non-formal education, and education programmes for pre-school children and adults. The school also actively promotes further education of teachers.

The main project activities were educational classes and workshops for diverse groups from the local population, led by teachers as well as other people. These were themed on improvement of leadership and civic participation, efforts to broaden opportunities for active lifestyle, activities to promote tourism and entrepreneurship, establishment of an education programme for learning business basics, establishment of services for pre-school children of early years "Babies' school", informal classes and activities for families, "backyard celebrations" when students went to visit senior citizens, living in the distant settlements, excursions and field trips to explore local neighbourhoods etc. Key projects described in the case are "*Young European Volunteer at School*", *State Employment Agency "Internship of Youth"* and "*Projects for improving teacher leadership skills*".

The report discusses the case under headings of 'participation', 'depth' and 'equity'. We relate the discussion in those sections to the EFFeCT project's four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

#### *Participative professionalism*

SZ confirms that since the SFL initiative, a "strong teacher team – leader team" has developed who are the main initiators and implementers of key activities and projects both at the school level and community. They also have become active in attracting collaborative partners, for example, local NGOs. When describing the principal's role she states: "*In our case a principal works as accumulator, (...) I try to keep interest for these things, but those who do it are teachers, teacher group, who engage in activities because they see the point to do so, they see benefit for themselves and their job and people with whom they interact.*" She confirms that "*in our case there are not teachers, who do not involve at all, some are more active, some are less active, but everyone participates*". It is reported in the case that teachers "*feel more holistic and feel that what they do really matters*" where each opinion, action and reflection counts and is of great value. There is a strong sense that the projects have empowered the teaching staff, enhancing their professionalism through ownership and inclusion in community development.

Other than teachers, young people and other staff such as teacher assistants, kitchen staff and cleaning ladies also are involved. This demonstrates the democratic and distributed leadership model that the projects are generating. Young people have been helpers to the teachers at the start and this has been an interesting learning process for both sides; later on some youngsters have become independent group facilitators or become permanent staff in the school. This participative professionalism works inclusively and powerfully to develop the local community.

#### *Deep level collaboration*

Although teacher collaborative learning was not purposefully organised in these examples and happened in a way indirectly and as a "by-product", they reflect new, innovative forms of cooperation among teachers, between school, teachers and other local stakeholders that lead to an accumulation of new knowledge and skills and development of school as a significant community resource.

The transition to the new model of school as a community resource centre has influenced teachers' collaboration among themselves as well as with the members of the local community. The experience of the projects is described as facilitating emotional and creative growth of the school, teachers and other employees, as well as developing joint understanding of how to work together for the growth of all (students, teachers and the whole local community). It inspired a cohesive culture to "*avoid fears and try out new creative methods to reach its goals and promote collaborative learning*". SZ describes the journey to common goals as a process where:

*"..... we looked for our special characteristics with which we can be interesting to ourselves and others. .... How you yourself feel, how your children who study here, feel and how people, who live here feel, depend on the level of our activity. It is our inner agreement reached in big discussions, therefore we continue to work."*

It is stated that these conclusions also influenced teachers' attitude to their work; they started to establish better relationship with families of their students and students themselves seeing success or challenges of students within the more holistic knowledge about their situation, personal characteristics and interests etc.

### *Equity*

SZ states that any interested person has the opportunity to become involved: "*But we also don't turn against those, who don't want [to involve]. People are different – more open, less open. We try to promote this thing, but don't want to make it mandatory, so that a person would feel under pressure that he must be involved in all activities, but there are no such teachers, who don't involve anywhere. (..) To motivate them to be involved, we try to make it interesting and carry them away with this idea.*" In order to ensure publicity on opportunities to participate, gratitude is expressed to those involved. In celebration of especially significant projects, their implementers have received gratitude diplomas from the school. The attempts and hard work of teachers or other active representatives of the local community are publicly evaluated, ensuring satisfaction and providing motivation for further work.

The process by which the school evolved the project demonstrates a concern for inclusive democratic principles that have advanced equity. The interprofessional nature of the practitioner involvement and the level of community engagement evidences this. The involvement of a young person in teaching a foreign language enabled a switch in perspectives for teachers in accepting the role of the learner, overcoming traditional power relations. Experiencing the learner's perspective also increased empathy and sensitivity towards difficulties that students can feel in learning situations.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

### *Qualification*

Teachers acquired new knowledge and skills from each other as well as from other members of the community, learning what is also beneficial for managing diversity in the classroom and the school in general. The "Project Citizen" (Participate and Influence)

methodology has been used to identify community problems, possible solutions, to choose the most appropriate solution and to develop action plans. Teachers have learned how to use this approach themselves in the interactive workshops engaging in collaboration and reflection. After that some teachers have applied the framework from the methodology in their teaching.

### *Socialisation*

The projects provide opportunities to demonstrate a civic engagement needed for successful civic and citizenship education. It is noted that teachers do not teach about civic participation formally from the textbook; they are involved in specific activities together with their students, their families and other people from the community. The report explains that involvement can be useful both for *'fulfilling direct job duties and can contribute to development of teacher personalities'*. With the help of these projects, the school developed as a multifunctional community centre promoting the development and wellbeing of the whole rural territory.

### *Subjectification*

Through regular participation in different projects and activities, it is reported that teachers increasingly realised that *"personal and civic aspects of their personality also influence quality of their direct professional performance"*. This indicates a sense of raised self-awareness and criticality has been engendered by value-led engagement with the community. The projects *"significantly changed perceptions about what the school can and cannot do and in what form it can work."* They instigated the promotion and establishment of cooperation between teachers, local inhabitants, students, their parents, local NGOs and local government in a way that significantly changed traditional relationship models and gave opportunities to "see each other as a partner, from whom it is possible to learn something new".

While learning together, the teacher gradually changes his/her position from the dominating role to the participant's role, and further on – to the position of an actively reflecting practitioner, recognising changes in professional identity as a process and product within the overall activities of the professional development (Charlier et al., 2001). Extending the partnership with the community, the teacher's perception of the surrounding environment improves and becomes more positive. This is essentially meaningful, especially in the situation of Latvia when in the public discourse the quality of education in small schools is sometimes questioned. It is important that the teacher does not feel as a passive victim of circumstances but is looking for opportunities to influence the situation, taking advantage of the existing opportunities and through professional pedagogical work and civic attitude and participation.

## Facilitating factors

SZ mentions the team of active teachers, a positive and supportive atmosphere among employees, a desire and sense of duty to involve and participate in different activities: *"I think that here it is important to what extent people are aware of their participation in activities. I guess it is called democratic participation. I'm afraid to affirm that we are very democratic, I don't know how it looks from the outside, but at least we try a lot to [promote] this participation"*

*both in teachers, in children and in parents, so that there would be sense of participation and responsibility for what we are doing.”*

Additionally, she positively assesses the desire and readiness of teachers and other representatives of local community to work without additional remuneration: *“We do a lot voluntarily because it is necessary to us and we want to do it. I don’t say that everyone wants to do it, there are people, who don’t want to, but majority is ready to be open and work not only for money.”*

LZ also details the benefits that the work in small school has and emphasizes the openness of school to new experience: *“We are small school, where everyone knows everyone well. We can react quickly to needs. ... we react to needs faster, maybe we are more flexible. People are not afraid to speak about their needs. Maybe it is openness that promotes such things.”*

According to the gathered information, it is not only school management’s openness and their ability to listen to necessities of teachers is important, but also the openness of teachers themselves to new experience and desire to improve their knowledge and skills. The principal is glad of the enthusiasm of her teachers, who despite heavy workloads are interested to acquire new knowledge.

The schools’ infrastructure has attracted financing for different projects. Accordingly it allows teachers and students to implement new, creative initiatives. In certain projects and activities it collaborates with and gets support from local companies and NGOs. One of those NGOs is Organisation for Development of Tirza Rural Territory (Tirzas pagasta attīstības biedrība - <http://www.tirzasbiedriba.lv/>) which has been very actively involved in the promotion of school’s development. The organisation was established in 2004 and also several teachers are active members of it. The principal of Tirza Basic School says that *“with the help of this organisation we got a “second breath” and changed (..). Changes, that have taken place inside school, to a great extent happened because of this NGO”*. The organisation attracts additional financing for the school, helps to develop infrastructure of school and in cooperation with school, implements different projects.

## Barriers

SZ defines external factors which were unstable political initiatives and a lack of a clear vision for the future: *“Barriers are external threats, which are logical, you don’t feel safe for future (..). The schools lack stability at the moment, you don’t know your future, vision, for how long you can plan the thing you do at the moment or when you do it...”*

In SZ’s opinion, barriers can be related also to the situation that there are different opinions in society and it is not always possible to understand and positively evaluate intentions and ideas of others: *“Barriers are in all schools and in society. Not always people understand you, not always your best intentions are understood to be the best intentions. There are things that are misunderstood (..).”*

There is no common agreement about what kind of school is the best: the one with selected students, high academic achievements and strict or formal relationships among students and teachers, or the one where spirit of cooperation prevails both among students, students and teachers and teachers themselves. Schools such as Tirza Basic School are happy and able

(skilled) to accept every child from the surrounding community or even other places and to help; meanwhile one can hear remarks also in the public channels of communication that this is not good feature of the school but something that may challenge the “quality of teaching”.

SZ mentions a lack of financial resources. However, at the same time, she admits that it is possible to find opportunities for implementation of any good idea despite different external factors: *“Maybe we are naive optimists .... I can’t name obstacles that could not be overcome. Of course, everything depends on the will of politicians and on economics, on anything else. (...) but we were taught in the project or maybe it is the philosophy of life – if there is an idea, it will be possible to find money. ... If we can’t find money in one place, we will find it in other place. If we cannot find money, it means it was a bad idea. We live according to this principle. Everything happens, if there is a wish to do it.”*

Analyses of the Tirza example confirm findings in the theories and education policy documents that the role and functions of the teacher in the context of rapid changes in the 21st century are undergoing drastic transformation that is closely connected with the changes in society at large, and specifically, in the school as an institution. Therefore, meaningful and sustainable transformation of the school into a multifunctional community centre is possible only as a result of conscious changes in the attitude and practice of the teacher.

## Commentary

This account provides a picture of powerful community engagement. It is fascinating to note the correlation between personal, professional growth and the transition of the school to a resource for community development. The holistic attitude to (social/civic) pedagogy seems to instigate a more holistic attitude to professionalism – to be thought of as an extended professionalism but perhaps also as more of an existential understanding of personal growth. As the school extended its reach, the leadership process became more distributed across the community.



Latvia (L4 – national level)

## Teachers' collaborative network as a framework for implementing a learning model based on lesson observation and analysis

(Based on the full report authored by Inta Baranovska and Aija Tuna)

### Context

In the western world, different teachers' collaboration groups and networks have been operating at least since the 1980s. Latvia took the first steps in this field quite recently. During the national development project "Science and Mathematics" (2009 – 2011) a successful teacher learning model was developed, where teams of science and mathematics teachers learn together. The idea was that well-developed teamwork improves the quality of practices as teachers work and learn from each other. Collaboration within this model was organised as sharing and joint work – where teachers teach, plan or inquire into teaching together.

The teacher collaborative network which serves as a framework for a learning model based on observation and analysis of lessons was established in the academic year of 2011-2012. The foundation of the network was rooted in literature studies and analysis of the teacher training needs and their implementation in innovative ways with a high practical impact.

In 2011 there was a clear need to seek alternative ways of facilitating dissemination of the new teaching approach, ideas and changes, and sustain the progress achieved during the previous projects. Consequently, a national joint collaboration network of schools with innovative experience was established under the National Centre for Education (NCE) and the CSME (Centre for Science and Mathematics Education) at the University of Latvia. The goal was to set a precedent and create schools where teachers are willing to open doors to their classrooms and share their experience of planning and leading lessons by demonstrating the new approach. The focus was to be on a teacher's own classroom, the place in which it would be precise and relevant enough to be most effective.

### Methodology

The report explains that, in order to determine teachers' understanding of the skills they need to improve, a teacher needs' questionnaire (2011, 92 respondents – science and mathematics teachers) served as a tool to study teachers' learning needs (adapted from PROFILES4 project). The questionnaire consisted of 40 questions on teachers' confidence in certain skills and emphasis for professional development. Respondents evaluated each of their skills according to the Likert scale (1 - definitely no need to acquire, 5 - a very necessary skill).

The impact of the performed cycle of workshops in the network was analysed with the help of teacher questionnaires after the first and second year of running the model (2012, 74 respondents) and (2013, 82 respondents). Each questionnaire included information about the improvement of teachers' skills in seminars; including collaboration and leadership skills; six questions refer to teachers' reflection skills. Evaluation was undertaken according to the Likert scale. The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for each questionnaire was analysed. Teacher focus group discussions take place at regular intervals; they are recorded in an audio format,

transcribed and encoded. The above research design has yielded authentic data that provides a deep portrait of the network, enabling evaluation of the process.

The work resulted in a teacher learning model within a collaborative school network which includes the content of the curriculum; preparation, implementation and assessment of workshops, including worksheets for lesson transcription, worksheets for lesson analysis, sections informing conclusions on teacher skills and advancement abilities, workshop procedure and recommendations for leading lesson analysis.

Analysis was conducted with due regard of the school team documents: collaboration plans with teachers of other schools from the same region and evaluations of such collaboration, for example, surveys of teachers from collaborating schools on the benefits gained and recommendations for further collaboration.

Teachers provided written feedback after each workshop by giving written answers to the same questions: benefits from lesson observation and from lesson analyses. The expert participating in the lesson observation and analyses makes a lesson transcription and takes notes of the lesson analyses as well as summarising teachers' feedback. After seminars, the feedback is coded through content analyses. This helps obtain data on the changes in teachers' understanding of the importance of lesson analyses and depth of reflection. CSME expert focus group discussions take place after every workshop. Experts from CSME are eight people with expert and coaching experience of 5 – 15 years, who have been initially trained to analyse video recorded lessons, by noting down the compliance of activities to specific criteria and levels and reconciling opinions, and also to lead analysis and give feedback. Two experts participate in the workshop-based observation and analysis of the lesson.

## Practice

The report explains in relation to practice that data show that a teacher will grow into a reflecting practitioner and leader if he/she takes an active part in the collaboration network on the national level and in the school team. These kinds of experience help develop leadership qualities. Analysis of the benefits reveals that the teacher CPD model operating in the regional groups of the national network has had the largest impact on the development of leadership skills. The model has fostered teaching skills in the classroom as well as the reflection skills, and has significantly improved teacher awareness of the need to immerse themselves in their professional performance.

Teacher activity, in its turn, in their own developed local network, has had the largest impact on the improvement of lesson analysis and mutual collaboration skills. Teachers assign the biggest significance to the local network as a motivator for immersion in teacher performance and sharing experience. School teams are described as the best facilitators for developing skills to provide feedback and recommendations to colleagues. Team work has facilitated readiness to share ideas and experience, form mutual trust, and experience the feeling of receiving the biggest support and shouldering from colleagues. The significance of collaboration within the school team is supported by data summarised in the survey.

For example the teachers of the Vecumnieki school team act as "lead teachers". They hosted and lead 11 workshops on the national level and 10 on the municipality level with lesson observation and analyses as well as 14 workshops in other regional schools and 3 school level

seminars. For two years each teacher on the team has been leading an action research group at the school.

The report discusses the case under headings of 'participation', 'depth', 'equity' and 'learning (deep learning)'. We relate the discussion in those sections to the EFFEeCT project's four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

Cooperation within this model was organised as sharing (teaching strategies and materials) and joint work – where teachers teach, plan or inquire into teaching together. Initially, the network included 22 school teams of 4-5 teachers from every school. The experience obtained in the national network was transferred by the school teams to the municipal collaborative network which they developed themselves by inviting and engaging teachers from other schools who volunteered to join the collaborative and learning activities.

As the school team extended its activities to the whole school, every teacher had the opportunity to become involved. For example, in one of the network schools, namely, Vecumnieki Secondary School, collaboration started in a team of 5. It now includes 26 colleagues (from 34) who actively collaborate. Since 2011 the school has had mutual lesson observation and analyses, since 2012 – 5 action research groups. There are monthly meetings of these groups and a follow up conference. Every semester it provides training workshops for all teachers. The school team has a decisive role in the entry and implementation of changes in the school as the whole, which allows the school to become a real leader among schools.

Implementation of the model in new groups of teachers helps teachers see how their colleagues apply teaching skills that the teacher himself/herself is hesitant to apply. The model can motivate changes in the practices of those teachers who completely lack different teaching experience.

Consequently, collaboration and reflection is the necessary precondition for the model to succeed. At the same time, regular practice develops collaboration skills - 96% of teachers (2013) agree that participation in seminars has been extremely beneficial in this aspect. Teachers admit that collaboration with colleagues has made them ready to share ideas and experience (88% - *yes* and *definitely yes*), develop trust in mutual relationships and acquire safety (86%), sense of 'shoulder and support' (89%); 89% enjoyed positive emotions, and common value (teaching philosophy) ownership (93%).

### *Deep level collaboration*

A teacher can help his/her colleagues only when he/she has developed assurance that he/she is capable of providing real assistance. School deputy heads admit that "*Teacher improvement is enormous! From "ordinary teachers" they have turned into confident classroom leaders with authority on the school and regional level*".

Teachers noted the benefits of collaborative learning, which at the same time speaks of the solidarity of the group, its supportiveness and impact. In surveys from 2013, teachers admitted that collaboration with colleagues developed trust in mutual relationships and provided a sense of safety (*definitely yes and yes* 86% - teachers), a sense of shoulder and support (89%), 89% enjoyed positive emotions. At the same time, approximately 30% admitted the presence of stress, the figure went up to 53% regarding cases when the particular teacher had his/her

lesson observed and analysed. At the same time, 100% of teachers asserted that collaboration motivated them to improve their skills.

Teachers admit that collaboration with their colleagues has developed a common ownership of values (teaching philosophy). However, the way ownership works resembles the chicken and the egg - in order to be willing to go deeper and invest more, the teachers have to at least express the desire for ownership.

