

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

DIVISION OF EDUCATION



"TUCKED INTO THE SCHOOL'S POINT OF
CHANGE..."

An illuminative evaluation of a language
support service initiative intended to assist
mainstream colleagues to meet the needs of
their bilingual pupils.

Assignment submitted in part requirement for the
Master of Education (English Language Teaching)
Degree of the University of Sheffield

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June 1995

ABSTRACT

This illuminative evaluation describes a short-term county initiative designed to enable mainstream colleagues to meet the needs of their bilingual pupils. The initiative was conducted by a team of language support staff working in partnership with their mainstream colleagues on school-initiated, school-based projects.

Data collection was in the form of written records and communications produced during the course of the initiative, participant observations made by the evaluator and interviews with those closely involved in the initiative.

The comments from the taped interviews were collated according to whether they were facilitative or inhibitive in their affect on the outcomes. These were made available, without further comment, to the participating members of the language support service to enable them to make their own judgements. Their decision-making and future planning was further assisted by the presentation of this dissertation in which the conclusions drawn by the evaluator were also offered as a basis for discussion.

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under the criteria laid down by the Local Education Authority (LEA). Schools in Lancashire receive varying allocations of language support staff according to their needs. These needs are assessed mainly through the County tests: 4+ screening, 6+ screening/Standard assessment tasks (SATs) and the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) test for Year 6. This support may come in the form of teachers, nursery nurses or bilingual assistants. Some schools, with a low percentage of underachieving ethnic minority pupils, may receive no support or minimal assistance; the allocations are adjusted each year. The idea in this Initiative was to support schools through the transition period as they began to cope without direct support from the EMA Project. The schools were asked to put in a bid and to designate one teacher in the school to lead a school-based project with short-term support from the TMT. It was envisaged that this designated teacher (DT) would then be empowered to become a change agent in the school, disseminating to the rest of the staff, making them more aware of the needs of their bilingual pupils. They would be the ones to demonstrate enhanced classroom practice by maximizing the use of oral opportunities and by using teaching and learning strategies that would not only give the bilingual pupils full access to the National Curriculum but would benefit all the pupils in the school. It would become their responsibility to facilitate any changes necessary in their own situation by drawing in other members of staff so that a whole school policy could be drawn up that they could own. As Fletcher says:

It is a truism within writing on the management of change that for change to be successfully implemented, those who adopt it must also be free to adapt it, and make it 'their' change. (1994, p.74)

The heart of the TMT message is that all children are worthy of recognition. I shall be describing the possibilities and problems encountered as the TMT worked in partnership with their mainstream colleagues supporting them through personnel and financial incentives in the planning, implementation and reflection of their school-initiated and school-based projects. The part that reflective practice can play in staff development should not be overestimated, as Harris argues:

Reflection is the difference between 20 years' teaching experience and one years' experience repeated 20 times. It is part of a personal development that enables tutors to formulate concepts about effective teaching, which are capable of being transferred into positive action in new situations. In quality terms, reflection is an essential element in the cycle of continuous improvement. (1995, p.14)

Since this Initiative is seeking to embed good practice and manage any necessary changes through staff development, it is important, first of all, to investigate the background to staff development, the management of change and main issues being raised in these areas by the researchers.

A BACKGROUND TO STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The term staff development has broader connotations than in-service training (INSET) alone. As Hewton argues:

Staff development...is concerned with both the needs of individuals and those of the organization as a whole...the use of the term staff development opens up the possibility of a much wider range of activities than would seem to be implied by the in-service education and training of teachers. (1988, p.9)

However, it is important to look first at what has happened to INSET as it still plays a central role in staff development. Gilroy and Day are concerned at the way the development of INSET has been determined by its funding and say:

It is clear from even a cursory glance at the development of award and non-award bearing INSET over the past 10 years that it has been inevitably and necessarily affected by the various alterations of the funding mechanisms that supported it. (1993, p.142)

Gilroy and Day (op.cit.) go on to explain that until 1987, local education authorities contributed to a central pool according to their means from which they could all draw funds. This national approach supported the feeling that, 'the teaching profession was a national resource and required national provision' (p.143). Since this time the INSET funding system has undergone a number of changes which Gilroy and Day refer to as its 'erosion'. They claim that central government:

has used its ability to control the funding of INSET to redefine and regain control of the profession in ways that are, to say the least, restrictive. (1993, p.142)

In September 1987, in the Government's proposals on pay and conditions, five non-teaching days were introduced as compulsory INSET days for teachers.

Kelly (1989) agrees that the new arrangements for the funding of INSET effectively placed control in the hands of the Department of Education, as all local education authorities had to submit their proposals for approval for funding. This led to the provision of short courses, often of a practical nature, run by the local authority or to school-based sessions where opportunities were given for staff to explore together various curriculum issues. It increasingly became used as a time to formulate whole school policies or for staff to receive training for the various initiatives that have arrived thick and fast into schools in the last decade. Last year it was appraisal, this year it is the new special needs register with OFSTED preparation for Primary schools, and post-OFSTED debriefing for Secondary colleagues. While Kelly does not denigrate such provision, he remarks that:

its corollary is that very little money is now being made available for teachers to attend courses of a more rigorous or more intellectually demanding kind in institutions of higher education, so that again it is that critical and analytical review of education and curriculum which such courses have come to provide which is being lost. (1989, p.169)

In July 1990, the latest reform of INSET was introduced to LEAs, namely, the Grants for Education Support and Training (GEST) programme which was to be operated through a bidding system. Gilroy and Day argue that:

...a realistic interpretation of GEST is that the programme, deliberately or fortuitously marks the end of central government support for a national conception of any continuation of the professional development of teachers which goes beyond the limited horizon provided by the 1988 Act. (1993, p.149)

Gilroy and Day (op.cit.) conclude that there should be a partnership formed; an interdependency between central government and the educational community, made up of parents, governors, teachers, local education authorities and higher education institutions, who together could challenge the government (p.155). Gibbons and Norman would welcome this partnership idea; their integrated model for sustained staff development particularly calls for a shift of power:

We are not speaking about a cosmetic dressing up of familiar staff development models. We are describing a paradigm shift in our whole approach to the task. The essence of that shift is changing the perspective that sees all decisions, plans and programs being determined by authorities outside the school to a perspective which sees them being determined by teachers who in reality do decide what and how their students will learn. (1987, p.110)

Ruddock develops the point further speaking of the energy which fuels the act of collaborative interpretation coming from the sparking of the two perspectives, that is, of the insider and the outsider. The insider is described:

as the one who has an intimate knowledge of the setting but whose eyes are dulled by the routine reconstruction of events in their own image – the habits which allow us to survive in complex situations but which make it difficult for us to 'see' and to change what is there; and that of the outsider, whose wares include ways of 'seeing' and thinking about the events of the classroom which he or she has developed through broad experience of classrooms and through critical reflection on different conceptual frameworks for analysing classrooms.(1987, p.139)

There is, therefore, much to be said for those involved in research and INSET outside the school environment to work closely with those facing the realities of the classroom situation. Although, it is sometimes beneficial to draw people away from their immediate environment to reflect more objectively on their practice, it is equally important that their current up to date experiences are fed into that reflection. As Skilbeck (1984) argues, if a school is viewed as a human social institution then it must be responsive to its environment. Griffin puts it like this:

A program to provide teachers with opportunities for professional growth must be seen in terms of the school culture into which it is to be introduced and in terms of the societal forces that will promote or hinder its movement towards success. (1987, p.36)

Staff development must, necessarily include INSET, albeit in the limited terms in which the government has set it, with its hands firmly on the purse strings and so on the content. However, it must not end there but include the whole spectrum of professional and personal development with the opportunities they provide to reflect critically not only on ones own practice but on the whole of educational theory and practice. Kemmis (cf Watkins, 1985) endorses the point commenting that:

A critical perspective on staff development and school improvement requires that the educational values which underpin these activities be recovered and critically examined in their contemporary, social and historical contexts. To do this is not only to locate schooling socially and historically; it is also to locate ourselves as agents in the process by which schooling has come to be what it is. (1987, p.73)

The introduction of the minimal five day INSET in school, before the budget was so drastically cut, did give staff the opportunity to draw in outside researchers

and consultants to assist in relating educational theory to the realities of the classroom. As the money has begun to dry up, schools have turned these days into planning sessions or opportunities to be introduced to, and to respond to the governments latest memo. On the positive side, what it did mean was that, as Wideen comments, staff development, along with the introduction of appraisal, placed:

...teachers at the centre of any improvement effort and assumes that the work of the teacher, and the visions that teachers have about improving their work, provide the starting point. It sees collaboration, collegiality, and mutual adaptation as necessary ingredients in any school improvement plan. It places value on the differences among teachers and schools and the uniqueness that results. (1987, p.5)

They further comment that to introduce, encourage and sustain such staff development needs a great deal of organization, energy, skill and endurance.

Hargreaves and Goodson argue that reform has worked against the schools' ability to maintain such standards in two ways. First of all, as it:

has intensified teachers' work - adding on huge additional burdens to a job that is already excessively demanding. Second, it has been anti-intellectual. It has failed to call upon the professional wisdom of teachers. It has dismantled and discarded the expertise of much educational research...even reshaped teacher education to make it less reflective and critical by shifting it more to the schools. (1995, p.15)

Evans (1984) draws together three possible approaches to teacher education and suggests in conclusion that there needs to be research into using a mixture of all three. This could, perhaps, form a model for a collaborative way of working. The first approach is the traditional approach of the external focus often found on award-bearing as well as short in-service courses. Here new orientations, new skills and new knowledge are taught but without any particular consideration of the school context. Secondly, there is the school-focused approach where the transmission model involves the learning of externally developed skills in a school setting. Thirdly, there is the school-origin approach which is the basic problem-solving model which involves groups of teachers in the identification and the resolution of school problems and calling on external expertise as and when it is needed. Progress has already been made in some authorities where teachers have been asked to highlight their in-service needs to the LEA who have then put on the

appropriate courses. The LEAs have also encouraged the development of curriculum guidelines and to this end have set up working parties of practising teachers led by County advisers (cf Skilbeck, 1984). This has developed to try and combat the feeling of teachers that a gap exists between theory and practice; between the educational researcher in higher education and the teacher in the classroom. As Evans comments:

Teachers are often impressed with what they learn from formal coursework, publications and in-service offerings, but...they are also often unable to apply these learnings directly in their own school setting. (1984, p.261)

In discussing curriculum development, Kelly makes this very point arguing that:

...having recognized that a gap exists between the ideals of the planners and the realities of the work of the teacher in the classroom, we should be concerned to close it by attempting not only to bring the latter nearer to the former but also by seeking to bring each closer to the other. To see the need to do this is to recognize that curriculum development is essentially a matter of local development, that requires a form of 'household' innovation, and thus that it has to be school-based. (1989, p.132)