### *Equity*

Initially, the national collaborative network involved school teams who had defined prior experience. The limited resources required for various networking needs posed a restriction to a meaningful expansion of the network. Consequently, participation in the network was not accessible for all the schools in Latvia. At the same time, the network is open for all teams that would like to collaborate locally with the schools of the national network. Practice shows that there are schools that closely work together with national network schools located as far as within another region; there has even been one case when such a school has gone further and joined the activities of the national network itself. This means that possibilities are open for schools that pro-actively seek collaboration for teacher training.

At the time of writing, there is an actively operating elementary school (grades 1-4) network on a national level where teachers practice collaborative learning by creating scenarios of lessons for contemporary and innovative learning. They are piloted, analysed and assessed, and the lessons where the approaches are applied are mutually observed. It means that the experience gained from the collaboration of maths and science teachers can be transferred to other teacher groups. This is corroborated by experience from the network schools that implement the model in their own school by engaging all the teachers in it.

The municipalities also have a role to play. CSME is aware that municipalities have supported and financed teacher collaborative learning within a model similar to the one described by engaging all the schools located in the municipality. As a result, the model has been tested in several other groups of teachers pursuing professional development within the schools of one municipality (Riga, Ventspils). There have also been cases when school management has initiated teacher learning activities in their schools through mutual observation and analysis of lessons by bringing in CSME experts (gymnasium of Limbazi region).

The direct impact of the collaborative learning model on the principle of equitable treatment of all students has not been specifically studied. However, in our particular context, it is worth noting that improvement of a teacher's own collaborative skills and their ability to take and give valid feedback is intrinsically important: only teachers who themselves have experienced and benefited from the experience will be able to transfer it meaningfully to a student learning situation (most of the teachers who currently practice the profession have not studied formative observation in university and have not been trained in group management techniques). It is important for every student to be able to engage in collaborative learning with their peers and to have professional support from their teacher during the learning process with clear and positive acknowledgement of what has been well mastered, what needs improvement and what steps are to be followed to improve the result.

The research conducted offers evidence that the network learning model helps to improve teachers' skills including reflection and collaboration skills as well as to develop their leadership skills. The benefit gained is a more effective teacher-led learning process during the lesson with

subsequent improvement of student skills, and teacher skills to collaborate and support other teachers and help them learn.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

#### *Qualification*

The model has been built with a view that the aspects discussed at the input sessions will not just remain as something the teacher knows or is aware of – they are implemented in lessons and in the subsequent workshops teachers give a practical demonstration of their effort, which is observed by their peers. Thus, the new knowledge is put into effect and the new experience is transferred to the teacher's own practice.

#### *Socialisation*

Complete understanding of the implementable approach is not enough to make changes happen in the classroom (for example, inquiry based science education, acquiring new learning methods, practicing them in action and receiving professional feedback). Teachers' learning is based on the philosophy that change arises from the teacher's immersion in practice. In order to make changes happen, teachers have to be immersed in their own and their colleagues' experience, analysing and reflecting on it. It is crucial to create learning situations that allow teachers to acquire different kinds of experience, take part in discussions, exchange opinions, practice, analyse and reflect on their own and their colleagues' learning, that is, facilitate immersion.

During interviews, school deputy heads admitted that *"It is not enough for a teacher to see and hear new things – they have to be discussed with a focus on how we can apply the experience, try it out and demonstrate to others. Discussion facilitates our professional capability"*. Improvement does not remain the private business of an individual teacher; through simultaneous innovation and collaboration of all the parties involved, the impact can be faster and more significant. During a lesson, the teacher is left alone with their students, and it is extremely important for them to form an unbiased understanding of their own performance and professional skill level. It is good to have colleagues at one's side who learn together and have common goals and understanding, and are ready to give support. In the survey from 2013, 90% of teachers admit that they have improved their evaluation of personal performance and their accepting (91%) and giving feedback (80%) – evaluation 5 on Likert scale 5 - 0.

#### *Subjectification*

The research has captured that the process helps develop individuals as both critical thinkers and as participatory or democratic professionals with a sense of belonging. Observation and analysis of each other's lessons improves the analytical and reflexive skills of every individual teacher and their insight; it is an enriching experience improving individual practice. The importance of the reflective skill is underscored by the fact that it is crucial for teachers' daily activity as well as for implementing any changes in the future. Teachers in the national network agree that they benefited most from observation

of practical teaching and learning methods in their colleagues' lessons. Consequently, the most visible direct gain for the teachers is learning skills which are directly observed in a lesson of a different teacher and transferred to the teacher's own classroom.

## Facilitating factors

Successful teacher learning and growth in the collaborative network is facilitated by:

- a) Every individual teacher's wish to engage, learn and collaborate
- b) Awareness and support of the school management, and their active involvement
- c) Highly professional experts
- d) Interest from other teachers - their wish to improve
- e) Positive approach and mutual trust
- f) Sustainability and continuity
- g) Clear, specific and coherent goals (of the network, school, school team and individual teacher)

The roles of leaders and professional coaching are crucial to the above.

## Barriers

Implementation of the model has several limitations and risks to be taken into account:

1. Resources: getting to another school of the network;
2. Organisational issues: network activities take place during school hours (in order to observe a real lesson). This means shifting classes in the involved schools on the specific day;
3. Personality and character of each individual teacher;
4. Lack of support from school management;
5. Time for establishing good collaborative relationships and trust;
6. Sceptical and negative approaches from peers; attempts to focus on weaknesses;
7. Time for expert professional development and number of experts.

An important risk factor is the stress arising from the presence of colleagues in observed or 'open' lessons. The model will be successful only if there is trust among the teachers themselves and the teachers and experts. Trust forms if the same group of experts has a long-term working relationship with the same group of teachers. In a new group of strangers, the model may be used formally, superficially, and fail to achieve the desired results. Another limitation is related to the quality of lessons which can affect the emotional context and confidence of the teachers involved.

## Commentary

The data charts the wide and deep impact of the collaborative network across the country. The survey of teachers, conclusions of experts and teachers' feedback all demonstrate that the model enhances the development of teaching skills as well as reflection and collaboration skills. Teachers of the national network admit that they have improved their own lesson planning and

leading. By observing their colleagues' lessons, teachers take ownership of particular teaching methods. Teachers assert that leading and analysing lessons has helped evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and improved their skills to reflect on their performance with colleagues. Teachers confirm that they have learned how to reflect on lessons with other teachers. Among other benefits, teachers stated that an insight into colleagues' performance encourages one to think about your own.

It emerges that collaboration enables the surfacing and sharing of values. This in turn allows for a more democratic vision for development, advancing equity and a deeper sense for what learning can be.

## Hungary (H1 – regional level)

### The DeMo project

(Based on the full report authored by Margit Barna)

#### Context

The report explains that two years ago The Foundation for Democratic Youth (DIA) initiated a project for civil society organisations to network, learn together and share experiences and knowledge. The 13 organisations that participated in the project called *DeMo* all work with children who live in deep poverty, often studying in segregated institutions characterised by lower-quality education. The organisations participating in the project use different methods and strategies to fulfil the common aim of compensating for the deficiencies in formal education in an attempt to close the social gap between the majority and minority, disadvantaged, marginalised social groups.

#### Methodology

A qualitative approach was used, which firstly drew on publicly available data on the DeMo project website. This was enriched by the personal experiences of members of the organisations involved in this project, gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews (recorded and transcribed), designed to reveal the personal experiences of members of the organisations involved. Written feedback was also collected.

#### Practice

The DeMo project involves three key activities:

- *field visits* - Members from each participating organisation visited three other organisations to observe and reflect on working practices;
- *organisational development* - individual coaching was provided at the start of the project;
- *sharing good practice* – planned knowledge-sharing activities were central to each project meeting.

Flexibility was key to the success of the project, with project members enabled to take the initiative to change agendas and the direction of meetings to suit their developing needs.

#### *Participative professionalism*

A participative, democratic model of professionalism was clearly evidenced in this case study. Facilitating the agency of participants, who would then come to their own solutions to personally meaningful issues, was found to be the most productive way of working. Rita Galambos, the director of DIA which initiated the project, conceptualised her role as a leader of the network through the metaphor of a spider making a web. The spider is not in the centre, or outside: it has the function of slowly connecting the little parts and constructing the web that holds everyone together. Interviews conducted with the participants and the organisers of the DeMo



project suggests that the presence of a leader who is accepted by participants is crucial in order to hold the network together. Participants also have to be able to determine the content of the collaboration based on their own personal needs and interests, however. Thus, the DeMo project can be described as a democratic model of collaboration, according to the report. The flexible structure and the fact that the participants have the freedom to influence the process provide an ideal context for collaborative innovation.

### *Deep level collaboration*

In this project, understanding, group cohesion, a high team identity, and the emotional and professional support of each other were all identified in the report as important factors characterising complex forms of collaboration. This is more than the sharing of information or good practice. It is a depth of collaboration which facilitates real learning and growth.

The community experience was mentioned by several participants, who described the emotional benefit of the project. Participants had often felt isolated in previous projects and contrasted this to the emotional benefit of being able to share obstacles and overcome them together. As a consequence of this depth of connection, several sub-groups were formed within the project team. The sub-groups were determined by the relevancy of the knowledge, experiences and good practices they could share with each other, together with personal connection. These sub-groups were not exclusive: participants could belong to many groups. The depth of collaboration varied across groups but in all cases was strengthened by the field visits which allowed participants to experience others' practice in an alternative way.

Participants associated positively with the name of the project which helped to support group cohesion and identity. The formation of strong groups was seen to support the long-term collaboration of participants beyond the official end of the project.

### *Equity*

The report explains that the overt aim of the DeMo project is to advance equity. All participating organisations work with disadvantaged children who live in poverty and often study in institutions characterised by a low level of education. A large number of volunteers support the various organisations and are equally committed to the advancement of equity in developing children's learning and life chances.

A sense of responsibility was a recurring theme in the interviews. Many of the volunteers and social workers travel from Budapest to segregated villages where they meet the local communities. The motivation to do this could be due to a sense of responsibility, or social solidarity: there is a suggestion that, coming from a privileged background, it is one's duty to be socially sensitive and to take an active role in advancing social equity. The societal implications of such individual social action are highlighted in the case study. A particularly pertinent question is around the impact which the DeMo project participants' work has on educational policy and practice. The case study raises the issue that this work takes places outside of the formal educational system, providing informal education for children who also attend schools within this formal system. The transferability of learning from the DeMo project to this formal education system is questioned, due to the lack of channels between civil initiatives using alternative methods and formal educational institutions. As a result, the report suggests, the efforts of the civil society sector often remain invisible on a system level.

## *Deep learning*

The report indicates that all interviewees felt that taking part in the project was a very fruitful period. There was evidence of openness to change on the part of participants, towards understanding the importance of sharing instead of trying to protect their own good practices for themselves.

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in terms of Biesta's (2009) three dimensions of learning:

### *Socialisation*

Personal meetings and field visits helped the participants to become involved and motivated to work together. In contrast to the common isolation many participants felt, being part of the project and establishing connections was refreshing and inspiring. A recognition of the validity of this type of collaborative working was also a key learning point. This is in contrast to the discourse of competition which remains strong, even in the civil society sector.

### *Qualification*

The project not only validated this way of working but also provided the tools and opportunities to allow collaborative learning to occur.

### *Subjectification*

The shaping of the project allowed for individual agency. The rules of engagement were more fluid than in many projects and opportunities and space for individuals to inform the project's shape were built into the participants' time together. This played a key role in promoting deep level collaborative learning.

## Facilitating factors

Several conclusions were drawn about what facilitated the success of the DeMo project:

- external funding
- personal motivation of participants who understand the importance of sharing and learning together
- transferability of learning to others within the organisation – this was challenging in some cases and so also appears under *barriers* below
- having adequate space and time to develop a project which authentically served participants' needs

## Barriers

There was not much information given on what hindered the success of the project. Transferability of learning to others within the organisation was seen as potentially problematic. This was sometimes hindered by organisations not sending the same participants to each DeMo meeting.

## Commentary

There were several points of particular significance in this case:

- Democratic model of collaboration in which participants had real agency to shape the project's activities and hence its outcomes
- Sense of belonging to the project, identifying with the DeMo name, and of mutual support, engendered by collaborative working and by a developing understanding of the practice and purpose of other participants and their organisations
- Sense of social responsibility and moral purpose which drove the participants' work.

## Hungary (H2 – local level)

# The Network of Teacher Learning Communities of the Pollack Mihály Primary School in Kazincbarcika

(Based on the full report authored by Adel Csernovitz)

## Context

The Pollack Mihály Primary School is located in Kazincbarcika, an industrial town in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, Northern Hungary. Kazincbarcika was created during the Socialist industrialization period, when several villages were unified with the aim of creating an industrial city. Due to a local educational government decision, the Pollack Mihály Primary School was merged, in two steps, with five other primary schools each of which already had their own teaching tradition.

In 2007 two schools, Árpád Fejedelem Primary School and Kazinczy Ferenc Primary School, were combined with Pollack Mihály Primary School. In 2012 the Ádám Jenő Primary School was attached to Pollack Mihály Primary School. The Ádám Jenő Primary School itself was a combined school including two previously merged institutions (Dózsa György Primary School and Gárdonyi Géza Primary School). These six schools now form a school complex, also named Pollack Mihály Primary School, which has 2368 pupils, 37.5% of whom are disadvantaged, and employs 193 teachers.

Three out of the six schools are located in the city centre, two schools are close to family housing areas, with the remaining school situated in Szuhakálló, a village near Kazincbarcika. The principal of the Pollack School is responsible for the overall management and leadership of the school complex. However, each member school has its own school leader. A network of inter-institutional Teacher Learning Communities underpins collaborative working and policy and practice across the school complex.

## Methodology

The report explains that a qualitative approach was used, drawing on the analysis of policy documents in the school complex, such as the annual work programme, the pedagogical programme and presentations made at various workshops. This was enriched by semi-structured interviews, designed to elicit the personal experiences of members of the school complex. Interviews were conducted with Principal-in-charge, Ms. Fürjes-Gáborné Csépanyi Ágnes and a group interview with members of the Art Teacher Learning Community, interviewed at one of the school complex's collaborative learning events in Kazincbarcika. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. This evidence base appears appropriate in terms of the strength of conclusions drawn from it.

## Practice

The inter-institutional Teacher Learning Communities consist of teachers who teach the same or related subjects (e.g. music and art) in the different member schools. The main aim of the

Teacher Learning Communities is to facilitate teachers sharing knowledge and experiences in teaching of their subjects, in order to support equity in learning opportunities and outcomes across the school complex. Teacher Learning Communities meet between 1 and 4 times a month.

### *Participative professionalism*

The inter-institutional Teacher Learning Communities are open to all interested teachers. A democratic leadership model is used, with no hierarchy evident, for example, in decision-making processes. Parents and pupils are usually not involved in the decision making process although parents are consulted in some cases and some pupils take part in the Pupil Government which is a feature of each school. If a decision is made by a Teacher Learning Community, the community is committed to implement it immediately in classroom practice and to monitor its impact, making adjustments to the new practice where necessary.

The report explains that not all teachers are comfortable with this model of participative professionalism however. The principal feels that older teachers are less open to new practices and many prefer to continue to use a tried-and-trusted pedagogy which could be viewed as outmoded. She also feels that there is not yet a fully shared understanding of how collaborative learning can support the learning and development of individual teachers as well as pupils. A future aim for the communities remains to engage everyone fully in their operation, developing deeper levels of communication which may either be face-to-face or through making further use of ICT.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The principal of the school complex is strongly committed to collaboration, feeling that it is the essence of successful future school improvement. The Art Teachers Learning Community has been active for many years and has achieved a depth in their collaborative practice over time. There is a core group which is very active and often comes up with new ideas. Other teachers are willing to participate in activities and share their expertise but there are some teachers who are more reserved and don't reveal their opinion readily in group meetings.

With collaboration of this kind appears to come some pressure to perform. Teachers talked of feeling a pressure to perform their tasks at high quality level. They feel that the momentum of solution-finding and change makes it difficult to have much time for a relaxed approach to their teaching.

### *Equity*

The principal of the school complex has clear views on equity and there is therefore an overt discussion of equity issues in this case. She wishes to give every pupil the opportunity to succeed and thus expects all teaching staff to implement a common, systematic plan and individual learning programmes to support pupils at risk. Teacher Learning Communities contribute to this process by discussing individual pupil cases and developing plans to address issues. The results of such an approach are that many children who would have been at risk of failure in recent years have successfully completed their schooling.

Securing equity in terms of opportunities for teacher development is also an element of this case. Teachers in Teacher Learning Communities produce shared resources in the form of

online teaching materials and exercise data bases which supports the work of colleagues across the whole school complex.

### *Deep learning*

The report suggests that one of the greatest achievements of the communities is the creation of a good flow of information and a lively professional exchange of experiences among teachers of the different member schools. The younger generation of teachers can benefit from the experiences of teachers with a longer teaching practise and senior teachers are able to renew their teaching practices and try to follow innovations. Community learning is seen by teachers as facilitating individual learning because each teacher feels an internal motivation to show that she/he is able to perform at high quality level. Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning are summarised in the 'Commentary' section below.

## Facilitating factors

Several conclusions were drawn about what facilitated the success of the Teacher learning Communities:

- The size of the school complex allowed many teachers from the same discipline to come together to plan and learn.
- School leaders from each of the school complex schools met weekly to debate issues and provide support for the Teacher Learning Communities.
- The flow of information from the school leader meetings is well established so the communities are informed practically about every development and decision made.
- The school complex is relatively successful in networking with external institutions such as the local government and companies. Internal relations among teacher communities, parent organisations and Student Government are also strong.
- There is a healthy, inspiring, rivalry between schools, as they all want to produce high quality work and demonstrate high levels of pupil performance.

## Barriers

The age of the majority of teaching staff is over 53 years which means that these teachers have a different methodological culture compared to a younger generation of teachers and sometimes do not easily see the benefits of collaborative working and learning. Many teachers in this age bracket will retire simultaneously. Given the difficulties of attracting newly qualified teachers to Kazincbarcika's schools, this may lead to workforce shortages.