As a language support service, the EMA project is concerned with more than the content of a school curriculum. Its concern must be to facilitate not only access to the curriculum for the bilingual learners through the primary vehicle of language, but also the creation of a stimulating and caring environment where all the knowledge and skills a child brings to the classroom are valued. This means looking at language across the curriculum and being involved in drawing up school development plans and writing policies. Most importantly it means providing staff development so that the mainstream teachers themselves are enabled to sustain and develop this good practice, as our service contracts. The EMA Project faces the same problems as any outside agent trying to introduce change into a school. Just as Stenhouse argued with regard to curriculum innovation, so the EMA staff development programme:

...involves changes in the premises of teaching - its aims and values - and consequent changes in the teacher's thinking and classroom strategies. (1973, quoted in Plaskow 1984, p.44)

The EMA school-based staff are standard scale teachers, who even if they have the respect of the mainstream staff, are not in a position to have influence with the

senior management team in their school. Some of these staff have been in a particular school for so long that their outlook is little different from the staff they are being asked to stimulate to new ways of thinking. Advisory support staff and other EMA staff with higher status have either a peripatetic role or come in on a 'hit and run' basis and so are thought of as outsiders with little understanding of the school context. The TMT Initiative was born out of a desire to discover ways of working which will empower mainstream teachers to meet the needs of their bilingual pupils and claim ownership of any innovations because of the depth of their involvement. Hargreaves and Goodson argue that:

It is time to rethink our approach to educational reform. It is time for teachers to be the included vanguard of reform, and not be made its marginalised victims. It is time for reformers to reconnect with the profession of teachers and with the expertise of educational research, by working with teachers to build strong professional cultures of shared learning, joint work and collaborative commitment. It is time for a change of direction and time for a change of heart. (1995, p.15)

MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

The Nature of Change

Before teachers feel a positive commitment to any staff development involving change they must be aware of some area that needs improvement and be willing to try and find a solution. It is unrealistic to expect all the staff in a school to be ready for the challenge and work may need to begin with a few. The membership of this group must contain some influential members of staff if the change is to be effective in the long-term as dissemination and general acceptance of the change is crucial to its success. Evan's survey (1979) showed that some of the main sources of change in schools were innovative staff members; some working informally in groups and others in appointed groups. It is especially important that the head is fully supportive. She/he may not be directly involved, in fact, it may be better if not, but their influence must not be underestimated. Everard and Morris claim that, 'change is an essential function of the managerial role' (1990, p.6) so we should expect senior management to be heavily involved in innovation. According to White:

A successful organization...is characterized by innovativeness because ...innovativeness and adaptability to changing circumstances go hand in hand. (1988, p.138)

While we are not to go looking for trouble or making changes just for the sake of it, as Handy comments:

Problem-finding is often a more creative and difficult task than problem-solving...it does mean discerning key opportunities for the advancement of the organization. (1985, p.27)

The implementation of an innovation means taking risks and facing unforeseen problems. It will result in reorganization with the resulting fears of changes in status, demarcation and authority. It will be costly in terms of the time, effort and money needed to maintain and develop the necessary resources: human, material and financial. Last, but not least it will mean standing back and taking a broad view of one's activities and seeing them in context (cf Everard and Morris, op. cit). Introducing change is, therefore, a complex matter and senior staff must appreciate all the hidden factors involved. There is a natural tendency for people to resist change particularly when it comes from the top. As Everard and Morris say:

Senior staff...have to help everyone concerned to discover and conceptualize the true nature of change and how it impinges upon us all...Change will affect beliefs, assumptions and values, and be affected by them. (1990, pp.233-34)

What are the conditions, then, that are conducive to successful change. The following key areas are suggested by Everard and Morris (op.cit., pp.237-40). The first point is the purpose. It is important that the aims of the change are clear and it forms part of the policy of the whole organization. The second is the structure. This should be determined by the requirements of the work. It may mean that different departments are organized in different ways and follow their own procedures. This may happen in a school with year groups or key stage groups working out their own preferred way of doing things. Provided the system works for them and does not cause confusion to others, then it should be allowed to continue. The third point is the process. It is important that decisions can be made by those who hold the requisite information. Communication should be frank and open and ideas considered on merit. This is endorsed by Kelly who says:

...the key to the adoption and implementation of the innovation is the social climate of the receiving body and that success or failure will hinge on the climate of communication there. (1989 p.127)

Although clashes of ideas should be encouraged, competition should be minimized and collaboration rewarded. The fourth is the people. The identity, integrity and freedom of individuals should be respected and attention paid to intrinsic rewards. Ways must be found for people to work together without losing their personal autonomy. Indeed as White argues:

...an educational organisation is operated by the persons who are themselves the instruments of change. Without their willingness and participation, there will be no change. (1988, p.116)

The fifth point is that of realism. People have to deal with situations as they are and so need to be aware of the 'health' of the organization. As Butt et al argue that this is the mistake that has been made over the past two decades:

Teachers were not able to participate in the changes that were thrust upon them. Reformers did not work with teachers in understanding classroom reality. In general they were ignorant of the culture of the school and the classroom. (1992, p.53)

The action research mode of management which I will deal with later provides a useful model here provided the necessary mechanisms are in place for built-in feedback. The sixth point concerns the environment. There is a need for an open system sensitive to the complex environment in which it is embedded, while the latter brings a sense of reality and proportion to the system. The seventh makes another point about the need for balance. This time it concerns the organizational development associated with change and the need for staff development to meet the new demands. As Everard and Morris (op. cit.) stress, 'change must not simply aggravate teachers' problems' (p.240). The final point is to do with collegiate culture and again quality leadership from the headteacher is emphasized. An HMI report put it like this:

They appreciate the need for specific educational aims, both social and intellectual, and have the capacity to communicate these to the staff, pupils and parents, and to win their assent and to put their own policies into practice.
(1977, quoted in Everard and Morris 1990, p.241)

Models for Introducing Change

Havelock (1971) identified three innovative models. The first is the research, development and diffusion model (RDD). It is based on a careful analysis of the situation; needs are analysed, objectives are specified and then a detailed design is drawn up. It is a costly method in terms of budget and personnel with outsider expertise being brought in to deliver a product to the clients. These consultants are often only around at the early stages and then move on just as the change is about to be implemented. Peters proffers the warning:

Most grand strategies flop, and most big "change" programmes fizzle.
Why? Because we worry too much about the plan and not enough about
the implementation. (1995, p.11)

The second is the problem-solving model. This begins with the identification of the problem; the needs of the users being of paramount importance in the process. The role of the outside change agent is non-directive, more the role of a counsellor rather than an instigator. This is a school-initiated model and as such draws on very strong commitment from the users; it consequently stands the best chance of long-term survival. Everard and Morris (op.cit.) cite Lavelle (1984) who noted that innovation is more likely to be successful when perceived as necessary by those in the school, rather than by outsiders. This model then scores a plus in terms of its appropriateness to the context in which it occurs but there are two possible dangers. Firstly, as White (1988) argues, the head and the staff could impose their own values on the school and secondly, the teachers may not possess the necessary technical research skills to implement the plan. Harris argues that other skills may also be deficient and says of Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1995) that in their book they:

consider the personal and interpersonal skills development needed by
both tutors and students to tackle reflective practice successfully.
(1995, p.14)

However, as White (op. cit.) suggests the application of active research may overcome these limitations as it involves the planned and systematic collection of appropriate forms of data. Mostly importantly, action research aims to improve practice by stimulating reflection upon action in the light of the theory derived

from the practice. This emphasis on a bottom-up approach fits in well with much contemporary thinking on the importance of school-based, teacher-initiated research and development. The third model is that of social interaction. This is based on the premiss that the social networks in a school will affect staff attitudes to the innovation. For this reason, the change agents need to identify these networks and seek to influence the leaders. This may present problems for both the outsider and the insider. The outsider may find it difficult to identify the groups and the insider may find it difficult to view them objectively. Change is still seen as a product to be delivered.

Change strategies

One important strategy that can be identified is power-cohesive. It is based on central control, upon decisions being handed down without being open to questioning. It may possibly be acceptable in the early stages of an innovation but other strategies are needed later on if the staff are to own the initiative. A second strategy is the empirical-rational approach, which appeals to the intelligence. It recognizes the need to take into account the fact that people are influenced by various factors, to gather their opinions and find out their needs before designing a plan in which they will be asked to participate. As Nunan claims:

Facilitators should...be open to the issues which teachers feel are important and relevant to them, and need to be aware of the dangers of steering teachers into projects which, while they might more pertinent to the facilitator, are of peripheral interest to the teacher. (1989, p.127)

A third strategy is the normative re-educative approach, which fits very well with the problem-solving model. According to White (op. cit.) it assumes that people are self-activating and non-passive and must participate in their own re-education involving normative, cognitive and perceptual changes. Normative change involves alterations in attitudes, values, skills and significant relationships, in other words one's own theory of teaching. Normative re-education emphasizes the teachers' system and involvement in working out programmes of change and improvements for themselves, that is, they assume the role of change agents themselves. As

White concludes:

On the whole...innovations which are identified by the users themselves will be more effectively and durably installed than those which are imported from outside, since it is the teachers and students themselves who will have 'ownership' of and commitment to the innovation concerned if it has a grass roots or bottom-up rather than a top-down origin. For this reason, a problem-solving model and a normative re-education approach to innovation will probably be the most successful combination, in language teaching as elsewhere. (1988, p.133)

This does not preclude the use of outside change agents but they must learn to work collaboratively with the staff in their efforts to define the problems in their particular school and to assist them in finding solutions. Nicholls comments that outside agents have been found to be particularly helpful, although there are problems:

...there is some evidence to support the claim that normative re-educative strategies are the most lasting and most self-sustaining forms of innovation, particularly when outside consultants are used, but they are time-consuming and difficult and require knowledge and skills that might not be present in all schools and so might, initially necessitate some form of external support. (1983, p.33)

Schools are changing and in the moves to meet the new demands, staff development and innovation are inextricably linked. One of the interesting new developments has sought not only to marry these two strands but also to bridge the gap between research and classroom reality is action research. It encourages a partnership between teachers and outside consultants. The 'insiders' are assisted by the 'outsiders' to reflect on their own practice and to unearth a problem the school has. The participants then work together on the solution. The research may lead to school-focused INSET which has been defined by Perry as:

all the strategies employed by trainers and teachers in partnership to direct training programmes in such a way as to meet the identified needs of the school, and to raise the standards of teaching and learning in the classroom. (1977, quoted in Hewton 1988, p.7)

Stenhouse (1975) realized that there was very little hope of change unless teachers were involved in the process themselves. They need to explore the implications for the change and be prepared to make any adjustments to their school routines. The TMT realized from the beginning that if they were to effect any lasting change through the Initiative then they needed to work in partnership with their mainstream colleagues on school-based projects.

ACTION RESEARCH – A MODEL PARTNERSHIP

A theoretical foundation

According to Altrichter et al, action research is:

primarily concerned with change, being grounded in the idea that development and innovation are an essential part of professional practice. This approach presupposes a reflective view of professionalism, which is very different from the commonly held, technical rational view. (1993, p.201)

According to Schön (1983), technical rationality follows three basic assumptions. Firstly, that there are general solutions to problems. Secondly, that these solutions can be developed in practical situations, for example, in resource or administrative centres. Thirdly, that the solutions can be translated into teachers' actions by means of publications, training, administrative orders and so on. It was operationalized in the classical RDD model of innovation. According to Altrichter et al, this results in a hierarchy of credibility, that is:

Practitioners...are working on a low level of theoretical knowledge and are merely applying what has been predefined in the academic and administrative power-structure above them. (1993, p.202)

Reflective terminology has been used in a variety of ways, based on different theoretical structures. Calderhead and Gates (1993) identify three of these. The first is that of John Dewey (1933) who distinguished between action based on reflection and action that is impulsive or blind and also stressed the need to develop certain attitudes of open-mindedness and skills of thinking and reasoning in order to reflect. The second is that of Schön (1983) who wrote about reflection-in-action. His idea was that professionals engage in reflective conversations with practical situations. They constantly frame and reframe a problem as they work on it, testing out their interpretation and solutions. The third is the critical theory of Carr and Kemmis (1986). This stimulated considerable thought about the importance of increasing teachers' awareness of the causes and consequences of their action through research on their own situation. According to Adler (1991, pp.142-3), Zeichner (1981) adopts this view and, although he does not dismiss technical proficiency or the need to respond to the specific situation of the practitioner, he does see the need to go beyond this into

the realm of moral and ethical issues. He expresses concern for justice and equality pointing out that people should be able to transcend their everyday experience and imagine things as they ought to be, not simply accepting things as they are. In this way he believes they will shape their practice and their thinking about that practice and will question what has previously been taken for granted. Reflective rationality, then, follows three different basic assumptions from technical rationality as set out by Altrichter et al (op.cit.). Firstly, that complex practical problems demand specific, not general solutions. Secondly, that these solutions can only be developed in the context where the problem has arisen and in which the practitioner is a crucial and determining element. Thirdly, that the solutions cannot be successfully applied to another context, although they can be made accessible to other practitioners as hypotheses to be tested. It is these assumptions that form the basis for action research outlined by Stenhouse as:

A capacity for autonomous professional self-development through systematic self-study, through the study of the work of other teachers and through the testing of ideas by classroom research procedures. (1975, p.144)

Action Research in Practice

According to Altrichter et al (op.cit.), action research makes an important contribution to the following areas. Firstly, the professional development of individual teachers who improve their practical theories and competence in action through reflection and action. Secondly, curriculum development and improvements in practical situations under research by developing the quality of teaching and learning through new and successful action strategies. Thirdly, the collective development of the profession by means of opening up individual practice to scrutiny and discussion and thus broadening the knowledge base of the profession. Fourthly, the advancement of educational research. Those who are initiating the research are also those who are in the school relating their hypotheses to the reality of the classroom. There is no deep divide between theory and practice, no separation between reflection and action. As Altrichter et al argue:

Through constant movement between action and reflection, weaknesses in the practical theories are gradually detected and useful action strategies are explored and extended. Through reflexivity, the reflective practitioner's action gains quality and the research process is rigorously tested. (1993, p.208)

The problems that teachers have as researchers are related to the amount of time, energy and money they are able to spend on the planning and implementation of the research. Evans suggests that,

At a time when resources are being withdrawn, it is too hopeful to wish for more funding, teacher release, and the like. The solution will have to be that two or more tasks are performed simultaneously. (1984, p.267)

He goes on to suggest, for example, that the extra burden of school-based curriculum planning and development can be absorbed in the following ways. Tasks which seem to be worthwhile can lead to the provision of materials and methods through team efforts and resource networks. Teaching problems can be solved, job satisfaction improved, career prospects advanced as teachers achieve a greater sense of autonomy and competence in decision-making. In terms of rationalizing teachers' time, programme planning, lesson preparation, in-service study, student teacher supervision are related and can benefit each other. The involvement of tertiary staff can result in the successful combination of pre- and in-service training. The action research can be undertaken in conjunction with school-based problem solving. So we have come round full circle to the great potential for a partnership situation between the outside agencies and the teachers within the school. The main part of this study will be evaluating just such an Initiative. The problems tackled are school-initiated and school-based with a team of language support service teachers offering support at various levels. The Transfer to Mainstream team were willing to tuck themselves into the schools' point of change; to fit in with the school development plan and offer support in areas where the need for innovation had already been recognized and hopefully where the initial inertia had been overcome. How, then, should such an Initiative be evaluated? What would be the criteria for judging its quality? Which model could be used most effectively?

EVALUATING EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

There are three areas to look at in the field of evaluation. The first concerns the theories, and approaches that have been developed from them in the past. The second looks to the future to find out how evaluation can be used to improve management and to ensure that we are accountable to all concerned in the success of education. The third issue concerns the planning and implementation of the evaluation.

Approaches to evaluation

Models have developed reflecting two diverging views:

i Evaluation with prespecified objectives

This first approach, as expressed by Harlen (1971), is based on the premiss that the prespecification of objectives is an explicit precondition for all types of evaluation. Tyler agrees arguing that:

it is absolutely essential that they (the behavioural objectives) be defined in order to make an evaluation since unless there is some clear concept of the sort of behaviour implied by the objectives, one has no way of telling what kind of behaviour to look for in the students in order to see what degree these objectives are being realized. This means that the process of evaluation may force persons who have not previously clarified their objectives to a further process of clarification. Definition of objectives, then, is an important step in evaluation. (1949, p.111, quoted in Kelly, 1989, p.190)

The HMI Curriculum Matters series was also committed to an 'aims and objectives' approach to curriculum planning regarding this as the only basis for assessment and evaluation. It is sometimes referred to as the classical experimental model and as well as Tyler's (op.cit.) evaluation model, includes the work of Bloom (1956) and Hirst (1967). Demands for accountability further encourage this kind of model hence the rapid development of the criteria and performance indicators of quantitative analysis in education. It does have the advantage that the evaluation is planned for from the beginning of the project and it does ensure agreement as to what constitutes success or failure. However, Kelly (op. cit.) identifies the following dangers of this type of evaluation. Firstly, the evaluative procedures govern the choice of objectives, curriculum content and methods used to implement it. Heathcote et al give a warning from the history of curriculum development in

secondary and further education in the last two decades saying that:

It reflects the danger of adopting a polarized stance on the use of curriculum models and on subsequently imposing a particular model without due regard for measurement and assessment issues in certain curriculum areas...it demonstrates the importance of choosing an appropriate model to serve the curriculum rather than forcing a curriculum into a model which may be totally unsuitable. (1984, p.53)

Secondly, it means that all curriculum planning must begin from a prespecification of objectives, which is unsuitable for certain areas, particularly the humanities. As a design, the experimental approach does rely heavily on a tightly controlled situation, whereas so much educational research has any number of variables, which cannot be controlled. Thirdly, it is too easy to settle for objectives that are easy to measure. For example, in the Schools Council Working Party Paper 26, a problem arises in assessing teaching that seeks to attain such objectives as 'the development of desirable personality traits and attitudes' (Schools Council, 1969, p.11). The Assessment of Performance Unit (APU, 1982), interestingly, decided not to attempt to monitor performance in areas of aesthetic, physical, social and moral education. Taba (1962) set up a social studies evaluation model to look for simple but lasting explanations of what works. She argues that there exists such a wide discrepancy between the scope of most sets of objectives and the scope of evaluation that it will lead either to inadequacies in evaluation or in the specification of the objectives themselves. So, as Kelly (op.cit.) concludes, 'even when objectives are clearly prespecified...evaluation is not easy' (p.193).

ii Evaluation without prespecified objectives

Stenhouse (1975) argued that evaluation requires the proper level of understanding of the process being evaluated. There is as much need to know why things have happened as there is to know what has happened. The problems voiced above with evaluation based on prespecified objectives led to the explorations of new ways of organizing more qualitative evaluation. This second approach moved away from simply measuring the outcome of a pupil's learning in a particular subject, oversimplifying school aims and ignoring educational processes. Stronach and Morris argue that more still needs to be done:

...it is time to develop a critical, deconstructive approach to evaluation that will be theoretical as well as practical in its approach, sceptical in its attitude, inventive in its relations with educational development, and novel in its reporting. If the task of evaluation is educational, then we can do no less. (1994, p.18)

The Schools Council's Integrated Studies Project set up in Keele University (Jenkins, 1973) did some exploratory work using a horizontal curriculum model in which the aims, learning experiences and materials were developed concurrently. The evaluation was seen as a device for continuously monitoring the project as it developed and constantly reviewing its aims, materials and the practical problems which arose: Tawney (1973) described this major technique as participant observation. A growing collection of experience and understanding of issues and problems emerged that was offered to teachers, not as a curriculum package but as a set of principles and a body of experience for reference from which they could develop their own schemes. For example, the Humanities Curriculum Project (MacDonald, 1973) took a holistic approach which according to Kelly:

sees evaluation as an integral part of curriculum development; it represents a form of continuous action research and feedback (1989, p.204)

The external evaluator of the Project, Barry MacDonald (1973,) confesses that 'in an approach which is not based on objectives, there is no ready-made niche for the evaluator' (p.82). As Kelly (op.cit.) observes, all educational activities, have many unexpected but valuable results and many 'unintended outcomes' (p.196). The information is provided for the consumer rather than simply making a statement about the Project's success.

Similar approaches were made by the proponents of illuminative and responsive evaluation. For example, Stake (1972) wanted to offer a comprehensive portrayal of a programme, viewing it as a whole and revealing its total substance. He tried to report the ways that different people see the curriculum. His evaluation did highlight conflicting hopes, although it ran the risk of stirring up conflicts about values while ignoring the causes of those differences. Parlett and Hamilton (1975),

anxious to design techniques that would discover aspects of a project not open to more quantitative measurement, introduced illuminative evaluation as being concerned 'with description and interpretation rather than measurement and prediction' (p. 99). They identified three stages where the investigator observes, inquires further and then seeks to explain. An information profile is put together with the aim of sharpening discussion, disentangling complexities, isolating the significant from the trivial and raising the level of sophistication of the debate. In Hamilton's (1976) responsive evaluation, the evaluator seeks to respond 'to the wide range of questions asked about an innovation and is not trapped inside the intentions of the programme-builders' (p. 39).

Of the two other significant models, the first is that of the teacher as researcher which has grown out of the work of Stenhouse (1975) and has led Kelly (op.cit.) to conclude that there is 'no curriculum development without teacher development' (p.137). Elliott (1994) agrees that the quality of children's education depends on the quality of the people teaching them and says of Stenhouse that he keenly expounded the need for teachers to be helped to adopt a research stance towards their practice. The second is the case study model produced by Adelman et al (1976) of which Lawton (1981) reports three advantages. Firstly, they set out more clearly the methodology, rules for interviews, observation, data control and processing, as well as the presentation of the data. Secondly, they set out a code of practice for evaluators, especially regarding the rights of those being studied and thirdly, they made plans for a handbook of principles, procedures and methods for case study work in education.