Another potential barrier is the attempt by some schools to attract pupils from more privileged backgrounds, in order to raise the attainment profile of their school. There is an assumption that such pupils will be higher achieving. However, such a set of beliefs and therefore admissions practice may lead to a rift between schools which could be deleterious to collaborative working.

## Commentary

There were several points of particular significance in this case:

- Scope of the project – any teacher at any level of the school can take part in the Teacher Learning Communities although there is an expectation that teachers in key positions will attend meetings.
- Principal's support for the project – the Principal is clearly committed to collaborative learning. Although the Teacher Learning Communities were instigated by her in a top-down approach, their mode of working is overtly democratic.
- The ownership of the Teacher Learning Communities by their members appears strong.

Hungary (H3 – school level)

## A Case Study of the Teachers' Professional Workshop in the Pécs-Somogy Primary School

(Based on the full report authored by B. Tier Noemi)

### Context

The institution featured in this case study is one of the member schools of the Budai-Városkapu Primary School and Basic Arts School, located in an outer, eastern part of Pécs called Somogy. The school has been operated by the state since 1 January 2013, through the Klebersberg Institution Maintenance Centre, established at the same time. The eastern part of Pécs has changed significantly over time, as mining, its traditional industry, has diminished, leading to unemployment, poverty and cultural dearth. A new school Principal of Pécs-Somogy Primary School, appointed in 2013, introduced an innovative school development process based on partnership and supporting methods and inclusion. This was a Teachers' Professional Workshop, which sought to enable teachers develop their pedagogy collaboratively.

### Methodology

The report explains that a qualitative approach was used, which drew on an in-depth interview (recorded and transcribed) with the school's Principal and naturally-occurring data about the school such as a statement of the educational programme. This was enriched through an observation of a teacher's workshop, when video and photographs were taken, and with flexible, opportunistic interviews with teachers and other professionals (e.g. social worker, pedagogical assistant).

### Practice

The Teachers' Professional Workshop was established in 2014 and seeks to develop an educational programme in which teachers can combine alternative pedagogical methods based on innovative good practice, such as Waldorf education, Maria Montessori's methods, the alternative foundation programme of Children's House<sup>2</sup>, Budapest and the Complex Instruction Programme<sup>3</sup>, developed by professionals in Hejőkeresztúr, as well as their own individual experiences to create a curriculum which best supports students' needs.

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<sup>2</sup> Children's House is operated in Pesthidegkút, Budapest, with 8 grades and one class per each grade, according to its own educational programme and local curriculum. The school has run the Children's House Alternative Foundation Programme since the academic year 1991/92, which, besides its teachers' practical experiences, was also greatly inspired by the appearance of reform pedagogical trends in Hungary in the early 20th century. More information: [www.gyermekekehaza.hu](http://www.gyermekekehaza.hu) (In: Ibid).

<sup>3</sup> Complex Instruction Programme (KIP) is the Complex Instruction method developed by Stanford University, USA, adjusted to Hungarian needs from 2001 by the teachers of Béla IV Primary School in Hejőkeresztúr, headed by Principal Emese K. Nagy. The programme has been used successfully for 15 years now, and also adopted by other schools. The model allows children to work in groups during classes. Each student in a group has a particular task, and therefore they do not only share classroom work, but also the sense of achievement caused by the successfully completed tasks. The programme seeks, for example, to handle status issues among students, to help children gain



### *Participative professionalism*

In the report it is explained that two to two and a half hour-long workshops take place on Friday afternoons in one of the classrooms on the Pécs-Somogy site. Workshops provide participants with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and pedagogical resources, either by self-education or with external help. Parents are asked to take their children home earlier on these occasions, and the ones who remain at the school are supervised by two teachers on duty. Topics for the workshops include problem-solving, studying the theoretical basis of pedagogical approaches and staff development led by an educational specialist in a given field.

All teachers from the Pécs-Somogy Primary School attend the workshops and are sometimes joined by teachers from other schools within the School District of Pécs. Teachers appear to attend willingly. Anyone can bring topics and ideas to the workshop, but generally it is the school principal who suggests/organises the agenda, mostly by inviting external professionals to share good practice they have observed across schools or to talk about their professional expertise. Most of the improvement initiatives taken forward within the school have arisen from the Teachers' Professional Workshop.

### *Deep level collaboration*

Teachers are not compelled to attend workshops. However, if they choose not to attend, the report explains that they are denying themselves the opportunity to be an active member of the school community.

The workshop sessions provide an opportunity for various levels of collaborative learning, from information transfer through case discussions and sharing good examples, to training opportunities. The small numbers of teachers involved in the workshop allows for authentic and honest discussion of issues, resulting in colleagues who support one another both professionally and emotionally. This took time to achieve however, and is the result of continuing efforts over more than a year. Workshop members' evaluation of the depth of collaboration generally puts it at between 3 and 4, on a scale where 1 is the sharing of information and 5 is full collaboration.

Collaboration with students has increased as a result of the workshops. Students are asked to give feedback on new initiatives introduced.

### *Equity*

The mission of the school is to provide education which helps students to overcome disadvantage and to have equal life chances with other children of their age. This is reflected in the school motto – *Everybody is equal but different*. The Teachers' Professional Workshop is one of a series of measures put into place by the school to bring such equity in educational, and therefore life, opportunity. It achieves this through providing an opportunity for the sharing of effective practice and the building of pedagogical understanding and skills.

Equity is also demonstrated in the school's admissions policy which is overtly non-selective. It admits children of all abilities, with teachers adjusting their teaching methods to suit students' needs, with the aim of valuing and supporting the development of the individual child.

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more knowledge, to develop cognitive skills, as well as to contribute to the classroom effectiveness of student groups of heterogeneous socialisation and knowledge. More information: [www.komplexinstrukcio.hu](http://www.komplexinstrukcio.hu)(In: Ibid).

The Principal is committed to a democratic approach to leadership, seeking staff views on current policy and practice and how it might be further developed. Her leadership approach is based on the values of acceptance, trust and enablement. The Teachers' Professional workshop shows these values in action: although its' agenda is set by the school Principal, there are no hierarchical elements in its operation. Instead, members work in partnership to debate and critique policy and practice, and to work towards shared solutions.

### *Deep learning*

The report explains that the direct impact of the professional workshop is mainly shaping teachers' attitudes, although there are also resultant changes in behaviour and learning of new teaching methods.

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case study features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in terms of Biesta's (2009) three dimensions of learning.

#### *Socialisation*

The Teachers' Professional Workshop is seen as a catalyst for changing professional attitudes, helping staff to develop into a collegial team who work together with no regard for age and experience, to find solutions to common problems. The use of external specialists and of the wider published pedagogical literature brings in valuable expertise from beyond the school.

#### *Qualification*

The project provides teachers with additional tools and opportunities, such as team teaching, which support their professional development.

#### *Subjectification*

Individuals are enabled to have a clear voice in development activities. They are supported in changing practices, such as swapping shouting at children for speaking with them in a calm voice, which are more educationally productive with their students. This also allows for a change of professional persona.

## Facilitating factors

Several conclusions were drawn about what facilitated the success of the Teachers' Professional Workshop:

- The bonding effect of facing challenging social and educational contexts and finding solutions together within the school and its community
- Structural support of sending children home on Friday afternoons to create time for mutual learning
- Teachers' experience and commitment to taking action to support the learning of disadvantaged children
- The partnerships with civil organisations and participation in various grant programmes to cover the expenses of the training provided at the workshops by external speakers etc.

- Support provided by the local government and professional partner institutions such as special services, child protection services and civil organisations

## Barriers

Although highly committed, a heavy workload can often leave teachers feeling exhausted. Without direction from the Principal teachers tend not to self-organise Teachers' Professional Workshop but to relish the 'break'. The exploration of a large number of stand-alone pedagogical approaches and their integration into practice can be time-consuming and requires a great deal of energy. It is also a challenge for teachers to leave the relative safety of tried and trusted practices to experiment with new creative pedagogies. A minority of teachers feel less committed to the development of collaborative working than their colleagues and this has the potential to impede progress and challenge the inclusivity of the community of learners.

## Commentary

There are several points of particular significance in this case:

- The innovative uses of structural change to support collaborative working
- The combination of hierarchical leadership by the Principal, in setting up and controlling the agenda of the Teachers' Professional Workshop, and distributed leadership through the contributions to policy and practice change by the whole staff community
- Intellectual stimulation by experts and reading of published literature as an impetus for change

The impact of this participative professionalism can be seen on the school culture which is more forward-looking and is having a positive impact on learning and teaching. Changes to the teaching staff, initiated by a new Principal, are supporting this change of ethos. Collaboration is deep in that teachers work together to share and develop school practice. However, areas for development are chosen predominantly by the Principal, potentially resulting in a somewhat diminished sense of collaboration between teachers and senior leaders. The potential for deep level collaboration is apparent, in that anyone can suggest a topic for discussion. However, structural impediments, such as the fact that the Principal arranges external speaker, in practice often curtail this apparent democratic approach.

## Czech Republic (C1 – national level)

### School clubs: non-formal education

(Based on the full report authored by Glynn Kirkham)

#### Context

Schools in the Czech Republic have been given more autonomy over the last 25 years. On 13th December 1990, the Czech National Council introduced a regional, decentralised school system. The municipality and the newly-established school authorities had autonomy. Teachers stopped being 'civil servants'. School administration today lies mainly with the headteachers, who also have the right "to hire and fire". Each school has a set of founders but these have little active engagement with the school's policy-writing or management except in the appointment of headteacher. Schools and thereby headteachers thus have great autonomy. Schools work a 'continental day'; that is that they begin at about 0745 and conclude early afternoon. In order that children are safe when parents are working most schools have both morning and afternoon clubs.

This case is in the area of non-formal education, i.e. school clubs for pupils that take place before and after the formal school day. The focus of this case is on after-school clubs. The experience and preparation for participation in school clubs as an instructor varies greatly between teachers involved. Initial teacher education at the faculties of education does not provide opportunities to learn about or engage in non-formal education, since the latter is not a contractual obligation of teachers. Therefore professional support is needed. The nature of this support, which is the subject of this case, is explained under 'Practice' below.

#### Methodology

The author of the case study writes, in relation to all the case studies, that it must be recognised that these are interpretations of interpretations. The author is necessarily interpreting both what has been seen by that individual and what has been told to that person by others, who themselves interpret the world and present it as they see and understand it. The reader of the case studies themselves interprets the written words and other materials presented through the lens of their own experience and understanding.

The principle method for data generation for all the cases from the Czech Republic was a semi-structured interview devised by the author on the basis of guidelines given by the partners responsible for the initial research exercise to extract examples of good practice in teachers' collaborative learning. In two of the cases (C2 and C3), the author of the case studies observed actors involved in the course of the activities which are deemed to be good practice. Additional research to seek to understand the central themes of the case studies was also undertaken. This summary does not contain the additional research.

## Practice

This case study focuses on a programme of professional support for teachers and leaders of school clubs. The programme was developed by the National Institute for Continuing Professional Development (NIDV) which incorporates the former NIDM (National Institute for Children and Young People). It is the outcome of the development of a rigorous and systematic development programme of individualised support, based on a learning manual in order to enhance the quality of management and of instruction with a national base. The programme was drawn up by a group of colleagues with extensive experience in the field of non-formal education as leaders of school clubs and instructors in the same, who are now active at national level in the professional development of teachers working in school clubs. Additionally, there have been developments in the national qualifications framework which now recognises the necessity for training and qualification in non-formal education.

### *Participative professionalism*

In the course of drawing up the programme, as well as reflecting on their own experiences, the authors and methodics (sic) took into account the many needs expressed to them by colleagues working in school clubs. Thus, the programme may be conceived of as a needs-based, grounded educational development. The participative aspect would seem to be the willingness to recognise and respond to the expressed needs of those working in school clubs. How participative professionalism is more widely reflected in the programme is not expanded upon in the case study but clearly is an essential element in mentoring.

### *Deep level collaboration*

Further information is given on the history, development and perceptions of non-formal education. It also explains that:

- through regional co-ordinators, mentors and tele-conferencing facilities, managers and leaders of activities within the school clubs can gain rapid support when and where needed from an experienced professional within the region.
- there is an established course for new entrants with a structured system of mentoring (from experienced teachers of non-formal education) that furthers the necessary basis for support and for the sustenance of programmes through the required course for those who come to hold positions of management of the school clubs and interest groups for young people.
- there is a national conference specifically for teachers and club managers working in the school clubs and other leisure-time facilities. Not all teachers or managers are able to attend, but the regions are well represented at the conferences and thus able to benefit attendees, and those with whom they work and mentor, from the ideas and discussion at the conferences.

Not every teacher who engages in non-formal education gains any monetary reward. However, they have reduced time to follow their interests in this field, since the daytime teaching and its preparation has to be a first priority, and so opportunities to engage with other teachers, to collaborate around themes of common interest is left to but a few.

However, information technology in the form of social and professional networks is now a major player in the field of collaboration between those involved in non-formal education. This

technological facilitation of collaboration and networking opens possibilities for those leading the programmes nationally. The availability of accessing support and the use of mentoring, and the annual conference, are highlighted in the national system. It might be concluded that a strong message is the potential of the possibilities of IT for deepening collaboration that is most apparent.

### *Equity*

From the case study it is learned that there is a national council for this educational activity, a national award which recognises the involvement of those engaged in non-formal education, and an annual conference which brings together the regional co-ordinators and teachers; that each of the regions has a co-ordinator for the school clubs; and that workshops are designed on the basis of needs established. It's not wholly clear from this account how equity issues are addressed by the programme.

### *Deep learning*

There is now a professional qualification in non-formal education of children and young people, but that debate continues about what constitutes a proper qualification in non-formal education and legislation has yet to be finalised. It explains that in relation to the programme - Keys for life and K2 - the quality and competitiveness of non-formal education have become approved vocational qualifications in non-formal education of children and youth, and that more professional qualifications in this area have been set in process for creation and approval. Various roles have been approved by the Ministry - i.e. co-ordinator of volunteers; head of recreational events for children and youth; head of leisure activities for children and youth and a head of leisure activities for children and youth.

More personalised is the mentoring and support (part of the role of the regional co-ordinator) of new entrants to engagement in non-formal education. The report states that much support is derived from what has been learned by experienced practitioners, who share their learning with the novices. Shared knowledge is clearly an outcome of collaborative activity.

## Facilitating factors

Many factors in this case facilitate collaboration. These are:

- appropriately experienced senior personnel
- clear and well-written guidelines and manual
- annual conference with workshops and seminars
- recognised qualification
- regional co-ordinators
- tele-conferencing facility
- nationally-accredited training
- established course for new entrants & mentoring
- required course for club managers

## Barriers

There are also factors which hinder collaboration. These are:

- paucity of time available during school semesters
- no clear standards for learning outcomes, although benchmarking has begun
- variety and multiplicity of clubs
- funding and resourcing
- opportunities for senior personnel in this field being limited nationally
- limited interest in non-formal education in the universities' faculties of education

## Commentary

The case is about a different and interesting aspect of teacher activity (non-formal education through school clubs) and how a process has been undertaken of giving greater professional support to the teachers and leaders in these clubs. The range of facilitating factors and barriers are identified clearly.

Further insight into the insight into the practice, the ways in which it encourages or facilitates collaboration, the kinds of learning that result and the equity issues that are of concern and are being addressed will be interesting to pursue.

## Czech republic (C2 – regional level)

### CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)

(Based on the full report authored by Glynn Kirkham)

#### Context

With some minor exceptions, the language of instruction in schools is Czech. The current European lingua franca, English, is competently spoken by only 30% of the population in the Czech republic. The non-western Slavic Czech language dominates with German and Russian being common second languages. In schools, English, German, French, Russian, Polish, Spanish and Italian may be found as taught second languages. The first three of the languages listed are those most commonly taught.

Competence in at least one other language is a key part of European goals for education throughout the 27 states. One current approach to modern languages' teaching is to use the modern language while teaching another school subject. One such method which has derived some success is called "Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). CLIL is an English acronym that stands for instruction when teaching a language and a non-language subject simultaneously, i.e., in an integrated manner; or, if a non-language subject is taught through a foreign language and if a foreign language is taught using a non-language subject. Pupils acquire knowledge and skills in both subjects simultaneously.

CLIL has two simultaneous objectives - the development both of a second foreign language and of a non-language subject, both equally important.

Teaching CLIL combines the teaching methods of both the language and the non-language subject. Knowledge is not one-sidedly presented by the teacher, the report argues, but students are encouraged to discover independently, to integrate new knowledge with what is already known. They are encouraged to discuss and work with different instruments for learning. Students communicate more naturally because there is a need for clarification of terms of feedback and self-reflection.

#### Methodology

The report states, in relation to all the case studies, that it must be recognised that these are interpretations of interpretations. The author is necessarily interpreting both what has been seen by that individual and what has been told to that person by others, who themselves interpret the world and present it as they see and understand it. The reader of the case studies themselves interprets the written words and other materials presented through the lens of their own experience and understanding.

The principle method for data generation for all the cases from the Czech republic was a semi-structured interview devised by the author on the basis of guidelines given by the partners responsible for the initial research exercise to extract examples of good practice in teachers' collaborative learning. In two of the cases (C1 and C2), the author of the case studies observed actors involved in the course of the activities which are deemed to be good practice. Additional



research to seek to understand the central themes of the case studies was also undertaken. This summary does not contain the additional research.

With regard to C2, the source of some of the material are the co-ordinators of this project and other contributors to the written text on the website [www.clil.nidv.cz](http://www.clil.nidv.cz) which has been translated into English. Under 'Participative professionalism', the report refers to the author personally witnessing knowledge mobilisation at one of the many workshops.

In the section on 'Deep Learning', it is commented that there were numerous settings in the project within which learning could take place and that it would require an in-depth investigation of each in terms of the total phenomenon, meriting a doctoral thesis, so what is presented in this report is only what it has been possible to elicit and deduce from the co-ordinators' perspective

## Practice

CLIL is an approach already being used by small numbers of teachers in some parts of the Czech Republic. There was no national approach, nor a national strategy. It was in this setting that a CLIL project supported by the European social fund and the state budget was established by the National Institute for Continuing Professional Development (NIDV) and carried out in 2010-2011.