Selinger and Shohamy (1989) conclude that all qualitative types of evaluation are characterized by the fact that the data is not known beforehand. They are selected because of a concern with learning in situations where it is not easy to apply the controls that would be necessary for experimental research. Yet, there is a growing awareness of the necessity for careful data collection and analysis in this

type of research leading to the development of increasingly more sophisticated techniques. As Tarone (1982) argued a controlled experimental setting is often artificial and may not produce the same results as a natural setting. According to Altrichter et al (1993), 'Inspired by sociological field research, qualitative educational research has developed using similar methods'. Qualitative evaluation puts the emphasis on the observation of all aspects of the situation rather than measurement, gathering data from different perspectives without necessarily making a judgement. This is difficult to do especially as one of the purposes of evaluation is to make judgements. It is also a more subjective approach and as such is prey to disagreement over the interpretation of the results. To guard against this, as many views as possible have to be taken particularly from those who are involved at the cutting edge. That is why, in this particular evaluation, care was taken to interview all the designated teachers and members of the Transition to Mainstream team as well as the EMA advisory support teachers who viewed the Initiative from yet another perspective. If any evaluation is concerned with action research, then it will mean involving the participating teachers in their own evaluation. Lawton concludes that:

It is possible to be eclectic, and the art of evaluation is partly a matter knowing the strengths and weaknesses of a wide range of techniques, and also knowing when one particular technique would have sufficient advantage to outweigh its disadvantages.
(1981, p.157)

Uses of evaluation

An evaluation is made when a problem has arisen and a research situation of some kind is set up to try and find a solution. When the most effective way of working is found, then this approach is promoted and developed. Different approaches would lead to different ways of working. For example, in a traditional approach to evaluation, experiments may be set up to trial different teaching methods or syllabuses. The experimental objective-based approach may study the original objectives, looking at the test results and noting which objectives are not being achieved. The illuminative approach may set up a longitudinal study of all aspects of the situation. There would be no judgements about where the problems lay;

teachers would be encouraged to find their own solutions. Examination results can be seen as an evaluation of learning outcomes but if these are used as the sole criterion of success or failure then this does not help us improve the quality of education. As Bradshaw points out:

...the main point is that problems in education are usually complex, are likely to have a number of interacting causes, and are rarely accessible to simple solutions. (1992, p.5)

An evaluation may be set up by a school to improve its educational standards in response to a particular problem. For example, an area may have been highlighted by an OFSTED inspection. Or, the school may have identified its own point for development. Whatever the reason, the evaluation will be carried out most effectively when it takes place as a whole staff activity where everyone has agreed the processes and the criteria and where the staff are involved in thinking about their own practice and considering ways for improvement. Rodger and Richardson (1985) comment on the tension for teachers between accountability on the one hand and professionalism on the other. They suggest a possible solution through the professional activities of reflection and self-appraisal while, at the same time, collecting the kind of information demanded by advocates of educational accountability. MacDonald comments that:

All evaluation is concerned with providing information for decision-makers, but not all evaluators agree about who the decision-makers are, or what information they need. (1973, p.80)

Part of the purpose of evaluation must be to satisfy those to whom we are accountable, but our main purpose is to improve the quality of the education we are providing. This will involve the introduction of change, inevitably. When a project involves large-scale innovation, then it is often better to break it down into manageable steps. This leads to the consideration of a widely accepted distinction first made by Scriven (1967) between formative and summative evaluation. The former term generally refers to ongoing evaluation where work is reflected upon, reviewed and any necessary changes or adaptations are made ready for the next stage of development. The summative evaluation is a conclusive report at the end of a project. The results may have a bearing on the next project but can no longer

influence the one that has just been completed. Bradshaw concurs:

As part of formative evaluation, this could lead to changes in plans, revisions of deadlines, changes in the way budgets are used or the realisation that the budget is insufficient...As part of summative evaluation, lessons can be drawn from the organisation and planning which can help to improve these processes in future projects.(1992,p.9)

Fullan (1981) makes the further point that the measurement of outcomes in terms of pupil performance alone cannot give information about whether the innovation has been fully implemented or not. He claims that the actual process of implementing an innovation should form part of the evaluation.

Planning and implementing evaluation

According to Bradshaw (op.cit. p.9), the first priority is to find out as much as possible about the purposes of the evaluation, the audience for the results, the resources and the time available. The answers to these questions will affect the responses of the participants to the evaluation; whether or not they accept it as valid, and how open or guarded they are in their discussions with the evaluator. In some situations, particularly of a problem-solving nature, an outsider might be the best person to undertake the evaluation as he or she will be able to take an objective view and will not be seen to have a vested interest. On the other hand, they will have to spend a lot of time familiarizing themselves with the background to the situation and, if an illuminative evaluation is to take place, they will need to build up a degree of trust with those from whom they are hoping to collect data. The evaluator also needs to have access to all the people and information required and this will have to be negotiated. The scope of the investigation will be limited by the form of reporting, the time and other resources available. Provision should be made for the predictable difficulties. One possible area of difficulty may be that of ethics. White (op.cit.) draws together the aspects of impartiality, confidentiality, data control, negotiation, collaboration and accountability as all needing careful consideration. As a result of the initial fact-finding, a list of criteria should be drawn up unless the evaluation is of an illuminative type. He argues that it may not be possible to pull everyone's objectives into one statement but even if it cannot be a collaborative effort,

everyone's interests should be taken into account. This will give a more comprehensive picture of the situation and will mean that the evaluation is more likely to be accepted and any recommendations put into practice. The next stage is to decide on appropriate methods. These are likely to be a combination of any of the following: interviews, questionnaires, diaries, analysis of documents, tests, analysis of teaching materials, observation, action research, participant observation. The final stage is that of reporting the results and making recommendations. In the case of a summative report where a number of people have an interest in the outcome of the project, then a formal report will often be required in which the results are analysed. Such a report will contain recommendations for future actions. It is most important to bear in mind is that unless the evaluation is accepted, its recommendations will not be implemented. Leithwood et al (1981) mention several reasons which can lead to evaluation reports being ineffective. The first factor is that of threat to some of those involved in terms of professional self-esteem. Chris Woodhead, the Office for Standards in Education's Chief Inspector, created such a threat in his recent lecture to the Royal Society of Arts by saying that teachers were subject to, 'unquestioning and ultimately irrational commitments'. According to Hargreaves and Goodson:

Emotional connectedness, moral support, reciprocal help, and mutual trust in pursuit of a common cause are central to strong professional cultures. Teaching is a passionate vocation. When Mr Woodhead demeans teachers' 'irrational commitments', he plucks the very heart out of teaching. (1995, p.15)

The second concerns disagreement with the important issues or problems evaluated and the third with disagreement about the criteria used for judgement. For example, Education Secretary Gillian Shepherd recently sacked the governors of Derby College, Wilmorton, after backing a report which criticized mismanagement at the college. As reported by Antony Dore, she:

rejected a campaign by former governors and the Colleges' Employers' Forum to question the legality of the report by Professor Michael Shattock...Three of the four sacked governors claimed the report was unfair because they were only given one 30-minute interview to defend themselves. (1995, p.2)

Fourthly there may be logistical problems such as a lack of sufficient time.

Finally, the form of the report can cause problems if the style and content are not suitable for the audience. For example, a recent survey conducted by McClelland et al found that:

parents are still confused about...how children's progress is being reported...Fewer than half of our interviewees (48%) felt that it was clear which information in reports related to the national curriculum. (1995, p.8)

Bradshaw (op.cit.) also makes two additional points. Firstly that it may be advisable to think through the consequences of what is written in case it has effects that are not intended. Secondly, it is better to make recommendations which can be implemented rather than 'action which, although highly desirable, is never likely to happen.' (p.14). This area of dissemination also raises questions about whether the results of the research can be generalized or whether they are peculiar to one particular situation. This is less of a problem for the researchers who use predominantly quantitative methods of recording their results, with a view to laying down a pattern of practice that can be adopted by other groups and used with very little adaptation. The difficulties are highlighted for the relativist researchers who are using case-study or other descriptive type studies, using qualitative methods of recording their results. For such researchers, Daphne Johnson argues:

Their purpose is not to obtain a set of facts, but to gain insight into a perspective...The work is intended to be intensive and illuminative, and will not lay claim to being representative and generalizable. In summary, the main requirement in qualitative research design is to give oneself the chance to be enlightened, and to avoid a research situation which rules out exploration and open-mindedness. (1984, pp.11-12)

What is important is that there is sufficient evidence, that it should be available, accessible and appropriate so that those working in a similar situation, are able to relate it to their own work. This is certainly the hope of those involved in the TMT Initiative as the reduction in Section 11 funding affects the support of very many children in hundreds of schools.

METHODOLOGY

In terms of evaluating this particular Initiative it seemed most appropriate to use a qualitative evaluation model rather than trying to quantify set aims and objectives. An illuminative evaluation provided the opportunity to be inclusive in terms of gathering data and so stand a better chance of not missing those 'unlooked for' results. As a participant observer I was directly involved in some events and had free access to any documentation either collected or distributed by the TMT. A variety of data was collected from a number of sources from which I was able to build up a comprehensive picture of the Initiative. This information was collated and made available to the decision-makers, who were then able to draw their own conclusions. The following data was gathered:

*Background Information

The TMT collected general background information about schools, which they felt would qualify for support in terms of the criteria laid down. In gathering this data they made verbal and written contact with the EMA Team Leaders (TLs), who were sometimes able to provide information about schools in which the Project had been involved in the past, or where the TLs themselves were still providing one or two teaching sessions. The aim was to meet a need created by the tapering of Section 11 support. The schools the TMT were targeting were described in their briefing notes to Team Leaders as:

Either low percentage S 11 (Section 11) pupils or have lost lots of support or were 'on request' schools
And are willing to have us in
And will commit themselves to a development between now and March 31st

There followed a more definitive sheet outlining their purpose as being:

...to support schools in meeting their responsibilities to their bi-lingual pupils, in particular in schools with a low percentage of ethnic minority pupils.

The National Curriculum put responsibility firmly with the mainstream staff by stating that:

each pupil should have a broad and balanced curriculum...relevant to his or her particular needs...offered by the school: it must be fully taken up by each individual pupil. (1989, para. 2.2)

The TMT were concerned that ethnic minority children were not marginalized:

They are legally entitled to full access to the curriculum. Therefore, if children cannot gain access to the curriculum, then the curriculum must be made accessible to them. The children are not at fault.

They proposed to achieve their purposes:

By working in partnership with schools and mainstream staff to develop appropriate policies and strategies to meet the needs of their bi-lingual pupils. By giving rewards in time and resourcing, by working on feelings, as well as intellect, we will be reinforcing the principle that good practice benefits all...In this way we hope the shift in thinking, the transference in teaching skills, the adaptation of teaching and learning styles or the production of appropriate resources will be a lasting one.

Letters were then sent to thirty-eight schools outlining the possibilities and the confines of the Initiative. The Team Leaders were given this list and asked if there were any other schools they would like including or any additional information they would like to share about the schools already on the list. The TMT offered the schools two types of support and examples were given, or schools could opt for a combination of the two. Type 1 involved a named member of staff being identified. This person would be responsible for leading the development in school, and during the days when they were involved in carrying out this work, they would be paid two responsibility points by the EMA Project. Schools were advised to apply for a minimum of ten supply days to be taken before 31st March. The TMT insisted that three days be made available at the beginning and at the end of the Initiative for the introduction, evaluation and dissemination. Type 2 provided supply cover for the release of one or more staff in the school to work on the development. Schools were asked to fill in a simple information sheet on which they also made their bid (see Appendix A). These letters were followed up with visits by the members of the TMT and negotiations began to take place. As evaluator, I had access to these sheets outlining the proposed bids and providing background information. In the end ten schools participated in the Initiative; six primary and four secondary. One of the secondary schools designated two members of staff so there was a total of eleven DTs participating. The bids were wide-ranging and included differentiation, teaching and learning styles, communication skills and maths assessment (see Appendix B).