The project was managed and co-ordinated by a relatively young but able and enthusiastic team of three modern linguists employed as teachers of teachers on in-service courses. All three had experience in schools as modern language teachers. Other actors in this project were specialist personnel from the Research Institute of Education (NUV) and the Association of Methodologists and Teacher Educators (AMATE).

The target group for the project was teaching staff (with the level of foreign language minimum B1) teaching English, German and French at the second level in primary schools and lower grades of secondary and grammar schools. The aim of the project was to raise awareness of teachers as to how to use CLIL in teaching in schools.

There were three main activities in the project:

1. Methodical training of teachers: an accredited 40-hour educational seminar on CLIL to teachers in all regions of the Czech Republic, attended by 477 teachers who had the opportunity to learn more about this method, with a view to linking subjects of English, German or French
2. Creation of methodical material: a handbook containing theoretical and practical presentation methods and experiences of teachers with the introduction of methods in teaching in their schools, including practical suggestions and CLIL activities which had been tested in schools, plus a DVD
3. Conferences with workshops: two conferences which introduced CLIL to teachers and headteachers, which included several workshops where attendees learned more detailed information about the use of CLIL.

### *Participative professionalism*

CLIL is an approach that lends itself to participative professionalism, it is claimed. A minimum requirement of its pedagogy is to have cross-curricular - or interdisciplinary - discussion to ensure a coherent syllabus for the learning of the students. Each member of the CLIL team had a specialism and coherence in the development of the project was assisted by the emotional strength of the team. The author of the case study commends the consensual, democratic and inclusive but goal-centred approach to leadership of the (female) team. Teachers' own knowledge was mobilised in workshops and there was much sharing of ideas.

Evidence of this professionalism was visible during the 40 hours' training scheme, with colleagues coming to understand that they too had expertise to share. One of the co-ordinators commented that "The tasks were distributed and it helped to achieve the goals; the tasks were not overwhelming."

Teachers were given examples of practice to try out in schools which had been derived from the taught sessions and from the sharing of practice within the workshop part of the course. They were given the chance to co-operate with others and share the learning that had derived from their practice. The project covered all 14 regions of the Czech republic and all contributions were valued and shared by means of videoed sessions and dedicated website recording where the participants permitted.

A distinction can be made between the pedagogy of CLIL and the project to promote CLIL. The report suggests that a model of collaborative, participative professionalism is part of both. Some insight is given into how this was facilitated through the way the project worked.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The nature of the collaborative approach as an integral part of the project is apparent in the previous section. The report also cites the stated values and modus operandi of the project, including the statement that "*Evoking a friendly atmosphere was number one priority.*"

Emotional support between teachers was observed by the co-ordinators as being high and equally it was experienced within the core team. The report states that a cohesive culture is something that Czech teachers believe "already exists in their schools". The project team themselves had a strong sense of group identity. A co-ordinator described the participants as "A group of people who were interested in learning and in their own self-development" then realised the same was true of those leading the project. They were breaking new ground.

The case study suggests that the level of collaboration was deep and robust, building on the cohesive culture in Czech schools (though recognising that the norm is that teachers tend to do their work in relative isolation). It is clear that the project had a sense of identity and commitment to collaborative activity and learning and to promoting these.

### *Equity*

It is pointed out that, In the Czech language, there is no word for 'equity' other than as a synonym for 'equality', so it was necessary to make this term comprehensible when interviewing Czech colleagues.

The report refers to participative justice, noting the co-ordinator's comment that "All the teachers knew that there was just insignificant development without co-operation" and that they were active in their own learning and in supporting the learning of their colleagues from other schools. The report praises the manner in which the co-ordinators and facilitators managed the learning opportunities within the space available. It is important to note that in the Czech culture there is a strong sense of tolerance (at least, publicly) and individuals are listened to generally within a CPD (continuing professional development) session without interruption, as well as there being discussion.

The learning culture established by the team developed the sense of equity during the project for the programme managers, the facilitators and the teachers. The move from closed content consumers to open content sharers was in evidence as the project progressed. The commentary in the case study suggests that participatory justice and cultural justice (respect) - to use the concepts from the four-fold framework of social justice - are high. Who or which groups might be less involved are issues that are not addressed. It is recognised (see 'Barriers' below) that some teachers were affected by funding difficulties and the lack of support by some headteachers.

### *Deep learning*

The case study highlights one definition of learning: a process that leads to a change of behaviour. One co-ordinator commented that following the project "only 60-70%" started to use CLIL. The report comments that, given that "many of the teachers were not supported by their headteachers" and that "many of the teachers were funding their expenses from their own funds" - this was a high take-up. Teachers had:

- produced and co-produced materials to share in their own schools and other schools
- gathered materials shared by colleagues
- benefited from a clearly-written manual and set of methodical guidelines to which they had contributed
- learned to produce videos which would demonstrate their own CLIL-style learning and teaching for their own reflection and learning and of such a quality for the learning of others.

From a total of 477 participants, the editors selected for inclusion in a manual on CLIL, 81 of the best examples for English, 10 for German and five for French. The facilitators (experienced teachers of CLIL, modern languages, and andragogues) gained new knowledge of the common (and not so common) examples of good practice in modern language teaching not only from the teachers in their workshops but also learned from the central organisational meetings with other facilitators as they planned their workshops and common teaching materials. In all cases, they were carefully guided by the core team of co-ordinators.

This quote from co-ordinators in one of the regions gives a flavour of an affective and motivational aspect of the learning that took place:

*We saw different processes, how to use relaxation to release or activate the mind. How to determine the types of sensory dominance in the group. How to work with texts. How to set goals and evaluate their achievement. We shared the experience of existing teaching practice and tried to evaluate it with fresh eyes. We discussed how important is reflection and introspection....*

The case study comments that teachers through the above are learning modes of conflict management and emerging with practical and positive solutions. Attention is also drawn to the learning amongst the project team that took place, such as how to draw upon their own and their colleagues' knowledge in order to make things happen and that many teachers are already creative in their approach to teaching but that their knowledge is not generally shared even within the school. They also commented on the value of tenacity and the ability to assess when to intervene and when to let discussion with the unconvinced be managed by the enthusiastic teachers.

The main focus of learning, as reported in the case study, is Biesta's (2009) *qualification* dimension of learning (knowledge and capabilities required for practice), with much effort given to bringing together and disseminating practical guidance and exemplars of practice. The italicised quote above and the last paragraph suggest the occurrence of important aspects of the other dimensions of learning identified by Biesta: *subjectification* (sense of personal agency) and *socialisation* (reinforcing the value of being an active part of a co-operative group of professional teachers).

## Facilitating factors

Many factors in this case facilitate collaboration. These are:

- appropriately qualified and experienced personnel in the central team and a professional team of people in the project who got on well together were determined and enthusiastic about the work in hand
- the undaunted enthusiasm and desire to learn by many of the teachers at workshops which complemented that of the team
- joint working on and writing of the guidelines, materials and manual, a joint activity that drew people together
- the successful conference with workshops and seminars to disseminate good practice
- the harmonogram (planning chart and dates) of the tasks which was well prepared and adhered to well
- distribution of tasks among project personnel so that no-one felt overburdened
- clearly given competences acquired by all participants

## Barriers

There are also factors which hinder collaboration. These are:

- in most cases, the level of teachers' knowledge of the CLIL approach which was next to none
- the limited interest shown by some participants and teachers not being incentivised financially
- funding and resourcing which had an impact both on the marketing and publicity for the project and on the purses of some of the teachers participating with some not even having emotional support from their headteachers

- fewer attendees than desired for the effective dissemination of the good work that had been produced
- a limited budget which restricted opportunities for publicity to promote training to schools

## Commentary

The case is a curriculum-focused project which promoted CLIL through participative workshops organised through the regions of the Czech Republic. A strong commitment to collaborative activity and learning is evident in the project team and as a model of working in the workshops, carrying with it a view of teaching that reflects participative professionalism.

The main focus of learning is the *qualification* dimension of learning (knowledge and capabilities required for practice), with much effort given to bringing together and disseminating practical guidance and exemplars of practice. There are suggestions that aspects of *subjectification* (sense of personal agency) and *socialisation* (reinforcing the value of being an active part of a co-operative group of professional teachers) may have resulted too. Participatory justice and cultural justice (respect) - to use the concepts from the four-fold framework of social justice - are reported as high, though issues of who or which groups might be less involved are not addressed. It is recognised that some teachers were affected by funding difficulties and the lack of support by some headteachers.

## Czech republic (C3 – school level)

### Vinohrady School (for children 6-15 years of age)

(Based on the full report authored by Glynn Kirkham)

#### Context

The case study opens by stating that this case study is about authenticity as an essential element in the collaborative learning process. The focus is an elementary (sic) school catering for children from the age of six to 15. The school's basic pillars are listed in the case study which describes what makes this school different:

- first foreign language (English) learnt through study groups from the 1st year
- second foreign language (Spanish) as an optional subject
- students accessing the Internet (in all classrooms) as a normal part of teaching, creating their own websites and working with digital media
- annual organisation of leisure activities for students, offering about 60 clubs

The school has its own song which declares "Each and every pupil goes happily to the school we like, where the teachers are our friends." It is stated that this is not just an idle lyric, but a verifiable statement describing a school where "There's a nice atmosphere, and time passes quickly". After their nine years, students emerge as unique individuals "equipped with knowledge and ready for life". Children from other cultures attend, which makes it different: the Czech Republic is largely monocultural and diversity within schools, though increasing, is rare, the author explains.

The headteacher has been in that post since 2005, and operates an 'open door' policy. The management structure and approach are outlined, which includes the management team (head plus 2 deputies), a set of 10 teachers who operate with the senior management group at the strategic level for pedagogic matters and at a tactical level with regard to the overall practice in school, and a new parents' committee.

The case study explains that members of the teaching staff tend towards open communication with all participants in the educational process - pupils, their legal representatives and the wider public. Important also are professional relationships among teachers. Individual teachers do not work only for themselves within their "own" their subject or class, but work together on students' education in year-group teams.

These are characteristics of the school, according to the report:

- Discussion and learning together. When working with parents, the strategy employed by the headteacher and his colleagues is that of discussion and learning together. It is important to listen to what parents have to say about the development of the school and how they might give support but all should be considered within the school's approach and fundamental principles. Each has specific responsibilities but work as a team in order to carry out the many tasks required. Decisions are made after full discussion. No documents are signed without their content being shared (in a professionally sensitive manner). Everything is discussed and in full knowledge of those involved and those concerned.

- Evidence-based judgements. Judgements are not made without evidence. In all cases, needs are assessed on the basis of evidence. There is mutual respect and no kowtowing to anyone, no matter what their status. Any arguments presented must be soundly based on evidence. The headteacher is properly intolerant of mere conjecture.
- Self-reflection. Teachers have developed self-reflection as practitioners operating within the context and potential confines of the school's policy. They may or may not have been actively involved in the development of the policy paper but they will be made aware of its content and expectations of practice.
- Seen as an outstanding example of good practice. When vacancies for teaching posts occur, there is great competition for places and the school is able to select very carefully those who recognise and appreciate its fundamental principles and practice.

## Methodology

The report states, in relation to all the case studies, that it must be recognised that these are interpretations of interpretations. The author is necessarily interpreting both what has been seen by that individual and what has been told to that person by others, who themselves interpret the world and present it as they see and understand it. The reader of the case studies themselves interprets the written words and other materials presented through the lens of their own experience and understanding.

The principle method for data generation for all the cases from the Czech republic was a semi-structured interview devised by the author on the basis of guidelines given by the partners responsible for the initial research exercise to extract examples of good practice in teachers' collaborative learning. As with other case studies, the text for C3 derives both from translated material and a semi-structured interview as well as calling on other research material and prior personal knowledge of the situation and individuals involved.

## Practice

The good practice is described in the report as follows: Everything is predicated on authenticity and transparency. Decisions made are based on the evidence available. Everything is predicated on the principles of honesty and equity. Everything is openly discussed and joint decisions are binding. Issues relating to the pedagogic and professional practice of teachers in the school are openly discussed, debated and decided upon, based on the best interests of the students in the school.

Each group of teachers for each year of students' activities discuss and plan together within the overall parameters of the school's development plan. At weekly meetings, they review and revise, based on what they have learned from work with students and from one another in their discussions. Each teacher has a portfolio of her/his own reflective practice. This is a working document which is accessed only by teacher and her/his supervising member of the leadership team.

Members of the leadership team are actively engaged in the supervision and mentoring of new teachers and direct observation of the teaching and learning process in all the classes. They give feedback to the teachers on the strengths and the areas for development as observed.

Thus, a very strong base of evidence about the learning processes and the impact on the practice of teachers and students is built up.

### *Participative professionalism*

The author writes that while it is recognised that the headteacher has ultimate responsibility and is ultimately accountable for the practices carried out in the school, those working in and for the school recognise that their contribution is respected and acknowledged whenever decisions have to be made which have an impact on school practice. Decisions about the direction of the curriculum, which sits within general framework given by the state, are made at the local level, which means in terms of the school's practice that the teachers decide what to teach and when.

The teachers' code of ethics is cited. Members of the teaching staff:

- a. shall, according to the best of their knowledge and skills, consider and make decisions on the basis of and in accord with the principles of humanity and democracy;
- b. understand their role in terms of being a member of the helping professions and not use positional power to manipulate and/or for private or personal gain;
- c. apply equal access to all students and reject all forms of discrimination or behaviour that oppress others;
- d. treat cautiously confidential information about pupils and never apply such to the detriment and disadvantage of pupils or to strengthen their position;
- e. respect the physical and psychological autonomy and uniqueness of both pupils and colleagues and parents. Likewise, they respect their personalities, their needs and the right to self-realisation;
- f. support the development of the skills and abilities of students according to their choices with regard to developmental needs, age difference and maturity;
- g. develop versatile students with different potential;
- h. maintain and develop an appropriate environment for learning;
- i. respect the student as a unique individual, respecting his health, language and other specifics;
- j. are obliged to become acquainted with information about the specific educational needs of pupils whom they are teaching; they have the right to request such information;
- k. shall draw upon all available means based on positive incentives before employing disciplinary action;
- l. work with colleagues and other professionals and lay people in the interest of pupils.

Highlighted in the case study are the commitment of working teams to the strategy and objectives of the school, the openness of communication, staff's understanding that open communication and co-operation are essential elements in the process of organising the educational process, and staff's recognition that continuous self-education is necessary to deepen and develop their professional competence. The leadership team supports and enables this approach to professional, self-development. Teachers regularly carry out self-assessment of their work, understand that their positive behaviour and actions have an impact on students, create healthy conditions for learning including requests for assistance, and are aware that any form of unethical behaviour is unacceptable.

All members of staff are entitled to information about events at school and have the right to comment on all matters relating to the running of the school, respectively and to propose amendments.



A picture is painted of a school whose practice is imbued with characteristics that could be associated with participative professionalism. These include: agency about what to teach and when; values of humanity and democracy; equality and respect for all pupils and their autonomy and diversity; collaboration with colleagues; open communication; continuous self-education; and consultation on the running of the school.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The case study reinforces how collaboration is a feature which imbues the practice of teachers. It states that teachers in the school are involved in collaborative enquiry, both within the school and within communities of practice involving other schools, faculties of education and educational charities - such as the educational project, "What is quality?" and the development of reflective practice in the Czech Republic. All good practice learned is discussed at school level and at the appropriate year group level, carefully considered and, if deemed appropriate and within the principles of practice at the school, put into practice to improve the quality of learning and opportunities for the students.

The picture of a school imbued with a collaborative approach, within and beyond the school, is reinforced here.

### *Equity*

The report states that through active involvement of personnel at all levels in decision-making - personal responsibility for self-reflection, decision-making and team level for all year groups and a consensual and professional approach to matters policy and practice - teachers develop a clear sense of involvement. Each is allowed to offer their professional judgement and to have this considered as a valued contribution to any discussion.

Like other schools in the Czech Republic, there is a school Parliament which develops notions of democracy for all participants: teachers and children. At the case study school, the voice of the children is listened to and considered with equal respect to the voice of teachers and of the senior leadership team.

What is learned in the course of discussion and debate is, in all circumstances, the basis for future action.

There are strong claims made in the case study about feelings of participation amongst teachers and pupils, about the voice of the latter being considered equally to the voice of the former, and about discussion and debates always being the basis for future action. Participatory and cultural justice (in the four-fold scheme of social justice – Woods 2012) is said to be strong.

### *Deep learning*

The case study does not give a specific account of the kind of learning that takes place, but emphasises the impression that learning is at the heart of the school. The pillars of the curriculum listed in the report indicate that the aim of the school is to foster a breadth of learning, which includes abilities to co-operate and communicate and the development of a positive self-image. The picture of the school that is given also suggests that much learning to

improve practice takes place and what is learnt is applied to improving practice. Such professional learning is associated with Biesta's (2009) *qualification* dimension.

## Facilitating factors

Many factors in this case facilitate collaboration. These are:

- an authentic school leader who models professional behaviour and a collaborative approach to decision-making
- appropriately qualified and experienced personnel in the senior leadership and management (SLAM) team
- the SLAM team knowing one another well, getting on well together and being determined and enthusiastic about the work in which they are involved
- teachers' undaunted enthusiasm and desire to learn which complements that of the SLAM team
- working on and writing together the policies and guidelines for practice, planning joint learning materials and manual, a joint activity that draws people together.
- regular opportunities to disseminate good practice and communication throughout the school
- staff recruitment and selection process
- fair distribution of tasks among personnel to make the most of the skills and talent available to achieve the school's goals
- clearly-developed competences acquired by all

## Barriers

There are also factors which hinder collaboration. These are:

- the time consensus takes
- need for education of parents and other members of the community in order that they follow the same principles

## Commentary

The case study paints a picture of a school whose practice is imbued with characteristics that could be associated with participative professionalism. These include: agency about what to teach and when; values of humanity and democracy; equality and respect for all pupils and their autonomy and diversity; collaboration with colleagues; open communication; continuous self-education; and consultation on the running of the school. There are strong claims about feelings of participation amongst teachers and pupils, about the voice of the latter being considered equally to the voice of the former, and about discussion and debates always being the basis for future action. The breadth and depth of learning at the school is recognised as outstanding by the Czech Schools' Inspectorate as well as by the many parents whose children are on the waiting list to attend this place of learning.