*Networking

An important aspect of the Initiative for the TMT was the 'networking' with other groups within EMA. Senior management and the TLs were regularly updated by being given copies of minutes and newsletters as well as through personal contact. As one member of the TMT commented, 'As you know, Sue, we send out minutes to absolutely everybody - almost including the milkman!' (March 1995, interview). The EMA Advisory Support Teachers (ASTs) were involved right from the beginning in team building exercises and remained heavily involved in the planning and delivery of the Initiative Launch day and some subsequent formal INSET sessions. They also attended some team meetings by invitation and interacted with the DTs on an informal basis when they came into the EMA Main Base. Unlike the TMT, they are not working within the bounds of a short-term initiative, and could possibly provide follow-up in the participating schools, if requested, after the end of March. Another Initiative operating at the same time was mainstream funded and has been involved in Parental Partnership. The leaders of the two initiatives tried to maintain contact and keep each other updated. Both leaders are required to present a report to various members of the Local Education Authority (LEA) and were called to an informal meeting by the Head of Project to discuss the format that this should take.

*Minutes of meetings

The TMT appointed a minute secretary and as evaluator I received copies of the minutes from all their regular Tuesday morning meetings plus any planning or review meetings with the ASTs for the Launch of the Initiative and the formal INSET sessions offered as options by the TMT. On the 9th December 1994, the TMT outlined their role to the rest of the EMA centre-based staff and I received the minutes from this meeting.

*Newsletters

One means of communication from the TMT to the school representatives was by monthly newsletter. There were five issues and I received a copy at the same time as they were sent out to schools. They carried information about forth-coming

events, change of dates, reminders of how to use the resources, record-keeping and examples of what other schools have asked for in the way of INSET. In a similar vein internal up-date sheets were sent to all centre-based groups and to the TLs. There were two such written communications and they also received copies of the schools' newsletter. As the evaluator, I was also asked for comments on other draft documents. For example, the questions planned for the Headteachers' interviews and those for the school representatives' questionnaire.

*Participation by the evaluator

i) My first official contact with the TMT was by letter. I offered my services as evaluator and in two separate communications sought to explain the type of evaluation I had in mind and why I thought it might be appropriate for their Initiative. When writing to The University of Sheffield to get clearance from my tutors, I expressed my intentions in the following terms:

It struck me when reading about Barry MacDonald's evaluation of the Humanities Curriculum Project that my colleagues were in the same position. They are starting a new initiative with certain principles but with no clear idea of where it will lead. To have prespecified objectives may mean that they, too, miss valuable, unexpected results (letter dated 21-11-94)

- ii) As well as permission from the University to present this evaluation as the educational research for my MEd dissertation, I had to clear the idea with my Head of Project (HOP). This was done informally; no notes were recorded but I was encouraged to proceed.
- iii) I wrote up notes from my first meeting with Hazel (TMT leader) when we met to clarify a few details appertaining to my role as evaluator. This followed the two letters I had written to the team outlining my proposals.
- iv) I was present at the Launch Day of the Initiative and was introduced as the evaluator, not of the teachers' individual projects but of the 'taskforce' way of operating with the TMT working in partnership with mainstream teachers. I was given the same package of information as the teachers. They were given practical suggestions to assist in making their projects successful including a sheet on how to use the TMT (see Appendix C) and an action diary sheet (see Appendix D). I took notes and a few photographs but was not just an observer. When the

DTs moved into planning with EMA staff, I was able to assist in this process. I made an evaluation of the Launch Day as a single event, looking at the goals set out for the day and whether or not they were achieved. I commented on the presentation by the members of the TMT, the content and the issue of ownership. On this day I also presented the TMT and the HOP with a booklet entitled 'Planner for the evaluation of the Transition to Mainstream Initiative'. This was adapted from Skilbeck (1984, pp.249-252) and was introduced as a basis for discussion at my next meeting with the TMT.

v) On Friday 9th December, I attended when the TMT presented their Initiative to the EMA senior management and to the other centre-based staff. I took a few notes of my own and was able to contribute to the discussion.

vi) On Tuesday 13th December, I was invited to attend the TMT meeting with an AST to assist with feedback on the Launch day. The minute secretary was given a copy of my assessment of the day and parts of it were fed into the minutes of the meeting.

vii) I was unable to attend the INSET day arranged on 'Multicultural Education', but attended the feedback session the next day. On Tuesday 10th January I was present to discuss the practicalities of my evaluation. The TMT members, the ASTs and the HOP were given a copy of my Outline Questionnaire prepared for my tutors in Sheffield. They also received a copy of a sheet entitled 'Anonymity and Confidentiality' (see Appendix E), which made it clear what I was able to deliver and what I was not in those areas. It was agreed that the evaluation days on 22nd and 23rd March would be a suitable time to interview the school representatives. Internally, the TMT members and the ASTs agreed to be interviewed. I requested permission to attend all Tuesday morning meetings to keep in touch with developments. It was suggested that:

...an evaluator's presence could be somewhat inhibiting and so coming, invited to some meetings, would be more workable: a more select access to meetings might accommodate the needs of the research project and a TMT need for the "full and frank discussion". (TMT minutes: 10-1-95)

This was discussed later by the TMT and the above line was taken on the issue. I was content with the situation provided I was furnished with a copy of the minutes

each time, which was agreed.

viii) On Friday 13th January, the EMA budget was frozen by Lancashire County Council until April. There were two consequences for the Initiative. Firstly, all promised supply cover allocation to schools was cut by between a third and a half. Secondly, another High school, who had made a late bid, lost the two days they had been offered which effectively meant they were out of the Initiative.

ix) On the 22nd January, the TMT met the two Assistant Project Leaders (APLs) to update them on the Project and I was invited to attend. The situation in each individual school was reviewed and I was able to ask for details of the formal INSET day on oracy which was due to take place the following Thursday. (This INSET unfortunately had to be postponed because of a very heavy snowfall the day before which made travelling conditions very difficult.)

x) On Tuesday 7th February, I was invited to attend the Team meeting to discuss the dissemination days at the end of the Project. The TMT had to decide who they were evaluating for, what evidence they needed, how they would affect it and who would comprise the audience for the dissemination/exhibition at the end of March. I was able to share the timetable for my taped interviews, which for the EMA staff was to begin on Friday 10th March, and to give the team a sheet to book their own particular session. The DTs were to be asked to book their time when they arrived on their evaluation day. It was agreed that I write independently to the school representatives to outline the evaluation I was envisaging; the TMT did not want to see this letter. No-one was given access to the interview questions but the general areas for discussion were shared: criteria to select schools, resources, relevance of INSET offered, communication, the individual school projects. It was agreed that the TMT would interview the headteachers/senior management in the schools as they had made the first contact with them; these would not be taped but notes would be taken. They asked if I would interview the EMA Head of Project. All the interviews were to take place before the dissemination day. The TMT leader had compiled a report on the possible ways of evaluating the 'disseminating' and sent this to the HOP and the APL's for their consideration

before meeting them on March 1st. Ideas were discussed for the dissemination days and whether the DTs should be asked to put together a small exhibition, where this should be, and who should be invited to view it. I suggested that videoing any feedback would be very useful for explaining this way of working to other schools in the future, if funding continued.

xi) The above meeting continued on the 8th March. I was no longer present but received the notes resulting from their discussion on 'The way to feed back', for the end of the Initiative.

xii) The 'oracy' INSET day, entitled 'On becoming a fluent speaker' was held on 9th February. I participated as one of the DTs and at the same time made notes on the delivery and content of the sessions, which I fed back to the TMT.

xiii) On 10th February, I wrote to the ASTs asking them individually if I could interview them because of their significant involvement with the TMT. I attached a copy of the sheet on 'Anonymity and Confidentiality' (op.cit.), to make sure they had their own copy and gave them the list of the available times.

xiv) I met the TMT on 14th February and gave them each a copy of the evaluation I had written up of the oracy day; a copy was also given later to the HOP for her information. After this feedback, the TMT leader gave us each a copy of some written notes from her meeting with the HOP on 13th February to discuss the compilation of some kind of report by 31st March when the Initiative officially ends. It outlined the need for some quantitative as well as qualitative evidence. We were asked to give this some thought before the team meeting on 27th February.

xv) On the 17th February, I sent letters out to the school representatives explaining my part in the summative evaluation of the TMT Initiative (everyone had at least seen me before the interview). I enclosed a copy of the 'Anonymity and Confidentiality' (op.cit.) sheet and details of the evaluation framework giving an idea of the general areas for discussion.

xvi) On 28th February I was invited, as the TMT evaluator, to a meeting of the HOP with the leaders of the TMT and the Parental Partnership Team (PPT). The

idea was to see whether it would be possible for the two reports to be presented in the same style. It was agreed that some quantitative, as well as qualitative, evidence could be collected from both teams and possibly be set out in the same way, although what was 'counted' and the new 'discoveries' made, would be very different.

xvii) On 2nd March, letters were sent out to three EMA staff to negotiate for the loan of their room for the taped interviews. A timetable was set out. The room was chosen because of its size and its position on the first floor at the back of the Base, where it is quieter.

xviii) From Friday 10th to Friday 17th March, eight taped interviews were conducted with the TMT and the ASTs at the EMA Main Base. The questions for the TMT reflected those asked of the school staff (see Appendix F). Those for the ASTs were adapted slightly; they were asked for their views of the TMT initiative in the light of their involvement with their initial team-building programme and the planning and implementation of the formal INSET days.

xix) On Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd March 10 taped interviews were conducted with the school representatives during their evaluation days at the Main Base while they were preparing their exhibition for the dissemination day. (One DT was interviewed on 27th March as she was on a special needs course the previous week).

xx) On Friday 24th March a taped interview was conducted with the EMA HOP at the Main Base and the information used only to clarify the TMT brief.

xxi) On Monday 27th March I attended the dissemination day, which was held in a local training centre. The DTs and the TMT were able to disseminate to each other and display their work to invited guests.

*Action diaries

The DTs were encouraged to keep diaries. I provided a handout for them from 'The research diary', (Altrichter et al, 1993, pp.10-32). The TMT asked if they could see these diaries, if they were not too personal, to help with their evaluation. The TMT also kept a diary for each school in the Initiative, in which they

recorded any contacts with the DTs and made brief notes of what occurred: I had access to these diaries.

*Evaluation

I was given access to the internal evaluation data collected by the TMT: the results of the interviews with headteachers, the quantitative and qualitative evidence that they collated for the LEA's bid to the Home Office on their behalf, and finally their summative report.

OUTCOMES:

The evaluation of a method of staff development must primarily concern itself with the outcomes of the approach in terms of the nature and degree of the changes in practice that have taken place as a direct result of the input. In this case I am looking at the effectiveness of the TMT Initiative using a short-term partnership approach, in empowering the mainstream teachers to raise the achievement of the bilingual pupils in their classes. The outcomes are set out in two parts in a similar pattern to that of Kinder and Harland (1991, pp.211-244). The first part looks at the accounts of changes in practice provided primarily by the interviewees towards the end of the Initiative, and the second part addresses the factors affecting the effectiveness of the approach and is sub-divided into three parts. The first part concerns the planning that went into the design of the Initiative. The second part looks at its implementation in terms of how the Initiative was put into operation including the various types of input. The third part is concerned with the wider context, the factors that lay beyond the control of those who designed and implemented the Initiative. In looking at the outcomes of particular areas, I will record the factors that have facilitated and those which have inhibited their effectiveness. I chose to use these terms because the experiences are often not bad or good in themselves but rather appropriate or not for a perceived or actual need; limiting or enhancing according to particular circumstances.

PART ONE:

1. SIGNS OF CHANGE

From the perspective of the TMT, given that 'what we keyed in on was a real need', they saw their contribution as adding value in a number of ways as well as having the 'effect of accelerating something', putting in 'a new dimension' and generating an excitement among the young teachers where they had 'experimented with something a little bit different for them', an excitement, which then 'fed the children'. The DTs responses reflect whether the signs of change highlighted by the TMT have taken place from their perspective. Comments made by the ASTs are added if they are pertinent to particular issues. The initial comments under each heading are made by a member, or members, of the TMT:

*Setting up systems

I think we've been initiating ways of working that will have the right kind of results...they've been initiatives that would facilitate the learning...of bilingual children within the whole class...it's a case of getting the systems in place that support them anyway and getting the right kind of ambience, getting the right kind of teaching methods so that the support's built in for everybody.

The DTs agreed that some systems were indeed ready to be put into place:

I've finished with some recommendations that the whole school could take up.

I think the whole school approach is going to...be altered as a result...Hopefully with this package we've produced, it'll be like an aid to the whole staff...

We were raising the standard of oracy with a view to updating our oracy policy and I've, this week, handed in a draft proposal to show the governors and I feel that I can...stand there and say, "I know these are things that work", The policy we are going to adopt will be based on good practice and, hopefully, will benefit the children.

...it is the way that the school's going to have to go if it's in it's development plan and fits in with departmental policy...if I can show that it works and it works well, then it will inspire confidence in some of the teachers that have more traditional methods.

*Heightened awareness of the needs of bilingual children

What we are supposed to be doing is leaving behind designated teachers who are more aware of our way of working and more aware of the needs of bilingual children...

This heightened awareness was endorsed specifically by some of the DTs as having happened either at a whole school or an individual level:

pupils have said they are not allowed to use their mother tongue in lessons even when they're talking amongst their peers, looking for support or perhaps an explanation of something...pressure came from peers, "Don't speak that language!", "What are you talking about me for?".

...the initiative...has raised our awareness...we say we respect their culture (the Asian culture), but we don't actually do anything about it and I think because of that input from here, we did something about it in the Textile project and it made us realize that we need to do something about it again...

I think I've become a little bit more aware of backgrounds, whereas before, if people said, "How many bilingual children have you got in your class?" I'd have had to think about it.

Others accepted the message given by the TMT that, for example, to enhance the opportunities for oral language in the classroom benefited all the children without singling out the bilingual learners.

For the bilingual children...I felt it should have been more specific to those children...maybe that's how it is looking at the whole class.

*Time

...the department or the schools had no time...we provided the time...

...your status sort of creeps up if you're actually offering all this time, which they think is very, very much a privilege.

I think it's very important...if you're going to persuade people to take something on board...it's the cherry on the cake...offering supply days.

There are many, many teachers who are willing to make changes, who are anxious to make changes, but they are feeling under a lot of pressure...They do not have a chance to reflect on their practice...So that time, I think, has been the key in giving young inexperienced teachers time to reflect, in giving experienced teachers time to follow through ideas, which they had already.

The ASTs, who have never had any time to offer, were interested to see the difference it made for the TMT in terms of the speed of their acceptance by the schools:

Very important we've worked for two full years without that, without being able to offer...

...with the best will in the world there are few schools that are genuinely committed...it releases great pressure.

...it's something we would have liked as an advisory group, some supply cover. One of the major hiccups is getting mainstream staff out of school...it was a carrot...

...I am a bit sceptical about whether a lot of schools would have got involved in the way they did if those things hadn't been available...

The generous amount of time made available for supply cover was seen as a major advantage by the DTs:

It's made a big difference...I think there's only been one class I've not been in in school, to go and work with groups and help other teachers.

It wouldn't have been possible to do what our project was doing without those supply days because it required taking two people off timetable for several days...shadowing several pupils and then interviewing a number of pupils...without time it's impossible to get things going; I have a very busy timetable...

I think it was essential in order to get people involved. I think if it hadn't been for the fact that there'd been the cover available, then people would have definitely said, "No!"

These have been important because you don't physically get the time otherwise particularly with what we've been doing. I've been working with the Infant co-ordinator for Maths; we've been working together to produce this work. There's just not the physical time after school.

Time-wise because I've had so many people involved...

...the time has been invaluable...to think about different ways of presenting things, to have time to go and look for different resources and to plan.

The supply was very important because I've been able to come here (Main Base) to work.

...they were invaluable because it did allow us the time to develop strategies, plan and it gave us the time to get together and look at the things we'd been doing.

I've had time to think through the options and actually design it for a class as opposed to a whole year activity...

*Support for planning

Had we not been around that planning would have only gone on at a much skimpier level...we've provided support with planning...

It's having some support from outside they've valued - a sort of appraiser looking at what they were doing, looking at the planning

In terms of support of the planning stage for each project, the Launch day at the start of the Initiative proved to be a crucial event. The ASTs who were heavily involved in the planning for the Launch and also participated in the one to one discussions with the DTs explained its use for planning in the following terms:

The initial discussions were fairly superficial but...once they had to start planning in quite a lot of detail, they were actually being asked some very hard questions about what they wanted to do and how it was relevant to bilingual kids and how they were actually going to carry it out, the process, in school...

...you have to look out for detail because when you're looking at what happens in the classroom, it's the detail that counts...it was about negotiating actual detail, clarifying goals.

Certainly the DTs who were present on the Launch day, expressed appreciation for the planning support they received that day:

...I was vague about how we were going to do it until I came to the day.

If we hadn't had that Launch day, that time, then it would have crumbled within three or four weeks because we wouldn't have been able to pinpoint exact aims and objectives...

I enjoyed the Launch day because it got me to focus my ideas and there was that bit in the morning where we had somebody challenging our ideas and questioning us and giving us a grilling and it made me focus my attention on that and I found it beneficial and I came away with a clear purpose from it...

In addition support was given in individual lesson planning with one or two of the DTs:

Christine (TMT) was there to help me, to support me...We were able then before we planned the next lesson, to evaluate that lesson and make changes, which I probably wouldn't have been able to do with Christine, if she hadn't been in with me.

This (the project) has just meant the group work's been slightly better, presented slightly better, it's been planned slightly better.

I've not just worked on my own there's always been somebody there to actually push...all the preparation, initial planning's been done here (Main Base)..the planning's got to be done away from school....

*Specialist knowledge

we've provided a certain amount of expertise.

We've been able to look at it from a specialist side of our...knowledge of language and of oracy'.

In terms of the specialist knowledge claimed by the TMT, this has been acknowledged by some of the DTs, although some were still left puzzled at the lack of specific support that was offered for bilingual learners:

..I don't think it would have been done to the extent it has been done. I don't think I would have had the understanding...I feel I've got a lot more out of it than just the RE scheme...

With the help of Hazel and Margaret again, we drafted out a questionnaire...to involve other members of staff...what I've liked about the input from here, it gave the initial start and lots of ideas...it put me on the right track as I wasn't really sure where I was going.

I found it (INSET on oracy) quite valuable because it did make me realize and think that possibly there are some children who might not know what I'm talking about even though in our school we don't have children – they all speak good English, I just wondered, not so much about the English, but the level of vocabulary I was using in my lesson...

What I was expecting to be said, "These are the strategies for teaching English second learners – boom, boom, boom and it wasn't like that, but at the same time, I went away thinking I know what's what now."

For the bilingual children...I felt it should have been more specific to those children...

*Enhanced classroom practice focusing on oral opportunities

...and because they know where we were coming from, heightened awareness of the language in whatever they were doing.

...and enhance classroom practice, like more oral opportunities – those kind of skills

By far the most comments from the DTs concerned enhanced classroom practice especially in terms of creating more opportunities for talk:

We've used...a lot of activities where they've had discussion time...working together in the group and then coming back at the end to all feed back to the rest of the class...I haven't really done that to such a great extent before...

I think...the benefits are going to be...long-term and a more thorough approach to the teaching of the subject.

They (the children) did the planning for absolutely everything: invitations, who was going to come, what food we'd have, recipes, menus – so in the end we've used that many different bits of the National Curriculum; it was not just science, a real cross-section...

...they (the children) haven't worked in groups for written work before...it's giving the children time to tell each other about things...I've probably been whole class orientated mainly in my approach to the oral work in the classroom...But I think the project has given me far more chance to talk to the children individually and in groups both about their written work as well as the practical side...

I have learnt a lot of things, different ways of teaching a class and we've trialled different styles of teaching that I wouldn't have normally tried.

...although I instinctively recognize the importance of role play, I found it very difficult to know exactly how to use it. It seems quite common just to provide a home corner and the children go in there and I felt that wasn't good enough but I didn't know how to get to grips with it and doing this project has made me focus on that and I've got much better ideas about how to develop it.

I suppose you feel there's that old stigma attached to teaching, if the class is quiet and heads are down they're working...people who are talking are frowned on, they can't be doing very much but talking to each other and talking to staff, it is important.

I've actually planned more time for talk to take place...

*Long-term resources

...and some long-term resources.

I know, now, that the RE at _____ is revised, put in line with the National Curriculum and is suitable for that particular school...

The Main Base of the language support services in Lancashire are no longer primarily 'Resource' bases but many of the DTs appreciated the Base as a quiet supportive place to work and they were able to use the computers, borrow books and articles about language and learning. Any artefacts that were lent were mostly the personal property of the the TMT. However, the teachers themselves were helped to develop their own long-term resources:

We've used...a lot more resources, pictures, posters and artefacts...

Hopefully with this package we've produced, it'll be like an aid to the whole staff...

Resources are very important...particularly artefacts that the children can actually handle and look at...we suddenly realized that we hadn't got anything like that...

I've got six lessons ready with the resources lined up that when we come to do it again next year, it's ready...

It's nice to go back to the books and say, "Oh yeah, I can do that one", "I can try that one", "I'll slot that one in."

...one of the girls who is working with me had asked...we'd been discussing things and for some reason it came to light that there were some resources at the centre that she could use and so it was arranged that Margaret (TMT) would come in with these resources...

That's been the good part of it because, for the textiles' project, Hazel (TMT) and Christine (TMT) brought in some invaluable resources...