## Ireland (I1 – school level)

### Peer observation of teaching

(Based on the full report authored by Joan Stephenson and Teresa O’Doherty)

#### Context

The institutions featured in this case study are Mary Immaculate College (MIC) situated in Limerick, Ireland, and the University of Limerick (UL), to which MIC is academically affiliated. Founded in 1898, MIC is a Catholic College of Education and Liberal Arts and offers a range of courses and programmes up to doctorate level. UL is an independent and internationally focused university, founded in 1972, which includes programmes to doctoral and post-doctoral levels in Business, Engineering, Sciences and Humanities. The report explains that a peer observation of teaching (POT) programme has been set up in both institutions which aims to enhance the richness and quality of lecturer teaching of student teachers within a higher education institute.

#### Methodology

The report relies on both the published research emanating from studies undertaken in UL and MIC (please see Kenny et al. 2014 and Vaughan et al. 2013), and annual reports of the Centres for Teaching and Learning in both institutions. The methods used were primarily qualitative, with some apparent quantitative analysis where appropriate for the purposes of illumination. Data were gathered through the use of tailored surveys, questionnaire and observations. Observation notes and interview recordings/transcripts were coded (themed) by researchers individually, discussed and any differences in interpretation explored.

#### Practice

The peer observation of teaching programme is undertaken by lecturers on a voluntary basis in both organisations. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for confidential and mutual reflection, with the aim of building teaching skills and competence, professional trust and respect. It also seeks to promote learning and future change. Lecturers choose their partner and the focus and time of the observation, the results of which are confidential to participants and are not used for staff evaluation of promotional processes.

The report considers the practice of the case in relation to equity and deep learning. Below, as well as noting this under headings of equity and deep learning, we summarise those parts of the report where we relate it to the criteria of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration.

##### *Participative professionalism*

Common features of the POT programme across both organisations are:

- a pre-observation meeting in which the focus and timing of the observation are agreed

- an unobtrusive classroom observation during which notes are taken; at MIC, a second observer was present to offer ‘an objective view’
- Post-observation meeting to facilitate reflective feedback and discussion

The richness of the dialogue during the POT process appears to have been influenced by personal relationships of the pairing or triad. The self-choice of these pairings supports the view of the activity as professionally valuable. However, there were differences of view around the desirability of a close relationship which was seen to be supportive by some whilst others see this as detrimental to professional development.

### *Deep level collaboration*

Teacher commentary on the POT indicates it is perceived as a conduit for collaborative learning. This collaborative learning is strengthened through the structure of the POT, where the lecturer being observed determines who their observer will be and the timing and focus of the observation. The training provided facilitates an understanding of the process and the degree to which adaptations and changes are appropriate. In this way the process supports deep learning through being to some degree individually bespoke.

### *Equity*

Within a higher education environment which emphasises the value of research and publication, the quality of teaching and the time invested in the creation of active learning classrooms can be diminished in value. The POT provides a clear indicator of the institution value placed on teaching and learning and on staff’s professional development.

Ensuring that the focus of the observation is in the control of the observe shows respect for their self-conceived ‘needs’ and allows the exercise to be wholly relevant to their actual and specific teaching and/or professional and personal development. The peer-duo also decide on the protocol and format of the observation and feedback, showing mutual professional respect. In this, the process embraces a democratic and developmental purpose. Peers are equal; there is no leader of subordinate. The process also allows the observee to explain the purpose of the observation to students, thus modelling the value of developmental activity to students.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report’s discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta’s terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

#### *Socialisation*

Some participants felt that the POT process helped them to experience a teaching session from a students’ viewpoint. In some cases, such an alternative view caused them to change their teaching approach. Some POTs exercises led to a long-standing critical friendship between colleagues which was mutually beneficial in the support of deep reflection and the development of practice.

#### *Qualification*

In an inter-institutional review of the work of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at UL and MIC, it recorded that the POT process was found to be particularly valuable for the

self-assessment and improvement of teaching skills, with the act of observing and being observed both contributing to this development.

### *Subjectification*

For some participants, the process of preparation for the POT session allowed an enhanced depth of reflection about their aims as an educator and the way in which they were planning to achieve these aims in the teaching session.

## Facilitating factors

Several conclusions were drawn about what facilitated the success of the Peer Observation of Teaching project, including:

- National policy which facilitates and supports the initiative
- A systematic use of evidence during the feedback meeting, with comments supported by concrete examples, allowing for a focused, constructive discussion
- A degree of trust between colleagues
- A desire for professional and personal development
- The opportunity to see different approaches to common problems such as managing disruption
- The power of choice of observation partner, focus and timing remaining with the observed
- This process is not linked to staff appraisal; hence it is voluntary and confidential. Results are not shared with line-managers and outcomes are not considered within promotional/appraisal processes.

## Barriers

Potential barriers to the success of the project included:

- Institutional or personal resistance to change
- Participant apprehensiveness about the nature of insights of an observer from outside of their own discipline (some welcomed the potentially alternative view this provided)
- Potential lack of participant confidence in their own teaching or the POT process, with fears of a hidden agenda
- The focusing on features outside of the control of the lecturer, such as timetabling or student tiredness, rather than of changes which could be individual effected
- The possibility of the reinforcement rather than challenge of existing norms where necessary
- The issue of time management for some participants

## Commentary

There are several points of particular significance in this case:

- The extent of the freedom offered to POT participants in their interpretation of the process in order to best support individual professional development
- The potential for lasting critical friendship

Ireland (I2 – International or bi-national level)

## The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)

(Based on the full report authored by Joan Stephenson and Teresa O’Doherty)

### Context

Education is seen by Governments worldwide as a vehicle through which to raise the political, economic and cultural standing of their country. Borrowing ideas from close neighbours is a common approach to raising educational standards. Despite European initiatives, there are few concrete examples of co-operation to enhance learning and teaching across countries. This case study seeks to ascertain if a body such as The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) can act as a vehicle for sharing ‘good practice’ internationally.

### Methodology

The report explains that the case study draws on previous evaluative documentation and documentary evidence of the background to SCoTENS in general and of the 2015 SCoTENS National Conference in particular, to evaluate the nature and level of collaborative learning facilitated through SCoTENS, using the conference as an example of its activity.

### Practice

SCoTENS was formed in 2002 through the support and financial commitment of the Department of Education and Science in the Republic of Ireland and the Departments of Education and Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland. Ireland shared a common education system until 1922. Thereafter both jurisdictions evolved separate educational policies, scholarship, and practice, guided or governed by their respective Departments responsible for education.

In the Republic of Ireland, the report explains, following the establishment of independence in 1922 and influenced by the dominant ideology of cultural nationalism, the promotion of the Irish language at all levels of the education system was central to education policy. Education was deemed a pivotal agent in the drive to revive the national language and culture; the centrality of the Irish language dominated the development of education and teacher education in particular over the next four decades.

In Northern Ireland, which became a separate political entity post 1922, educational policy was dictated by political decisions made in Westminster and the education system reflected that established in Britain. Despite the close proximity of Dublin and Belfast, there was no cross-border collaboration or communication for almost 80 years. This distance in time and ideology, and an awareness of the potential of educationists to promote and endorse the peace process, drove the establishment of SCoTENS which is the only network of its kind in the world, operating across a contested border.

We summarise those parts of the report where we relate it to the four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

SCoTENS Committee Members meet approximately six times a year. In light of emerging issues and/or policy concerns, as perceived by the Committee and reflective of the priorities identified by the respective jurisdictions they consider focus areas covering all aspects of teaching and learning, the curriculum, methods, delivery and policy areas. Dialogue, challenge and discussion are seen as ways in which to explore the what, where, how and why of education in the increasingly complex landscape of teacher education, in both jurisdictions..

Established to bring together those involved in initial teacher education, SCoTENS has now broadened its membership base and currently has members from 43 associations that represent all those involved in teacher preparation and support in the two jurisdictions. These include colleges of education, university education departments, teaching councils, curriculum councils, teacher representative/trade unions and education centres in Ireland with a responsibility for and interest in teacher education. It invites senior political and policy development actors to attend functions/conferences, and seeks opportunities to influence policy development on a national and international basis.

### *Deep level collaboration*

SCoTENS' underpinning mission is to support the peace process. However, as a non-political and non-sectarian organisation, this mission is not explicitly stated in its objectives which focus on supporting the development of teacher education across the North and South, that is, cross-border and system-wide learning. This support is offered through activities such as providing a supportive framework for collaborative research and professional development activities; holding invitation conferences and promote position papers on themes of mutual interest to teacher-educators; providing seed funding, and supporting applications for further funding, for teacher-education research projects. SCoTENS is committed to supporting teacher exchange arrangements and maintaining a communication website. It also acts as an agency for advice and consultation by policy makers in the Departments of Education of both jurisdictions.

The annual SCoTENS conference provides a forum where teacher educators across Ireland can engage in open, critical and constructive analysis of current issues in education with a view to promoting a collaborative response to these issues. Its theme, location and guest speakers are decided democratically by the committee, following the invitation to all members to make suggestions. The regular presence of ministers for education, North and South, together with senior members of the inspectorate and the civil service, indicate the value and status attributed to SCoTENS within both jurisdictions.

### *Equity*

Building on a deep commitment to quality teaching and learning for all, and a shared tradition where teaching is a valued profession, teacher education has become the vehicle for one of the most successful North-South projects. The case demonstrates an awareness that peace building is a vulnerable process however and highlights SCoTENS' role in educating against unacceptable prejudices.



The annual conference normally rotates North and South of the border. Although rarely formally consulted by the ministries of education in Belfast or Dublin, it has an informal role in establishing channels of communication between the teacher education community, government and practitioners. Themes of recent conferences indicate its focus on equity. In 2015 the conference theme was *Teacher Education for social justice*. The keynote address was made by Professor Kathleen Lynch, Professor of Equality Studies, School of Social Justice, UCD on the topic of *There is no view from Nowhere: Ideology, Social Justice and Teacher Education*, with supporting workshops exploring various aspects of social justice.

### *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

#### *Socialisation*

The annual conference is one of the few venues open to teacher educators and policy makers, civil servants and politicians, to meet and discuss issues of importance to them. In this way it acts as a vehicle for creating an inclusive community of educationalists. Key speakers are carefully chosen for their ability to introduce new, challenging ideas from different contexts. Workshops are designed to include cross border/subject/phase spread.

#### *Qualification*

The annual conference is used as a platform to tease out and debate issues and actions of interest to the teacher education community and to governments.

#### *Subjectification*

The annual conference provides the opportunity for participants to contribute to the development of policy, to have their voice heard. It is recognised that such policy needs to be informed not only by international experts but also by practitioners in the field who share their expertise in the conference through workshops and panel discussions.

## Facilitating factors

Several factors facilitate SCoTENS effective working, including:

- Continued resources from policy-makers to part-fund the organisation
- The provision of seed funding research projects related to teacher education, with a view to establishing sustainable North-South partnerships and projects

## Barriers

Potential barriers to the success of SCoTENS are the complexities of cross-border working and the potential vulnerability of any peace process.

## Commentary

There are several points of particular significance in this case:

- The use of teacher dialogue and collaboration as a key support for the peace process
- The development of teacher education as a vehicle for one of the most successful North South projects
- The function of identifying areas of common educational concern as a catalyst for collaboration

Ireland (13 – local level)

## The Limerick DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Primary Schools Literacy Initiative

(Based on the full report authored by Joan Stephenson and Teresa O’Doherty)

### Context

The Limerick DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Primary Schools Literacy Initiative is a city-wide initiative involving all DEIS Primary Schools (15) in Limerick. The initiative emerged from a partnership approach involving the Department of Education and Skills (DES) (Limerick Office), Mary Immaculate College (MIC), and Limerick Education Centre (LEC). The initiative focuses on the continued professional development of teachers to support best practice in oral language and literacy instruction and the application of advanced approaches in this area at a whole school level.

### Methodology

The report explains that the case study draws on previous evaluative documentation relating to the CPD programme at the heart of the project. A teacher questionnaire (n=114) analysed the degree to which teachers’ literacy was enhanced by CPD sessions. It also draws on naturally occurring data in the form of documentary evidence around the initial set up and ongoing evaluation of the project. A recent publication, ‘Promoting Communities of Effective Practice’ reviews the work of this project and provides greater detail in relation to the findings.

### Practice

The DEIS initiative fits with the national strategy to improve literacy standards amongst children and young people in schools. The report goes on to explain that improved assessment and monitoring of progress with language and literacy is a key priority in national educational policy. At the outset 14 of the 15 Primary schools in Limerick volunteered to join the Literacy Project. Despite having a socially disadvantaged profile overall, the schools have a diverse population in terms of ability and ethnic origin. With its most intensive phase taking place between 2012 and 2014, the DEIS initiative aimed to deepen teachers’ understanding of balanced literacy instruction and upskill them to deliver this. The project also seeks to develop the leadership of literacy both within and across schools.

The initiative began with an audit of teacher skills, knowledge and understanding and of school resources followed by an intensive CPD programme. The CPD programme utilised many approaches to development such as lectures, mentoring and ‘live’ observation and review of teaching. “Open Days” at school, where the school hosted visits and discussion with teachers from other schools, was another example of opening up the schools and developing collegiality, as well as offering new opportunities to exchange experience. Ways in which learning might be shared at whole school level were also considered.

We summarise those parts of the report where we relate it to the four criteria of participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning.

### *Participative professionalism*

The case study identified a number of levels on which participative professionalism could be seen to be operating. The DEIS committee contained representation from across all main stakeholders including the DES, MIC and LEC, with a principle of practice being to consult across all members. School principals were highly committed to the project and actively engaged in its strategic steering in their schools. In this way, the DEIS was both a policy-informed and evidence-based project.

The project was supported by eight ex-quota literacy teachers, called Network Teachers, within the participating schools. Most Network Teachers worked across two schools. These literacy teachers were nominated by their school in a process showing high levels of democratic professionalism. They were asked to support the implementation of literacy and oral language instruction, wider capacity building and application of best practice in the schools, the setting up of literacy stations, bringing in new resources, including texts as well as pedagogy resources, the assessment and analysis of pupil tests, and the planning of oral language and literacy instruction.

### *Deep level collaboration*

This case study emphasised the depth of collaboration which whole-school initiatives such as DEIS afford. All classes and teachers within the school were involved and networks within and across schools developed, with the result, the report explains, that collegiality and teacher confidence in their pedagogical approaches increased.

The project's principles demonstrate a view of teachers as key agents of change at classroom and whole-school level. All schools have equal access to available resources. The establishment and sustaining of effective literacy practices in schools is seen to be dependent on teachers' ownership of practices both individually and collectively. This collective owning of practice is seen to be a key lever in the development of a community of practice around literacy.

Deep level collaboration was also supported through the Open Day system where teachers observed colleagues teach literacy-based lessons and then engaged in discussion and reflection in a peer-to-peer, professional development activity. One of the Network Teachers now facilitates meetings of the network and takes individual schools' needs for additional support back to the LEC.

### *Equity*

The DEIS initiative builds on an established and evolving programme in schools in some of the most economically and socially deprived areas of Limerick City. It followed on from DES policy, supported by the local DES offices in the city, to retain teaching resources in primary schools in the city's most disadvantaged areas. The reports explains that, within a complex and turbulent social context, schools are fulfilling a central role in creating safe and stable environments for children and young people. The case study evidences the importance of principals playing key leadership roles in securing equity of opportunity in their schools and communities.

## *Deep learning*

Our reflections on the report's discussion of deep learning suggest that the case features examples of the promotion of several types of deep level learning, in Biesta's terms, the qualification, socialisation and subjectification functions.

### *Socialisation*

To support this initiative, strong partnerships have been formed between government departments with academic institutions and statutory bodies (Mary Immaculate College and the Limerick Education Centre). These partnerships have been effective in sustaining this project in the longer term to continue to improve educational outcomes for children.

### *Qualification*

The central role which high quality CPD plays in building teachers' professional knowledge and self-efficacy is clear.

### *Subjectification*

The success of the Limerick DEIS schools in building a strong culture of sharing best practice in literacy across schools has allowed teachers within schools to develop an identity as effective practitioners in this field. The importance of an open door policy across schools, where professionals can build their knowledge, skills and understanding in an atmosphere of trusting critical friendship, is emphasised in the case study.

## Facilitating factors

Several factors facilitate the effective working of the DEIS project, including:

- Specific resources made available to Limerick to support regeneration, including the retention of the DES and providing additional staff resource in DEIS primary level schools
- Management and facilitation services for the DEIS networks provided by Mary Immaculate College
- High level support and guidance on the project steering group from across the DES, Mary Immaculate College and the Limerick Education Centre
- A collaborative approach to development, based on extended relationships between cooperating agencies and schools
- Substitute cover provided for teachers attending CPD events

## Barriers

No potential barriers to the success of the initiative are identified in the case study. Instead it is proposed that a lack of any of the facilitating factors could prove potentially problematic.

## Commentary

There are several points of particular significance in this case:

- The clarity of the link made between teacher's knowledge, skills and understanding and children's learning
- The collaboration of a number of institutions to support teacher development
- The importance of a joint, collaborative response to an agreed social need

UK (UK1 – school level)

## The HertsCam Network: Teacher-led Development Work

(Based on the full report by P. A. Woods, Amanda Roberts and Leo Chivers)

### Context

The HertsCam Network is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to support teacher and school improvement through inclusive development programmes. Teacher leadership is pursued through the teacher-led development work (TLDW) (Frost, 2013) model in which collaborative research informs collaborative leadership for improvement.