They worked...with the children, leading discussion and providing materials.

Sonia was videoing the actual lesson so we could have another medium to actually get the information back...

...what I needed was the resources - like the computer to do my word processing, to produce things like the reprographics...

I came into the Base a lot right up until the middle of January to do all the research and use all the books and things that were here - finding out different techniques...

2. PERCEPTIONS OF THE SHORT-TERM TASKFORCE APPROACH

As far as the TMT were concerned, the time limit was both facilitative and inhibitive. It's short-term nature 'put an urgency into it':

The fact that it's short-term...you've got a target...You'd a beginning and an end.

...because we are short-term...it's very tightly planned. It's got a long-term benefit to curriculum planning.

The fact that it was time limited has been a tremendous strength because you've got to spend the money, prove you've spent the money properly and you've got to achieve the targets you've set. You can't go meandering on. There is an evaluation point.

Conversely, the time limit meant it 'started off in a rush' and 'when we've only just got going properly...detracts from it because it's 'rushing the end'. It posed questions about the establishing of relationships, the quality of the evaluation and the uncertainty of any follow-up.

They (the ASTs) had a lot of time to build up the relationships, the structures. We've had to do it overnight and that's been very difficult.

Now what we're doing is a lot of rapid planning, the actual children's work has been condensed into too short a time so we're evaluating something that really hasn't had time to run.

The ASTs saw parallels with their own action research projects:

...you've a time limited aspect, it makes you move and it makes you clarify your goals and you move along and you keep to the time-scale...getting the commitment from the school, negotiating with the school, saying from the word go this is what we hope to achieve, this is the outcome. We need commitment from you before we're prepared to put in our commitment.

The inhibiting factors, as the ASTs saw them, concerned the lack of facility in the TMT Initiative for an adequate follow-up:

We've been able to do short-term action research approaches in the classroom but that thing of then taking that and bringing it back to the management has got to be handed over, you've got a lot more embedding in terms of systems into the school so that the school will...put its future into...the examination and development.

What they can do about it in terms of the Initiative, I don't know...You hope that these young teachers will carry on but once the facilities, the extra time and the support is no longer there from Section 11, there's no guarantee that they will get that facility from the school and it's unlikely that they'll be able to carry it on top of all the other commitments. Perhaps that needs to be negotiated.

The DTs mentioned the effect the time limit had in helping them to focus and

one said, " It kick-started it (the project)." Other facilitative factors were:

...hopefully with the time we've had and the Initiative, that we've come up with something that's going to be used in the school long-term.

...a team coming in and working with staff from time to time, I think that's quite important...something like this gets you thinking about...my approach to teaching...

That's got to be the way forward, not only for developing staff but also developing the advisory support team (TMT). Surely they'll improve themselves by delivering the kinds of things they're actually planning, as opposed to watching other teachers trial it...

It has a place in professional development and, therefore, has an effect on the development of the school.

While the DTs would like to see Initiatives like this as part of a package, they expressed concern that they might replace direct pupil support, which they saw as representing "a relaxed on-going kind of teaching":

I've tried different ways of teaching in these trials but I still don't think it really replaces having somebody in your class. I don't know if it's meant to be...

Others echoed the inhibitive factor concerning the lack of time:

The only problem I had with that, maybe because we came into it late and it's got a bit hurried, is that this particular time of year, with teaching English, it's course work and exams coming up and it tends to be a pressurized time as well, so I haven't felt I've had as much time as I would have liked to have had to spend on the project.

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

For the TMT time was limited and it was essential that the Initiative started off quickly. Schools were asked to put in bids but it was made clear that the TMT was willing to tuck into the school's point of change, something in the school development plan that was ready to be implemented. They had no time to build in-depth relationships or to overcome inertia, so with a substantial financial package to offer they began to negotiate with schools to see if their project would come within the limits of their broad criteria. Examples were drawn up of areas that would be considered. The subsequent bids, therefore, covered a wide range of topics. INSET sessions were offered to meet particular needs and these, of course, reflected the diversity of the projects being pursued. These formal INSET days were optional; there were only three compulsory days in the end: the Launch

day, the Evaluation day and the Dissemination day. As far as the TMT were concerned their priority was to empower the mainstream teachers to meet the needs of all their children and in particular their bilingual pupils. The DTs, also aware of the time limit of the Initiative, were tightly focused on the benefits for their own project when it came to formal INSET sessions:

I didn't come to the INSET days. There was a language one, which I felt, because I teach English...wouldn't have been relevant; I didn't think it was necessary to the project at the time and since I'm out of school so much these days for equal opportunities, records of achievement...

Most of the professional development in terms of classroom practice was done through the action research projects with the TMT working in partnership with the DTs: planning, delivering and evaluating together:

Christine and Wendy came and they've done group work with kids. They've helped me, whenever I've been doing any trialling, they've been working with groups and just extra support because when I've done the trialling, I've done it as a whole class...there's a lot of oracy going on...with the support I've had from you staff here, I've found it a lot easier to take groups and work together and get into a habit.

We were able then, before we planned the next lesson, to evaluate that lesson and make changes...We worked together...

There were a number of spin-offs in terms of professional development, especially for the young staff taking part. Many cited the boost to their confidence but there were other benefits in terms of the development of managerial skills:

...I didn't feel that with teaching for such a short amount of time there will be many opportunities open to you and people tend not to be willing to give them to you because you lack experience...this Project was targeted at people who were recent to the profession, I think...it was a good idea because it gave people a chance that you tend not to get.

It's useful to organize such a thing and oversee it and see it through and hopefully to see the recommendations implemented...

The thing I liked about it most of all is that I knew there was someone there if I needed them but there was nobody behind me all the time watching me every step of the way and I felt the freedom to be able to work it through independently. I felt trusted with it...it was nice to have contact and...if I needed anything, it was there...I liked the idea to be let loose!

From my point of view, for staff development, it's been marvellous; it's given me some kind of status in school, which is something that I haven't really had before...just from developing leadership qualities, I think, actually organizing members of staff and organizing meetings, it's been very useful in a number of ways...

PART TWO:

FACTORS AFFECTING THE OUTCOMES

1. DESIGN OF THE INITIATIVE

*Processes and criteria used to select schools

The Initiative was set up with some imposed criteria drawn up by the two EMA Heads of Project and the Senior County Advisers. According to the HOP (EMA NE) it was organized for:

the schools that had come out of the Project because...the numbers of underachieving ethnic minority pupils were not sufficient to allow them to have an allocation from the Project...it was decided...that it would be valuable to have a small team of teachers to go in and support that transition from support to no support. We also thought it would be valuable to involve mainstream staff...so that the mainstream staff could have time to reflect and to work with...Project staff, to work upon the strategies and resources, which would enable them to continue independently, without the Project.

Various schools were invited to make a bid. The criteria were interpreted fairly broadly by the TMT, some of whom seemed a little unclear as to the actual funding brief.

The criteria that we had for those schools in the first tranche had to be schools that had lost input or perhaps never had it. I think the actual wording we had at the beginning was quite vague...we were giving something back.

It sounds specific to say low percentage but in fact it's vague and two of the schools we're involved with, I don't really think fall into the category, they've got 0.5 (PST)...

The second restriction was the time limit. The Initiative should have run for two terms, but the TMT was unable to start until 1-11-95 and still had to end on 31-3-95. This time pressure coupled with the fact that the criteria were interpreted freely, resulted in a couple of schools being included which, although they had a reduced allocation, nevertheless still retained a PST 0.5. They responded so positively and with such enthusiasm they were taken on. At the other end of the scale, one of the schools included only had one or two bilingual children and this caused some concerns for the ASTs (EMA), who were supporting the TMT. Although it was generally agreed that the criteria were good by the majority of those interviewed, some anxieties were expressed:

The criteria were very much like ours...It had to be whole school development, it had to be partnership approach, people working together, it had to be a commitment to carry it on afterwards, which was important...In terms of choice of schools...I personally felt that some of the schools – it was too low...In one school, I think, two or three pupils (ethnic minority) in the school. (AST)

The commitment to change, to do something, was important. What might have been missing a little bit, although I can understand it, due to the fact that they were low percentage schools, was actually relating it specifically to how it might affect bilingual pupils. (AST)

In terms of the bidding system itself, one of the headteachers, while agreeing that the bidding process was fine, said that 'the bid criteria were rather vague and this made it difficult to link the project priorities to the bid.' Indeed, after the initial letters had gone out to schools, it did require a follow-up visit to most of the Heads before the bids were drawn up. An AST, while agreeing that 'with a short-term (Initiative) you do need a bid system and you need something to offer.' argued:

'that the bid system tends to force schools to jump to an issue fairly quickly. I think the offer brings schools in but it also can end up being the reason why we bid for the funding...'

Facilitative and inhibitive factors were both identified in relation to the time-scale for the Initiative; the dichotomy is expressed below:

The answer is yes and no. The fact that it was time limited has been a tremendous strength because you've got to spend the money, prove you've spent the money properly and you've got to achieve the targets that you have set. You can't go meandering on...there's an evaluation point...but I do think some of the Initiatives have been so exciting, the teachers have enjoyed them so much that it would be nice to be able to follow on. (TMT)

An example was given of one teacher who evaluated four different teaching styles in one day, which meant, almost certainly, that the quality of the evaluation would not be as good as it would have been over a longer period. If the teacher had been able to trial one a week, she would have had more time to reflect. Another TMT member felt strongly that the time-scale had been far too short to conduct the action research properly:

Now what we are doing...is a lot of rapid planning, the children's work, the action research has been condensed into too short a time so we're evaluating something that really hasn't had time to run.

*Financial resources

Schools were offered a number of supply days to support a development project with a named member of staff who was expected to lead the development in school. During the allocated days, the designated member of staff was paid at the main grade plus two responsibility points. These financial incentives proved crucial in drawing Heads in at such short notice:

I think the fact that we could offer them something was probably essential in terms of the speed of the uptake... (TMT)

The supply days proved to be very important for the success of the Initiative, as one DT put it:

I think it was essential in order to get people involved. I think if it hadn't been for the fact that there'd been the cover available, then people would have definitely said, "No!"

About six weeks after the schools had been given their allocation, the budget for the Initiative was cut and the number of days was adjusted accordingly; some lost half their days and others a third. This caused more problems for some than for others and, although the schools generally recognized that the TMT were not to blame, it did cause some disquiet:

I don't want this to sound like a criticism, I don't think it's your fault really, I think it's probably people higher up, but I think having given us a certain amount of time, it's a shame that it couldn't be seen through. I think my head's felt a bit disgruntled about it. You've got one thing sorted out and he's arranged a supply and everything and then everything's had to change and the amount's been cut. (DT)

Although this was out of the hands of the TMT, other dates were changed by the Team causing a similar 'niggle' (DT). Other inhibiting factors for the DTs concerned the amount of time that they were spending out of the classroom and consequent worries that their pupils were suffering, especially when their classes were not covered by subject specialists. Some complained that it wasn't made clear to them that the money for the supply cover could have been used for resources, educational visits and so on.