Facilitators of teacher-led development work groups are experienced members of the network who use shared material, such as facsimiles, workshop guides and proformas, developed by the Network, to guide discussion. In the TLDW programme, teachers who wish to effect a change come together as a group and are guided by a facilitator to work through a number of key steps (Hill, 2014):

- a) The teacher clarifies their professional values
- b) They identify a concern
- c) They negotiate with colleagues to explore that concern
- d) They design and produce an action plan for a development project – a process of change
- e) They negotiate with colleagues to refine the practicality of the project.

Teachers produce a portfolio of evidence of their development work, of what they and others did and of the impact their activity had.

### Methodology

The report explains that the methodology involved the use of a participatory approach with practitioners. The strengths of this approach are manifold, as the intention is not to conduct research *on* the practitioners but to engage *with* them in the enquiry so this provides a reflexivity that yields improvement for practice. The case is made up of data collected from three published accounts or stories of teacher-led development work. Initial analytical notes were written on each story, organised under the headings.. These were then subjected to further analysis, across all three stories, leading to the critical commentary in the report. The case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory and planning meetings with co-ordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss our interpretative analyses of the case studies. Limitations of the method. For example, triangulation of the data constituted by the stories was not feasible for the purposes of the case study by seeking views of colleagues and students in the schools concerned.

## Practice

The practice in this case comprises the following three examples of teacher-led work:

1. Developing an approach which allowed reluctant boys to drive their own writing development. The boys had an influence on what they were to write and why. The combination of increased student voice and a focus on writing for a purpose was transformative, with students increasing both their writing activity and confidence.
2. Raising awareness of language and cultural diversity, affirming children's cultural background and developing self-esteem. Language-awareness initiatives were implemented and their impact explored.
3. Establishing a Global Working Group through collaborative projects between a secondary school and schools in the Zambia to develop cross-school curriculum collaboration.

### *Participative professionalism*

The stories evidence that the HertsCam TLDW programme provides effective support for the development and demonstration of participative professionalism. Teacher leadership in action is a central linking thread as the participants did not hold official leadership positions. They initiated projects which were then used to underpin whole-school improvement, rather than enacting the vision of school leaders. They designed their approach to solving a problem they identified, demonstrating a high level of participative professionalism.

These non-positional leaders demonstrate their ability to mobilise their fellow teachers and other stakeholders such as parents. Furthermore, the involvement of students demonstrates an understanding of the motivational power of democratic, distributed practice, shifting usual power dynamics. The participative professionalism evidenced here operates across cultures and continents, driven by a common desire to support student learning. The stories reflect a participatory, organic professionalism based on practical wisdom which has a natural pattern of growth, fuelled by inspiration.

All three stories evidence the way in which teacher knowledge and enterprise can be mobilised through the exercise of moral purpose.

### *Deep level collaboration*

In all three stories, an individual's determination is the driving force, but with the understanding that they could achieve their aims more effectively if they collaborated throughout the life of the project. All three teachers invited other stakeholders to join in the initial thinking and planning to holistically shape the projects. The level of ownership of the projects which their collaborators showed may therefore seem surprising on one level as the agenda was not their own. However, all three teachers appear to have tapped into areas which were recognised and valued by others.

For Gertie, this deep level collaboration meant working with students as equal collaborators, reducing the power imbalance where students are seen as data sources rather than project



members (Roberts and Nash, 2009). Marie wanted to find a new way to encourage parents to become involved in the life of the school and focused on children's first languages to achieve this, supporting the learning of English and literacy skills. Parents collaborated as experts, contributing something unique to the project which could not have existed without them. Helen's story also illustrates multi-level collaboration with international development organisations, with her Zambian colleagues and then with her own project at staff meetings to stimulate the involvement of colleagues in her school who then designed several of their own projects.

### *Equity*

These projects were clearly equitable in their conception and activity as they were inclusive and redressed traditional power imbalances through multiple levels of collaboration. However, they may well have had more far reaching impact on how participative and distributive justice is understood in these schools. Stakeholders were acting agentially to tackle inequality and injustice. The teacher-led development work project had allowed them to both plan and undertake actions which they believed would make a difference.

Helen became an advocate for the development of equity. Senior leaders in her school believe the project to have had a deep impact on both present and future equality, promoting student belief in their agency and their ability to make a difference through social action. This belief is supported by student activity. Through engaging teachers and students in a range of schools in international development work she sought to promote certain ideas and ways of thinking which she believes have a positive influence on promoting an understanding of others. In so doing, she sought to secure wider impact on equality.

In Marie's school, teachers acknowledged the positive effect of the 'Language of the month' project on children's pride in their cultural heritage, an impact which could potentially have far-reaching effects on children's sense of positive identity and learning. Marie's project similarly focused on equality in its implementation and desired outcomes. The resulting increased understanding of languages and cultures was influential in increasing social cohesion in this multi-cultural school.

Ideas for writing development came not only from Gertie but also from the group. The boys' insistence on the importance of writing for a purpose set a new direction for the development of writing support activities. The boys advanced participation still further when they invited all the other children in their class to feed back to them about the benefits of the new approaches to teaching writing which were being introduced. Gertie's project had a profound impact on the degree to which children acted as partners in pedagogic development.

### *Deep learning*

#### *Qualification*

The development of additional knowledge, skills, understanding and dispositions is well evidenced through the three stories.

Gertie, noted the levels of maturity demonstrated by her students when working together on developing writing. Not only did the students make fantastic, innovative suggestions but the new approach to learning had a dramatic impact on students' attainment as demonstrated through teacher assessments. This appeared to be accounted for by both skills development and a change of disposition towards writing, with some now writing for the sheer joy of it. The exploratory approach which they now took to writing development

allowed for a variety of ways in which to plan, discuss and execute their writing which had a direct impact on their understanding, enjoyment and success as learners.

In Marie's project, the students and teacher shifted their role from learner and imparter of knowledge to co-learners. The success of this approach in terms of enhancing learning led to a range of other language-focused projects such as children watching films and writing reviews in their own language.

Student feedback on Helen's teacher-led development work similarly indicates deep learning from this project. It has enabled students to understand in a profound way the nature and impact of poverty and issues facing the developing world.

### *Socialisation*

Gertie, Marie and Helen all became members of a particular, and new, social and cultural group through undertaking their teacher-led development work. Their joining of such a group marked them out as a certain type of professional, one who wishes to take an active role in school improvement and in the building of professional knowledge. Marie also networked nationally in a group sponsored by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) with an aim of supporting teachers from schools across the capital in taking the initiative to lead development work in their schools.

A feature of the HertsCam programme is networking, generally facilitated through regular Network Events and an Annual Conference<sup>3</sup>. Network Events take place after a school day between 4.30 pm and 6.30pm. They are hosted by schools in the network and all the workshops are led by teachers. In these workshop sessions, teachers discuss their projects and share ideas about how to address their professional concerns. Gertie's story talks of the importance of sharing with a community of teachers engaging in teacher-led development Work at a Network Event. The enthusiasm of others for Gertie's work, and their determination to try it out in their own schools, enhanced Gertie's sense of her own wider professionalism (Hoyle, 1975).

The socialisation aspect of learning did not just apply to the teachers who led development work however. Gertie in particular aimed to promote learning which socialised her students into an alternative image of childhood, where there was meaningful activity outside of the technology-dominated world they inhabited through a reliance on screen-based entertainment and learning. Her story shows that she had some success in this aim, with some previously reluctant readers giving up their time at home to complete stories for a class book.

### *Subjectification*

The enhancement of individual agency is clearly a factor of the development projects. In Gertie's story, for example, the boys were encouraged to develop not just as writers responding to a given task but as free and authentic authors of their own stories, producing narratives of their own experiences which they went on to publish as a class book. Through this, students identified themselves as active co-producers in the learning experience rather than as passive subjects. The students' positive response to this way of working meant that Gertie developed a clear confidence in them as learners, which allowed her to give them the freedom to shape that learning experience. This in turn impacted on students' confidence not only as writers but as learners across the curriculum.

Marie's story also raises some interesting questions regarding the development of children as individuals within a school which has its own culture and norms. Children clearly bring their own cultures and norms into a school setting, yet these can be subjugated by the 'way of being' deemed appropriate within the school community. Marie's story shows her attempts to use language to value alternative cultures through the development of curriculum-based multi-language activities, giving children and their parents the opportunity to retain their individuality by adding to the richness of the learning community. Children's sense of agency was also enhanced, as was their pride in their cultural heritage. This valuing of and learning from alternative cultures similarly underpins Helen's story.

## Facilitating factors

The role of the senior leadership team in facilitating the action and impact of teacher-led development work is underlined strongly by Marie. Helen was also supported in her work by senior leaders whereas in Gertie's school, the leader of literacy took an active interest in her work and tried some of Gertie's approaches in her own classroom.

The structures for teacher-led development work provided through the HertsCam Network clearly have a significant influence on the success of the development work described by the three teachers. The stories themselves also facilitate development work, however. They are read by other teachers and inspire and encourage them to identify their own concerns and, through strategic, collaborative action, to amend them.

## Barriers

Barriers to the impact of the teacher-led development projects reported in this case are on one level project-specific. Helen, for example, faced frustrating delays in receiving resources and feedback from her Zambian collaborators. There were also communication problems arising from language, with both students and staff struggling to understand the Zambian English used in the video footage their colleagues sent to them.

A more general barrier to the effectiveness of teacher-led development work could be seen to be the policy context in which it took place. This is not mentioned in the stories themselves but rather in written commentaries on teacher-led development work by those leading the HertsCam team. Val Hill, for example, talks of the relentless focus on 'high stakes testing, performance related pay and other instruments of incentivisation' (Hill, 2014:75), instead of a focus on mobilising teachers' moral purpose and scaffolding their agential action which, she argues, would have much greater effect on quality of education and students experience. It could be argued that there are also facilitating factors in the English policy context, such as an increased promotion, at least rhetorically, of increased teacher innovation and autonomy and a school-led school system. However, this is not mentioned in either the stories themselves or in the HertsCam team's written commentaries.

## Commentary

Perhaps ironically, the ‘teacher led’ initiatives here have inspired *heutagogic* principles to come into play so that the leadership is distributed to students to promote equity. Within the HertsCam Network, teacher leadership is enacted through teacher-led development work. Here, teachers focus on an issue which matters to them. They collaborate with colleagues to plan and lead change processes, gather and interpret evidence of the impact of what they have done, and share their enhanced understanding with others. In so doing, they inspire colleagues to also work to change things for the better. The strength of the approach is that they have been allowed to choose and they seem to pass this gift on to other stakeholders – especially the students.

The concept of distributed leadership draws on the proposition that leadership in organisations is the outcome of the actions and interactions of the people within the organisation, rather than on the actions of one or more designated leaders (Woods and Roberts, 2016). Teacher-led development work demonstrates this proposition in action. Here, teachers initiate activity based on their moral purpose and their determination to effect meaningful change for teachers and students. The stories of this work are inspirational. However, they are also brief, approximately 800 words in length. It is difficult in such a short piece to fully explore how long-term impact of teacher-led development work projects can be evidenced.

UK (UK2 – local level)

## The HertsCam Network: A multi-school teacher-led development work (TLDW) group

(Based on the full report authored by P. A. Woods, Amanda Roberts and Leo Chivers)

### Context

This case study analyses a multi-school TLDW group linked to a two-year, part-time MEd course for teachers. This course was based on an assumption that teachers' practice would be transformed through the development of their knowledge-base. However, the question of the impact was raised and evidence was sought that the course was having an impact on the wider educational community, rather than only on those who attended. This question drives the purpose of the multi-school TLDW group.

The Network chose to build on Hoyle's (1975) concept of extended professionalism and argued for: '... an approach to teacher leadership, which does not assume that leadership is linked with positions in the organisational hierarchy of the school. Instead it recognises the potential of all teachers to exercise leadership as part of their role as a teacher. We believe that all teachers and education practitioners have some leadership capacity. After all, leadership is a dimension of being human.' (Hill, 2014: 74).

### Methodology

The methodology involved the use of a participatory approach with practitioners, informed by co-operative research such as PALAR (participatory action learning and action research) (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 367). The strengths of this approach are manifold, as the intention is not to conduct research *on* the practitioners but to engage *with* them in the enquiry so this provides a reflexivity that yields improvement for practice.

The case is made up of data collected to illuminate the way in which a multi-school teacher led development work group can support the development of participative professionalism and deep level collaboration and impact on equity and deep learning. Secondary data sources were used such as papers and an evaluation of the HertsCam Network. There was also a video-recorded session of TLDW group members who were asked by the researcher to make a collage to represent leadership in their setting. The completed collages were photographed. Participants were asked to comment on their developing understanding of leadership through the programme in the portfolio of evidence which they submit for assessment.

Video recordings were transcribed and themed according to the particular areas of interest of the EFFeCT research project, as detailed above. A copy of their collage photograph was sent to each participant. Participants were also given the opportunity in the TLDW session to undertake some writing about what they were learning about leadership, on a proforma designed for this purpose. This piece of writing will form an item of evidence in their portfolio. This case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory planning meetings with co-ordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus

group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss the interpretative analyses of the case studies.

Limitations of the method. These include the fact that it was not possible in the time available to interview individual members of the group to ascertain in greater depth their views of the TLDW group itself and the impact of their teacher-led development work in their settings.

## Practice

This multi-school TLDW group is held at a Nursery School in Hertfordshire which has recently been awarded Teaching School status. The Headteacher of the school herself completed the MEd programme in 2002. This host school is geographically within a few miles of the settings of all TLDW participants. The group is facilitated by Sarah Lightfoot, deputy-director of HertsCam Programmes, supported by another MEd graduate. 14 participants make up the group. There is a range of roles represented: Early Years Practitioners (4), Early Years Teachers (2), Primary School teachers (2), Nursery School teachers (4), Pre-School leader (1) and Teaching Assistant (1). A range of settings is also represented: Maintained Nursey Schools (4), Maintained Primary Schools (4), Community Pre-Schools(1) and Children's Centre (1). Nine of the 10 settings are engaging with a TLDW programme for the first time; 1 setting has previously engaged with another TLDW group. This is the first TLDW group which has brought together practitioners who have a focus on the Early Years.

### *Participative professionalism*

The structure of the Teacher-led Development Work programme and the case study evidences a participatory or democratic model of professionalism in that it includes co-leadership by teachers or other stakeholders, mobilisation of their knowledge and expertise, and the proactive interpretation and enactment of policy.

Meetings are held at the end of the school day, to facilitate attendance by professionals in all roles. Sessions include activities which help participants to develop a focus for and plan their development projects. A process of values clarification is facilitated by one such activity in the first TLDW session as confirmation of participants' agency and freedom to focus on the development of an aspect of practice which they feel passionate about.

Participants seemed to relish the opportunity afforded them to lead development, particularly when working collaboratively with others, and highlighted the sense of responsibility they felt. Some participants saw other members of the community as involved in co-leadership. One, for example, talked of the leadership opportunities given to children within her setting.

Group participants saw children's leadership as fundamental to Early Years' work. The fact that Early Years' educators plan learning opportunities around children's areas of interest was offered as evidence of the pervasiveness of children's leadership. Such leadership is not of the sort facilitated by teacher-led development work groups however – it does not include planned, strategic action to effect change nor does it rely on the enacted, facilitated agency of the children. However, it remains an interesting insight into TLDW participants' views of the appropriate boundaries and purpose of distributed leadership and the opportunities it offers to initiate actions driven by moral purpose. The opportunity for teachers to lead projects which

arose from their own beliefs and values facilitates participative professionalism. The degree to which such activity can promote depth of collaboration is explored in the next section.

### *Deep level collaboration*

Participant 10 summarises how listening to and building on the ideas of others strengthens the potential impact of a teacher-led development work project. :

*So although my project was yoga it came from doing some training in another subject and then listening to what people said about children's attention being lower so sometimes the ideas don't just come from me they come from lots of other things. (Extract from commentary on Collage 10 by collage-maker, Participant 10)*

A key tenet of teacher-led development work is such collaboration, working alongside others to develop practices which are owned by all. This demonstrates a commitment to deep level collaboration in order to secure ways forward which support the learning of children and families. However, it challenges the concept of individual agency through an acknowledgement of the impact of the agendas of colleagues and of the organisation. These multiple agendas are further highlighted by this participant:

*I am the one who is trying to find out what my Early Years Manager wants, my teacher wants, the children want and come up with something which suits everyone and is also child initiated so watching what the children are interested in, so it is down to me to make it work because that's my role. (Extract from commentary on Collage 1 by collage-maker, Participant 1)*

### *Equity*

The structure and ways of working of a teacher-led development work group are themselves underpinned by a commitment to equity and to a belief that leadership capacity is not limited to those holding named leadership positions (Hill, 2014). Any educational practitioner can be part of a TLDW group. Widening possible participation to anyone who works in a professional, educational community demonstrates HertCam's commitment to supporting the leadership capacity which is a characteristic of human beings (Hill, 2014). As explored in the contextual information above, a wide variety of roles were represented in the multi-school TLDW group. However, participants reported that they worked together effectively across schools and roles in this group, supporting one another to achieve their individual goals. However, hierarchical leadership structures in some settings are seen to hamper this vision of distributed leadership across roles.

*Schools are very much a business and you've got to have that strong leader but sometimes I find that these here need more of a voice, more of an input and to have that recognised whether it is good or whether it is bad and to have all the cogs working because sometimes you can get the cogs working here and if it is not a two-way process sometimes these cogs stop working and you start getting a little bit of jittery. (Extract from commentary on Collage 5 by collage-maker, Participant 5)*

Other participants concurred with the hierarchy of role-based value in settings, whilst recognising the emancipatory power of learning:

*I think that is really interesting because the only reason my head teacher sent me here is because they say they value their TAs and they no longer want to see them at the bottom. They want us to become leaders and to use initiative and to drive things forward ourselves.*  
(Comment on Collage 5 by TLDW group member)

### *Deep learning*

All three types of Biesta's (2009) aspects of deep learning are exemplified in this case.

#### *Qualification*

There is some evidence of the development of additional knowledge, skills, understanding and dispositions through undertaking teacher-led development work. Participant 10 for example is clear that learning has taken place and is equally convinced of its collaborative nature;

*We put our roots down, we suck up all that knowledge and learning and we add to the layers and then we branch out in our different ways but they all intertwine. So although my project was yoga it came from doing some training in another subject and then listening to what people said about children's attention being lower so sometimes the ideas don't just come from me they come from lots of other things.* (Extract from commentary on Collage 10 by collage-maker, Participant 10)

Participant 7 also underlines the collaborative nature of learning but in her case underlines a potential hierarchy of learning, based on role.

*The learning cascades down but also it goes up and it goes across, because there are leaders at every different level and different staff are there with their different roles and responsibilities so it interlinks but we have a leader who leads, who drives the centre and drives the school forward but everybody's part of it.* (Extract from commentary on Collage 7 by collage-maker, Participant 7)

Such a hierarchy does not preclude a distributed leadership approach however. Instead it acknowledges the necessity for some positional leadership within a context where the leadership of all is valued.

#### *Socialisation*

As noted in case UK1 above, in being part of a TLDW group participants become members of a particular, and new, social and cultural group through their teacher-led development work. Their joining of such a group marked them out as a certain type of professional, one who wishes to take an active role in school improvement and in the building of professional knowledge. A feature of the HertsCam programme is networking, generally facilitated through regular Network Events and an Annual Conference. Network Events take place after a school day between 4.30 pm and 6.30pm. They are hosted by schools in the network and all the workshops are led by teachers. In these workshop sessions, teachers discuss their projects and share ideas about how to address their professional concerns. Some participants in the multi-school TLDW group were reluctant to share their learning in this way. They felt that it was too exposing or that they did not have the qualifications so to do. This feeling may have been engendered by a curtailed understanding of the appropriate scope of development opportunities in some settings. Others welcomed networking events as great opportunities to share their developing knowledge and understanding.



### *Subjectification*

Biesta's (2009) concept of subjectification reminds us that it is important to develop as an individual in the communities into which one is socialised. The enhancement of individual agency is a clear focus of teacher-led development work. In some settings the availability of development opportunities has historically been influenced by role.

*She is starting to recognise this now and some of the TAs are starting to go on courses but for a long time they haven't been so their feelings of self-worth were low. It is coming up – don't get me wrong, I think she is a strong leader, but in terms of ... I don't know .... It's hard and I think it has to be up and down. It's not an easy task.*  
(Extract from commentary on Collage 3 by collage-maker, Participant 3)

This is acknowledged by Participant 3 as inequitable, with its impact on individual feelings of self-worth similarly highlighted.

## Facilitating factors

The role of the headteacher in facilitating the action and impact of teacher-led development work is underlined strongly by some of the multi-school TLDW participants. In some cases, the headteacher has explicitly encouraged the development of distributed leadership through teacher-led development work. Some headteachers have provided personal support and encouragement to colleagues unsure of their ability to succeed on the programme. Others saw the development of colleagues as part of a strategic plan to distribute leadership across the school.

*My headteacher sent me here because she does want it to be planted and she does want TAs to lead.* (Comment on Collage 5 by TLDW group member)

The use of the word 'sent' is interesting here. This participant was extremely positive about the leadership in her setting and about the sense of agency which teacher-led development work had fostered in her. However, the power of the head to command, to send colleagues on development programmes rather than asking them to attend, is apparent here. An alternative interpretation might be to see this way of articulating power relations as simply to be expected in the early stages of the enactment of a distributed leadership agenda.

## Barriers

A general barrier to the effectiveness of teacher-led development work may be seen to be the policy context in which current TLDW projects are being developed. This was not mentioned by members of the TLDW group. However, Early Years is coming under unprecedented national scrutiny. National headlines have focused on cost, capacity, accessibility and quality of early education and childcare (Ofsted, 2015). Such a context potentially challenges the emancipatory power of teacher-led development work.

## Commentary

Perhaps ironically, the teacher 'led' initiatives here have inspired heutagogy principles to come into play so that the leadership is distributed to students, promoting equity.

Within the HertsCam Network, teacher leadership is enacted through teacher-led development work. Here, teachers focus on an issue which matters to them. They collaborate with colleagues to plan and lead change processes, gather and interpret evidence of the impact of what they have done, and share their enhanced understanding with others. In so doing, they inspire colleagues to also work to change things for the better.

UK (UK3 – regional level)

## The HertsCam Network MEd Leading Teaching and Learning

(Based on the full report authored by P. A. Woods, Amanda Roberts and Leo Chivers)

### Context

The MEd has existed since the beginning of the HertsCam network and first started recruiting in 1999. The master's programme reflects the aims and principles of the network and 'developed ways of working in keeping with a partnership-based approach, for example employing graduates of the MEd as supervisors and contributors to the taught programme' (Frost et al 2016: 4). Between 1999 and 2013, 253 students were recruited, of which 215 (85%) graduated. In 2014-15, the programme was reviewed and designed as a master's taught entirely by school teachers and the programme re-validated by the University of Hertfordshire which awards the master's degrees.

### Methodology

The methodology involved the use of a participatory approach with practitioners, informed by co-operative research such as PALAR (participatory action learning and action research) (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 367). The strengths of this approach are manifold, as the intention is not to conduct research *on* the practitioners but to engage *with* them in the enquiry so this provides a reflexivity that yields improvement for practice.

The data examined for the purpose of the case study of the HertsCam MEd were primarily secondary sources, such as papers and an evaluation of the HertsCam network and information from the HertsCam website. The case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory and planning meetings with coordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss our interpretative analyses of the case studies.

Limitations are that the secondary data examined should not be approached as objective representations. This is not to assert that straightforwardly objective representations are possible. Rather, we are recognising that the publications and papers constituting the secondary data are created by the HertsCam Network and are the outcomes of numerous decisions about how to present the network and its activities. They provide partial though nevertheless illuminating insights into the latter. It is important to recognise, therefore, that triangulation of the secondary data was not feasible for the purposes of the MEd case study. For example, it was not possible in the time available to analyse directly the content of theses produced by the programme, to interview students or to seek views on the impact of masters projects from colleagues and school students.

## Practice

The purpose of this case study was to analyse, in terms of the criteria of good practice (participative professionalism, deep level collaboration, equity and deep learning, plus factors helping and hindering the good practice):

- the stated aims, rationale, pedagogic principles of the masters programme
- the topics and focus of the masters programme (to consider to what extent they provide indicators of deep learning and advancing equity)

The programme consists of four sequential modules which enable the MEd student to plan and lead a development project that makes a difference to the quality of teaching and learning and to base this project in a critical appreciation of relevant literature, concepts and domains of knowledge. The programme enables the MEd students to discuss their projects with other participants and a wider range of colleagues at HertsCam network events (HertsCam 2016: 3).

### *Participative professionalism*

Participative professionalism is evident as explicit and central features of the constitution of the MEd, as shown in the rationale discussed in the previous section. The programme is aimed at developing the kind of professionalism that involves active, ongoing agency in bringing about innovation, creating professional knowledge and exercising leadership, and undertaking this agency as a member of a professional community rather than individualistically. In this way, the master's is committed to developing a professional identity in which the practice of distributed leadership is a defining feature. The pedagogic principles provide a framework that helps to promote participative professionalism.

### *Deep level collaboration*

As with participative professionalism, the pedagogic principles support deep level collaboration. This is particularly evident in principle 3 (development of the programme as a learning community), the centrality of development projects (cited in principle 2) and the place of critical friendships (cited in 3). These crystallise the programme aim of creating a cohesive culture and a shared identity, systematically encouraging and facilitating mutual support and providing a framework for working together in creative ways. These are all features of deep level collaboration. They also describe the kind of participative culture, enabling institutional structures and an open social environment that are integral to distributed leadership in an organisation (Woods 2015, Woods and Roberts 2015). Relevant to the depth and sustaining of collaboration is the fact that the programme is embedded in the wider network of HertsCam. This is manifested in specific ways. Wearing's (2011: 31) evaluation observes that participation 'in the MEd gives a sense of belonging to a community in which goals, standards and values are shared'. Students take part in activities such as the twilight sessions (p30) and residentials (p31). HertsCam Network Events are conducted in ways which encourage collaboration that draws participants together with a sense of shared purpose - a collective sense of empowerment that is indicative of deep level collaboration.

Evaluations and feedback to HertsCam have found the community feel and activities to be positive, though there may be potential issues of inclusion that are yet to be examined, which are referred to in the next section.

## *Equity*

Equity does not appear explicitly in the pedagogic principles, but it is implicit in principle 1 on moral purpose which states that the programme is taught 'on the basis of a shared understanding that improving the life chances of the young people in our schools is our central purpose' (Frost et al 2016: 6). An example reinforces this. Participants in HertsCam community activities for the MEd programme are asked at the start of their involvement to reflect on their professional concerns (p10):

... when they rehearse these with other teachers it raises questions of equity and justice. For example, a teacher leading a workshop might begin their narrative with something like: 'I was concerned that there was a group of students who seemed always to be on the margins of classroom discussion and even in small group activities seemed to be passive'. The effect is to spread the virus of moral purpose through mutual encouragement to identify and face issues which are essentially moral ones.'

The decision about what issue or problem a teacher's MEd study should address is for the teacher to make, and the right and responsibility to do this is central to the programme. Nevertheless, a critical examination of the topics and approaches to addressing equity in master's projects would be illuminating. Its results would provide evidence to inform future project decisions by teachers and might have implications for the pedagogy of the programme. Another aspect of equity is access to and inclusion of teachers and other potential participants in the MEd programme. Some issues were indicated in the evaluation by HertsCam. Secondary school teachers are more likely to be participants; and approximately twice as many secondary as primary teachers had participated in the MEd, with very small numbers from nursery, infant and special schools (Wearing 2011: 29). In recent years, the numbers of secondary and primary teachers taking up studies have become more balanced. Data are not available to see if other factors might be associated with differences in participation, such as gender, ethnicity or subject area.

## *Deep learning*

The MEd and TLDW programmes are intended to have learning and other impacts upon teachers (individually and collectively as a profession), school students and the community. The outcomes of master's projects should contribute to organisational learning too, by embedding collaboration and pedagogic dialogue within the development processes of the school. In other words, the MEd is intended to act as a catalyst for change by encouraging positive changes in the enduring cultures and habits of interaction in schools.

Each of the pedagogic principles will lead to interpretations in practice that contribute to all three of Biesta's dimensions of learning. A table in the report suggests in which dimension each of the principles is likely to make most impact, and illustrates how the intention of the MEd is to advance learning across these dimensions.

The way in which the MEd enables teachers to develop their learning and to have a ripple effect beyond the individual MEd student is illustrated in numerous personal and interpersonal stories that have been generated within the programme. The MEd, and other HertsCam development work, involves the construction by teachers of stories or narratives of the change they are making through their development projects. This is central to the HertsCam approach, because story construction enables the complexities, interactions, progress over time and multiple impacts to be captured, as well as the agency of teachers. One of the practitioner tutors on the

MEd programme explains that MEd students are given the structure and the support to think about those various aspects of impact and to plan for that. So it's not about 'I'm just going to do these few activities and see what will happen'. We are encouraging them to be strategic and to be aware of all those different aspects that might be impacted and how. (Sarah Lightfoot, focus group, 25.4.16, Rec2:18.23-18.44)

A variety of aspects of student learning is addressed by the MEd and development work in the network.

The development work undertaken by teachers within the HertsCam Network usually seeks to have a direct impact on the quality and outcomes of students' learning. This may be directly focused on attainment for example by focusing how to enable students to understand a particular concept in Physics or to become more adept at solving mathematical problems; it may equally be a matter of developing strategies to enable students to learn about how to become better learners or to enable them to develop a more positive attitude to school and learning in general. (HertsCam 2011: 9)

## Facilitating factors

A key contextual factor that promoted the HertsCam MEd and the distinctive form it takes is the partnership from which it emerged. That is, it was the product of a university (the University of Cambridge) that had established an active network with schools, school leaders and teachers with a commitment to leadership for learning, and a relationship with a local authority (Hertfordshire County Council). Involved in the origins of the MEd were academics who were committed to creating a different kind of MEd for teachers that put into practice a pedagogy and approach to research that was based on an active professional agency. Crucial too was the leadership given to the early and later development of the MEd by a university academic (Dr David Frost) who could formulate a sustained framework and distinctive intention for the masters and communicate this to others.

A capacity for flexibility in response to changing circumstances and for learning and adapting was a crucial factor. Over time the HertsCam partnership underpinning the MEd changed in response to the pressures on both the local authority, with funding being diverted directly to schools, and the University of Cambridge, with the impact of the University's aspirations as an intensive research institution. The MEd was able both to review and develop itself as a programme run by the HertsCam Network and to find a new academic institution (the University of Hertfordshire) to validate and award the degree. The availability of an external institution open to the spirit and way of working of the MEd and possessing the academic capital to provide appropriate scrutiny and award legitimacy is an essential factor in understanding how the MEd has been able to develop and be sustained.

Other important facilitating factors include the larger framework of the HertsCam Network in which the MEd sits. For example, the practice and pedagogical principles of HertsCam are embedded in its whole approach. The commitment and energy of the teachers and other participants in the programme are key factors too, as is the openness of school leaders to incorporate and support teachers in taking the masters.

## Barriers

Some of the changes to which the MEd programme has had to respond, referred to in the previous section, can be seen as barriers that needed to be overcome. The changing priorities of the University of Cambridge, for example, led to fees being raised and an insistence by the university that it was not legitimate for practitioners to teach on the masters. This led to the decision by the HertsCam Network to end the relationship with that university and to seek another academic partner, which was a challenge. Teachers' fees for the MEd have been mostly met by schools in recent years and it is recognised that the programme is dependent on schools continuing to be able to do so.

## Commentary

The HertsCam MEd is a distinctive programme that enables teachers and others to develop an active participative professionalism in which educators from any part of the conventional school hierarchy can initiate and lead change collaboratively. It promotes in a practical way non-positional distributed leadership. The programme has led to hundreds of projects created and led by teachers that have and are making a difference to the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Since 2015, the MEd has been run and taught by practitioners. Its teacher-led character is therefore threaded through its entire operation. The 'teacher-led' approach can be seen in the case to directly affect the learning of the students, instigating empowerment and enjoyment of learning. A common aspect of this development can be seen to be the adoption of a dialogical approach to the construction of knowledge.

It might be beneficial for the programme to examine some specific questions about equity. For example, whilst issues of equity are addressed in MEd projects, it could be useful to carry out a systematic examination of the ways that master's projects address equity in school pupils' learning in order to identify any patterns and gaps. Another aspect concerns patterns of access to and participation in the programme. Secondary school teachers historically have been more likely to be participants, though the participation of secondary and primary teachers is more evenly balanced now.

UK (UK4 – regional level)

## Annual conference of the HertsCam Network

(Based on the full report authored by P. A. Woods, Amanda Roberts and Leo Chivers)

### Context

The thinking behind the annual conference shares the rationale for network events and the importance given in the network to sharing with others, dialogue and enabling mutual inspiration and learning to take place. There are normally six network events during a year, plus the annual conference. All members of the network, including tutors and those on the MEd programme, are invited to attend. Network events are hosted by schools in the network and take place in the 'twilight' period after a school day between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm. In line with the principles of the network, workshop sessions during these events are led by teachers and are forums in which teachers can discuss their projects and share ideas about how to address their professional concerns (Hill 2014: 8).

The annual conference was selected as a case study of good practice because it exemplifies the active networking and face-to-face collaboration of teachers across schools and the whole network, and the way in which the activities are led by practitioners. It exemplifies the kind of dialogue the network aims to facilitate.

### Methodology

The methodology involved the use of a participatory approach with practitioners, informed by co-operative research such as PALAR (participatory action learning and action research) (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 367). The strengths of this approach are manifold, as the intention is not to conduct research *on* the practitioners but to engage *with* them in the enquiry so this provides a reflexivity that yields improvement for practice. The data examined for the purpose of the case study of the HertsCam annual conference were primarily secondary sources, such as documents, together with information (including a video of the 2014 conference) from the HertsCam website. The case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory and planning meetings with co-ordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss our interpretative analyses of the case studies.

Limitations of the method are acknowledged. We recognise that the secondary data examined should not be approached as objective representations. This is not to assert that straightforwardly objective representations are possible. Rather, we are recognising that the publications, papers and visual data constituting the secondary data are created by the HertsCam Network and are the outcomes of numerous decisions about how to present the network and its activities. They provide partial though nevertheless illuminating insights into the latter. It is important to recognise, therefore, that triangulation of the secondary data was not feasible for the purposes of the case study of the annual conference. For example, it was not possible in the time available to undertake an in-depth investigation to generate original data (through embedded participation in the event and a programme of interviews) or to collect



systematic data on the impact of the conference on networking and practice after the conference.

## Practice

The annual conference is a one-day event 'for all members in the network to come together' (Wearing 2011: 42). It is a celebration of the network and its activities and usually involves teachers presenting at and leading sessions about the projects they are doing, as well as plenary talks and displays about some of the projects being undertaken by teachers. It is largely organised by the practitioners themselves. The 2015 annual conference is highlighted in the report as an example.

### *Participative professionalism*

The conference is an expression and reinforcement of participative identity and active, confident professionalism. This is articulated by one of the key speeches of the 2015 conference, by an assistant headteacher of a HertsCam school and one of the leading co-ordinators of the network.

... you keep bringing such passion and energy to HertsCam and it grows because you grow. Each innovation, each collaboration, each tweak to practice shifts the juggernaut and builds our collective professional knowledge, our understanding and probably most importantly our confidence... We are sometimes guilty of thinking that our work doesn't make a difference in the great scheme of things, that we are too small to be noticed but events like today remind us we are part of something much bigger: we are the grains of sand in a dune that as a single force has the power to cover pyramids.(Speech by Val Hill, in Frost 2016: 5)

How the interconnections and networking is experienced in and through the conference by practitioners is illustrated by this teacher who was interviewed during the 2014 annual conference:

It's truly professional. A lot of time and effort. Really, really positive. Always really good fun. Seminar presenters. Really good resources, and just really good people to contact with, and from that I've been able to network quite a lot. [Asked about his thoughts about the seminars.] I think all of the seminars as you've seen today, it's really professional, a lot of time and effort's been given, you can tell, by the staff presenters themselves.

### *Deep level collaboration*

The identity of the teacher as a pro-active agent of positive change - 'the power of the individual teacher' that Val Hill gives prominence to in the speech above - is not a call to individualistic agency, but is made part of a collaborative and collective endeavour. The point is made a key one for the conference - that by 'collaborating and consulting with others we create and share professional knowledge which transforms our work and embeds it into the school culture...' (Speech by Val Hill, in Frost 2016: 5). The annual conference is a component in the ability of the network to create a sense of belonging. The 2011 evaluation of the network found that this was an important impact.

The point of significance with regard to this case study is that the conference acts as a collective construction of identity, both by what is said and through the practice of the conference itself. It is an active ingredient in building a culture of collaborative learning that embeds and supports distributed leadership.

### *Equity*

The principle of inclusion is written into the underlying rationale of the network and repeated in the explanations of the kind of non-positional teacher leadership that it promotes. The annual conference reflects in its spirit and aims the commitment to inclusion. The conference, for example, includes workshops and presentations from teachers involved in the International Teacher Leadership initiative which includes teachers seeking to build a pro-active profession committed to collaborative agency in situations marked by high degrees of deprivation, social divisions and histories of violent conflict. Seminars in the 2015 annual conference included presentations from teachers about their projects in Macedonia, Egypt and Ramallah. Equity issues are specifically addressed by some projects. It is, however, unclear which groups of teachers and other educators in schools might find it particularly difficult to be involved in the annual conference (and other events). For example, the 2011 evaluation (Wearing 2011: 42-43) suggested that not all senior leaders necessarily were convinced of the value of such an event and willing to encourage staff to attend. Data are not available to examine if difficulties of attendance might be associated with factors such as school type, gender, ethnicity or subject area.

### *Deep learning*

As is evident from the discussion of participative professionalism, an integral part of the annual conference is the socialisation dimension of learning, as described in Biesta's (2009) typology of learning. A speech by Val Hill to the 2014 conference explicitly linked the learning of networking events and the development of an extended professionalism. This again is an expression and reinforcement of a particular kind of professionalism, inviting participants to take this away as a fortified sense of who they are as teachers.

We tap into a vast store of professional knowledge that lives within and between us. We are here to further advance that extended professionalism because it's at the core of our being. (Speech by Val Hill at HertsCam Annual Conference 2014, quoted in Anderson et al 2014: 126)

The aim of the conference seminars was to enable participants to engage in reflection, analysis and dialogue. Each seminar was 55 minutes long and involved substantial in-depth discussion of a theme relevant to teacher leadership. Feedback on what participants took away from the 2015 conference is available from the final networking activity facilitated by two teachers (Frost 2016: 23). This activity provided evidence of the deep impact of the event.

## Facilitating factors

The annual conference is an integral part of the HertsCam Network and so it is facilitated by its being a planned part of the yearly cycle of the Network. The larger framework of the HertsCam Network in which the annual conference sits is a major facilitating factor. The annual conference has benefited from external support. The University of Cambridge has hosted the conference, giving use of buildings and support for audio-visual resources for example. Starting in 2016, the

annual conference each year is to be hosted by a school. The commitment and energy of the teachers and other participants in organising and contributing to the conference are key factors. So too is the contribution of 'veteran' members of the network who bring their experience of network events to the voluntary support they give to the conference.

## Barriers

Probably the most serious risk to the future continuation and flourishing of the annual conference would be a sharp reduction in the financial support from schools for teachers undertaking the MEd programme, which would likely drastically curtail or end that programme. This could have implications for the demand for the annual conference.

## Commentary

The HertsCam annual conference is an event that reflects in its practice the teacher-led ideals of the Network. It acts as a collective construction of professional identity, both through information shared and through the practice of the conference itself. It is an active ingredient in building a culture of collaborative learning that embeds and supports distributed leadership. The conference has an important affective impact on participants. There is evidence that participants experience positive mutual affective and cognitive reframing through the activities that take place during the day. Participants influence, support and bring about positive change in the feelings and ideas of each other, helping to forge a predisposition to a professionalism that challenges the assumptions of teaching built into the dominant policy frame in England. The impact of the annual conference does not occur simply as an effect of the day itself. It arises from the conference being a planned and integral component of the yearly cycle and activities of the Network as a whole. This provides a framework, resources (chiefly enthusiastic people who live the active, participative professionalism) and an energy that creates an effective and inspiring annual event.

UK (UK5 – national level)

## The International Teacher Leadership Initiative – The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina

(Based on the full report authored by P. A. Woods, Amanda Roberts and Leo Chivers)

### Context

The International Teacher Leadership (ITL) initiative was launched in 2008 by colleagues in the HertsCam Network. The ITL initiative had a team consisting of over 50 experts supporting around 1,000 teachers in around 150 schools in 14 countries (Frost 2011a: 1; 2011b: 17). Colleagues in the HertsCam Network in initiating the ITL project were responding to interest in the HertsCam work on teacher leadership expressed by researchers and practitioners in a number of European countries. The aims of the ITL initiative are to:

- establish programmes of support for teacher leadership that are appropriate to a range of different cultural/national settings
- explore how the development of teachers' professional identity and their modes of professionalism can contribute to educational reform in a variety of cultural/national contexts
- create and/or enhance knowledge networks for teachers
- create and/or enhance a network of experts who can continue to provide support for teacher and school development
- promote and foster inclusive educational practices
- contribute to the development of democratic civil society

The ITL initiative promotes teacher leadership as a process of enquiry-based development led by teachers with the purpose of generating shared knowledge about pedagogic innovation. Deliberate and sophisticated scaffolding and support is seen as a requirement to enable teachers to develop as teacher leaders in this way..

#### *Bosnia and Herzegovina: 'Teachers as leaders of change' Project*

The case that is examined and presented in this report is the *Teachers as leaders of change* project implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H). The education system of B&H is complex, resulting in there being 13 ministries or governments of education, as well as deficiencies in the provision for teachers' professional development (Čelebičić 2013; see also Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 2). The country comprises three ethnic 'constituent peoples': the Bosniaks; Serbs; and Croats. Differences and conflicts were exacerbated during the war which took place between 1992 and 1994 (Čelebičić 2013: 1-2). The country has ambitions to create an education system

that is inclusive, de-centralised, efficient and transparent; that promotes a culture of evaluation and self-evaluation, justice, tolerance and constructive communication; that engages well educated reflective and motivated professionals; that is capable of meeting special educational needs as well as the needs of minority and marginalised groups and that includes the perspective of life-long learning.

(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 3)

However, problems (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013) include: the centralised nature of the educational system (p3); teachers being reduced to *implementers* of educational policies created by other experts in education (p3); a need for teachers to develop the capabilities required for taking more proactive role in the process of education (p3); and teachers who 'frequently share dominant prejudices and convictions with other members of society' (p2).

## Methodology

The methodology involved the use of a participatory approach with practitioners, informed by co-operative research such as PALAR (participatory action learning and action research) (Denis and Lehoux 2009: 367). The strengths of this approach are manifold, as the intention is not to conduct research *on* the practitioners but to engage *with* them in the enquiry so this provides a reflexivity that yields improvement for practice. The data examined for the purpose of the case study of the ITL initiative in B&H were primarily secondary sources. Evaluation is integral to the ITL initiative: the support programmes for developing teacher leadership 'are monitored and evaluated using data collection tools provided by the Cambridge team' (Frost 2011b: 8). Local participants in the initiative used the methods of data collection best suited to local circumstances, but were asked to report the data using a common format. The report draws on accounts of the ITL initiative's evaluation in Frost (2011a) which makes reference to B&H as well as other ITL countries, and other sources, such as a film of the B&H project and accounts by Čelebičić (2013), Čelebičić and Vranješević (2014) and Vranješević and Čelebičić (2013).

The case study also drew from planned meetings about the case studies: there were two exploratory and planning meetings with co-ordinators of the network in which the aims of the study, information on the masters and other aspects of the network were discussed and collected, as well as a focus group to explore questions arising from the analysis and discuss our interpretative analyses of the case studies. Limitations of the method are acknowledged. The secondary data examined should not be approached as objective representations. This is not to assert that straightforwardly objective representations are possible. Rather, we are recognising that the publications, papers and visual data constituting the secondary data are created by the HertsCam Network and are the outcomes of numerous decisions about how to present the network and its activities. They provide partial though nevertheless illuminating insights into the the latter. It is important to recognise, therefore, that triangulation of the secondary data was not feasible for the purposes of the case study. Access to the evidence generated by the ITL's evaluation was limited because the more detailed evidence in teachers' portfolios are produced in local languages and hence more difficult to access (Frost 2011a: 32).

## Practice

The *Teachers as leaders of change* project aimed to empower teachers in B&H to take a more proactive role in the process of educational change and was created by bringing together two projects: the APREME project (Advancing Participation & Representation of Ethnic Minority Groups in Education) and ITL initiative (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013). It began in the academic year 2009-2010, with the goal of supporting teachers' capacities for leading change and enabling them to gain insight by reflecting on this engagement.

The aim of the *Teachers as leaders of change* project was to advance the participation and representation of minority ethnic groups in B&H. The APREME project defined the topic

(minority parents' participation in schools) (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013) and ITL provided key values and a framework for the project's methodology, with ITL initiative guidelines and tools being adapted for the context of B&H.

Six schools in B&H (and five in Serbia) were selected to take part in the project. The schools either had large populations of Roma children or were located in multicultural settings, and were committed to improving education by enhancing participation, partnerships and co-operation with families. In Bosnia, the work with the schools began with initial meetings in schools, aimed at informing school management and teachers about the project and establishing groups of teachers committed to working on development projects concerning parents' participation. The next step was to ask teachers to identify problems that they considered were important in relation to establishing partnerships with parents from different minority and marginalised groups. Twenty eight teachers participated in B&H. There were six meetings in each school, including the initial meeting, which involved mentors for the teachers. In addition teachers and mentors were in touch through individual sessions. The mentors were highly experienced professionals involved in different ways in teachers' pre-service and in-service training. The role of the mentors was important in supporting teachers and helping them to become pro-active, rather than dependent on the mentors for direction, and in facilitating the sessions and meetings.

Development ideas are the teacher's and the implementation and evaluation are done by teachers themselves through their teacher-led development projects and trying things out in practice, using the tools and methods of teacher leadership. The teachers created 28 development projects in B&H. The projects could be classified into five types:

- informing parents about different aspects of school life
- educating parents / Parents as educators
- parents' participation in curricular activities
- parents' participation in extra-curricular activities
- parents as activists take the initiative to improve life in their local communities

### *Participative professionalism*

The programme modelled participative professionalism through its participative character. Meetings were usually held after the school day. It was experienced as a participative way of being a professional teacher. Comments from teachers in the B&H project illustrate can be seen indicating the beginnings of the kind of professionalism that enacts distributed leadership. This practising and experiencing of participative professionalism gave rise in all of the ITL countries to the reframing of how teachers felt about teacher self-efficacy and how they understood leadership, coming to see it as a capability to change things that all teachers could exercise (Frost 2011a: 32-34).

### *Deep level collaboration*

The operation of the project and its supportive elements demonstrate deep level collaboration. The support group titled 'Supporting teachers to lead change', the regular meetings of teachers and the facilitation by mentors and critical friends (Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 100, Frost 2011a: 22 - 23, Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 6-11) help to give a sense of cohesion, identity and shared purpose.

There are signs that changes in habits of mind and practice, indicated in the section on 'Deep

Learning' below, are beginning to create deep level collaboration in schools. The ITL's evaluation suggests that the projects in the participating countries, including B&H, contributed to changing the cultures in schools, enabling progress towards becoming professional learning communities where collaboration and teacher initiation of change is accepted as the norm (Frost 2011a: 37). This kind of development in schools, if it is able to continue, nurtures the organisational climate in which distributed leadership is able to grow and be sustained.

### *Equity*

Čelebičić (2013: 4) explains that during the academic year 2012-2013, inclusion was put at the centre of the programme in B&H with the title, 'Teachers as agents of change for education without prejudice' and the aim of 'Enhancing the quality of educational processes, providing equal education for all children regardless of their ethnic background and belonging, and in accordance with their special educational needs'. The teachers' projects were focused mostly on teaching and learning in the classroom.

The focus of each teacher's project was closely related to the problems they were facing at school every day. The teachers were very clear that their projects had to result in improvements in practice that would have the most benefit for their students. This focus on equity had a special importance (Čelebičić 2013: 6) and the impact on parents and students was reported as positive (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 12). The report notes that without more detailed data on the impacts, it is difficult to come to clear conclusions about the depth and degree of any outcomes reducing inequalities and marginalisation.

### *Deep learning*

Though the project was supportive, the aim was not to make teachers dependent on support. Rather, the opposite was intended (Čelebičić and Vranješević 2014: 100-101). Mentors supported teachers but had to make sure that the teachers developed their autonomy rather than look to the mentors to be the change agent. It led to teachers valuing of small changes, instead of being burdened by feeling a need to change whole system. In this section of the report, the initial difficulties that teachers had in identifying problems to tackle are highlighted, an overview is given of the dimensions of professional learning being developed and the reframing taking place, and illustrative evidence set out of the changes in teachers and schools, concluding with a brief note on student learning.

The report provides an account of teachers' learning. It indicates that this learning is about developing as members of a profession that sees itself as being made up of teacher leaders - Biesta's (2009) socialisation dimension of learning. It is also about Biesta's subjectification dimension - developing as an individual with some independence of the communities into which the person is socialised - in that the project encourages teachers to think independently. At first, teachers found leadership challenging either because they thought they were not sufficiently competent or because they thought they needed to create major change in the educational system. Gradually they became more and more proactive. They learned about leadership by doing it; by taking small steps such as defining the problem and planning actions to create change, evaluating the results and planning next steps. With each step they became more confident and proactive. Reports from each of the ITL countries found that the projects enhanced teachers' self-efficacy and self-confidence (Frost 2011a: 32).

With regard to students' learning, the evaluation of the projects in the ITL countries concludes that direct evidence of improvements in students' learning is difficult to access (Frost 2011a: 36):

...but members of the international ITL project team are confident that teachers' development projects have made very significant contributions to such improvement. Evidence of impact on students' attainment and on their capacity for learning is to be found in teacher's own portfolios and, although teachers have used different approaches to collecting such evidence, reports from project partners are clear that the development work led by teachers has had a major impact on the quality and extent of students' learning, as well as their capacity to learn in the future.

## Facilitating factors

Space being made available and the opportunity to gain the appropriate support are positive factors important generally for the collaborative, non-positional teacher leadership advanced by the ITL initiative. Making a general observation about the progress of such teacher leadership, thanks are given to 'the many headteachers, school principals and government officials around the world who *have made the space* for shared leadership to flourish and have *provided support and encouragement* along the way' (Frost 2014: iii). There are specific actions that senior leaders in schools can take, such as making additional time available or helping to facilitate opportunities for collaboration. The more fundamental task, however, is concerned 'with culture building or creating the conditions in which teacher leadership can flourish' (Frost 2011: a).

In the context of B&H, the support and facilitation provided by the B&H project is a vital component in enabling teachers to design and carry forward the development projects, and to develop their sense of agency and autonomy (Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 13). The explication of a well-grounded theory of teacher leadership and developmental pedagogy, and the framework of principles, guides, tools and modes of support grounded in wide experience that the ITL initiative is able to provide is an enormously important factor in making projects in member countries feasible and successful. This includes the framework of group and school meetings reported above and the support of mentors and the 'critical friendship' provided by the more experienced ITL initiative team members from the HertsCam team, largely through e-mail contact (Frost 2011a: 15). The ITL approach is distilled in a set of principles that stand behind this support. These principles and the ITL approach benefited from the established work of the HertsCam Network so that the participants in the B&H project were building on and adapting a substantial body of experience, ideas, practice and materials.

The ending of the support and facilitation at the end of the B&H project was a concern in terms of sustainability (see 'Barriers' below). However, following discussions with the teachers who participated in the project, networking was identified as an important next step. National network events were organised for all schools that participated in the project, as well as regional network events where teachers from B&H and Serbia got together and exchange their experiences.

For some teachers, because of the war and post-war isolation, that was the first time they had the opportunity to meet their colleagues from the other country, and discuss some professional issues. Those network events were great starting points for building allies, since this is a crucial element of the teacher leadership process: teachers need support from other colleagues and



they need to explore different ways of how to make allies within their group of colleagues, nationally and regionally.(Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013: 13)

## Barriers

As noted under 'Context', B&H and the ITL countries face particular and very testing challenges. These include relatively poor economies and high unemployment, divisions amongst the peoples of B&H, the centralised nature of the educational system reducing teachers to implementers of educational policies created by others, teachers' self-identity as a passive profession, an absence amongst teachers of the attitudes, values and capabilities to act as change-agents, and the fact that many teachers share dominant prejudices within society (Čelebičić 2013, Vranješević and Čelebičić 2013). Sustainability after the project was also a key challenge.

## Commentary

Building on and adapting the experience, ideas, practice and materials of the HertsCam work on collaborative teacher leadership, the ITL initiative in B&H effectively facilitated and supported development of participant teachers as active, participative professionals engaging in collaborative change to improve learning. There is evidence of professional learning, including reframing teachers' ideas and feelings in relation to teaching as an active profession. Equity and inclusion were put at the centre of the B&H project. Working to overcome barriers and prejudices, reducing inequalities and helping to advance equal rights and a more cohesive society in which learning is supported were crucial aims informing the project. Without more detailed data on the impacts, it is difficult to come to clear conclusions about the degree to which the outcomes achieved these aims.

The beginnings of developments which embed change in the culture of schools appeared to result from the project. These suggest small movements in the direction of a situation where collaboration and teacher initiation of change become accepted as the norm and an organisational climate is created in which distributed leadership is able to grow and be sustained. The progress made is especially noteworthy given the context of the testing challenges that B&H and its education system face. It is not possible to assess from the data and information we have, how firmly established and sustainable are the progressive changes and small movements achieved by the project. Nevertheless, for many of the participants, there were reported transformations in how they felt towards and experienced teacher-led change.

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