The incentive allowance was significant initially in determining the staff that heads recruited to take part:

...it's been significant because we never realized at the beginning, that because of that incentive allowance, we would attract young teachers ...and that's been a very great bonus that we've had some very open-minded, very amiable young teachers working with us.

Many of the DTs themselves were not aware of this allowance and those that were did not attach great importance to the financial gain, which was just as well as it turned out:

Because of County Hall's way of working out salaries, they could transfer the salary but not the tax allowances...which has meant that some members of staff are actually receiving less wages because they were put on an emergency tax code and they will only get it back after Easter. So that has been a disaster... (TMT)

*Emphasis on school initiated, school-based projects

According to the TMT,

...we started on a good base, which was we would fund things the heads had in mind to do anyway provided they fitted our Project criteria. So we were going with the flow...

...very open about the kind of initiative that would be developed in schools because we saw very much from the beginning the priority of their having ownership of whatever they did...it was never meant to be anything imposed upon them...the time-scale precluded that...we really had to say to people, "What are you doing in the near future that we can support you in?" and I think that was a good way of doing it...and consequently when we pull out, whatever's happened should stay in situ...nearly everyone's already written it into the school development plan or certainly intend to...Nobody did anything just for modified, developed, expanded whatever they were already doing...

This was generally confirmed by the headteachers in their interviews with the TMT:

It helped us implement plans that we already had, in fact, it extended them...we would have done it anyway but it would have been rather low key.

...it was already in our development plan. We were already considering this and this (Initiative) has enabled us to take it on a further step with the teaching and learning styles aspect.

From the perspective of the DTs, one expressed the involvement of the Initiative in school in the following terms, '...It kick-started it. We were looking at the 5th year and we were looking at underachievement.' Another teacher commented that the Head was not intending to move his (the teacher's) area on in the development plan, but seized the opportunity offered by the Initiative to do so.

*Communication

Communication between the TMT and the DTs was made possible by visits to the Main Base for the DTs and visits into school by the TMT. Within the Base, the TMT had their own phone and the DTs were encouraged to call whenever they wished and it was possible to fax material through the office. Monthly newsletters were also sent out. In terms of the level and quality of the communication between the TMT and the DTs, the TMT made the following comments:

...it's varied in different ways. Two people (DTs) came in here (Main Base) every Thursday; so we always knew we'd see them on Thursday. Other people have come in here a few Thursdays, as often as they could find time to do it. If they didn't come, it gave us an excuse to get out and see them in situ in the school and see the school.

One of our principles is a lot of quality communication...we've been very open about what all the schools are doing...often in the newsletter we've been informing other schools about what is going on in terms of their recording...assessment, so everybody else knows what everybody else is doing and that's been extremely positive.

The tone of the relationship was set by the Launch day, so communications have not been a problem for teachers who were there...but it's all good, I think.

The DTs were positive about the ease of access to the TMT, 'It was just nice to have that knowledge that at the end of the telephone there was someone who could advise', 'I've chatted to Christine (telephone) on a couple of occasions' and 'We've faxed things through.' They have found the TMT easy to work with and 'very willing to do anything we've asked and full of ideas and suggestions.' Two felt they would have liked more time to discuss things with other DTs doing the Initiative. One DT expressed her initial anxiety at working with people she didn't know and she wasn't sure what was being expected of her, 'It's as though you're being tested and being watched for what you'll produce.' Generally, however the comments portrayed the TMT as approachable, especially from the people who had a lot of contact both in the Base and in school. The newsletters had a mixed reaction and I often had to ask specifically for a comment about them; they weren't the first thing that sprang to mind when I spoke about communication. Some said they had been interesting and informative, others that the information was not particularly helpful for them:

That could have been because of the kind of project I was doing and they weren't updating me on how some of the other people were getting on. They were interesting but I didn't feel that they were as important as they should have been and I'm not sure what their function was.

For others it was yet more paper they were being bombarded with at school and one DT thought that were accompanied by too much reading material:

I do feel that there's been a slightly academic slant...as if we're doing a course with a qualification at the end...it's essentially been a practical thing...but I have felt all this talk of doing research and the evaluation, it all sounds terribly in-depth and official. I know it's all good stuff but too much I think for what we were doing in one term...

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE

*INSET

The Initiative was marked out by three compulsory days in the Main Base where all the DTs were drawn together: the Launch day, the Evaluation day and the Dissemination day. Originally there were two days earmarked for each of these events but pressure from a reduced time-scale meant the number of days was halved. This meant that the planning was very tight for these days and highly focused.

The Launch day

There was agreement from every group that this day was significant for the Initiative. There were two parts to the day:

...you had the group thing at the beginning so they got the empathy and there were the people they could relate to, then later on they got the individual ,more detailed input.

The DTs, who were present, said how the day had given them a sense of not being alone and they had come away with a much clearer idea of what they were going to do. I noted in my evaluation of the Launch:

Several comments were made either during the feedback, or informally afterwards, from people who said they had not known what to expect from the day and had 'little clue' about what they were going to do in terms of their bid but they were coming away with a 'fair idea of what I am going to do'...A possibly 'unlooked' for bonus was the bonding that took place between members of the school staff; two primary colleagues arranged to meet together to share their experience and during the feedback a desire was expressed from secondary colleagues for the 'chance to meet each other' and an interest was expressed in the bids other people had made. (8-12-94)

Certainly those DTs, who for various reasons, were unable to attend the Launch expressed feelings of having 'to catch up'. The TMT felt their relationship with the two groups to be 'visibly different':

The Initiative teachers' (DTs) ideas have been much more diffuse without the Launch. They've been much more tentative about using the services of the Team and I think it was the group feeling on that day and the big presentation and the lunch and everything coming together that really did launch them. I hadn't expected it to be quite so significant in the relationship; it has made a perceptible difference.

The only inhibitive factor as far as the TMT were concerned was the fact that because the planning was done individually with the help of the ASTs, they were not keyed in to everyone's plans when they went into the schools to begin the follow-up.

The Evaluation day

Apart from the formative evaluation which was on-going in the classroom, the DTs were asked to keep personal diaries and during the last two weeks of the Initiative to answer a written questionnaire, which was devised by the TMT for their own feedback. The TMT interviewed the headteachers of the participating schools and these comments were written up, too, as data for their final report. Some quantitative evidence was required by the Home Office so data was also collected in terms of the type and frequency of their contacts with the DTs (see Appendix G). The DTs were given the choice of coming into the Base on the Wednesday or Thursday of the week previous to the dissemination day. During these two days I conducted my interviews with ten of the eleven, while they spent the rest of the day setting up a display detailing their project. The TMT assisted the DTs in setting up their displays on folding boards, set up their own display and transported it all to the Pendle training centre where the dissemination was to take place. One teacher was attending a special needs course that week so I conducted my interview with her after lunch on the dissemination day in a quiet side room. The transcriptions of the taped interviews were then collated under headings reflecting the information sought from the questions. Some were further subdivided under facilitative or inhibitive factors (see Appendix H). I chose these terms because it is often not a case of an experience being good or bad but

rather appropriate or not, according to individual circumstances, or perceived need. One copy each of the full transcription (approx. 17,000 words) was given to the TMT, the ASTs and the Head of Project on the 24-4-95 as a basis for their future discussions and later a draft copy of the outcomes as addressed in this dissertation. At the time of writing, it is fairly certain that the Initiative will receive funding until 1997, but reduced by half; we await Home Office confirmation.

The Dissemination day

Towards the end of the Initiative, most of the DTs had already set up internal dissemination sessions for the whole staff, one or two had written up detailed reports for their senior management or for the governors. Some were waiting until after the Initiative dissemination day on 27th March, so they could use the displays they had set up. On the morning of that day, all the DTs, ASTs and the TMT gathered at the Pendle training centre, plus the EMA senior management and the evaluator. Each of the DTs in turn, stood in front of their display and told the others about their project, how it had gone, what was effective, where they had run into problems and what they had managed to achieve; each presentation was videoed and plenty of photographs were taken. Then after lunch, the leader of the TMT gave a brief summary and thanked everyone. All the headteachers of the participating schools, various representatives from County Hall and EMA team leaders were invited to view the displays; a small number attended. The displays were left in the Training Centre for the week as all the EMA teachers were due to use the room for Appraisal training that week and it was a way of disseminating to them. The day proved a mixture of excitement and challenge tinged with regret as the TMT and their DTs realized suddenly that the Initiative was at an end and there were goodbyes to say.

Other formal days at the Main Base

The DTs were asked to indicate what INSET topics they would be interested in pursuing from a generic list that the TMT felt able to offer. This meant that the INSET was directed to individual needs but those needs were diverse. In the end two formal days were held covering multicultural issues and oracy, as within these the TMT were able to meet the needs of several of the DTs. Attendance was not compulsory and the teachers could opt in or out as they wished. The DTs who did attend found the sessions particularly helpful in that they gave time for reflection and the opportunity to discuss with colleagues. Opinion was divided over the aspect of compulsion. Those who were content with the model that was used, felt that it fitted in with the general approach of the Initiative:

We tended all the time not to work in an authoritative kind of way with people...Essentially our principle was to work with what professional needs certain people and certain schools have, but it's from that starting point. (TMT)

...I thought the model that they used was good...I think it has to be on the agenda that doing this project there will be times when you are encouraged to come in and share, so it needs to be in the framework ...but I think it needs to be open-ended enough for people to feel that you are addressing their individual needs within their school... (AST)

Some of the DTs concurred that the days should not be compulsory for the reasons outlined above, that is, that not everybody was doing the same topic. The concerns centred around the fact that the attendance rate was not good and that consequently, what the DTs actually gained was 'patchy.' One of the ASTs expressed it as follows:

I think they (DTs) need a bit more guidance and perhaps having a core of activities that you expect everybody to do and then giving the option of additional ones, which might be more related to their specific projects.

Some of the DTs missed the days because of circumstances beyond their control, others had expectations that didn't materialize or at least not in the way that they imagined. Others did not feel that any of the topics were necessary to their project. Someone felt it was too easy not to bother if the day wasn't compulsory, 'it's very easy...for something to crop up and to think, oh well, sorry I can't come to that, whereas if you know it's there and you have to attend...'

*PARTNERSHIP

The major part of the contact between the DTs and the TMT was on a more individual basis; either working together in the Main Base or in the classroom:

In-school

The TMT were involved in observation, trialling, questioning, evaluating, small group teaching, and team teaching in the schools. They saw it as one of their strengths that they had a wide variety of skills between them and they:

'have laid their hand to all sorts of activities...in particular classroom involvement; being prepared to observe and give feedback, to support people through the experience of OFSTED, to act as...the equivalent of a mentor...All those things have been asked for and given freely by the team and that has given us a strength and credibility in school to be confident that the changes won't peter out...because we've been prepared to get in there and do the business and to earn our classroom credibility...

The ASTs work in a very similar way in school, and endorse that it is possible for one small group in a school 'to trial something and then take it back to the whole school' with the idea that somebody else might then want to develop it '...it's like a cascade...'

In some projects, the research has been done outside the classroom and here there has been less direct input from the team:

The project itself was different to a lot of schools where there's... classroom-based stuff where you could need more input from here...There were lots of problems along the way but nothing that could have been changed by input from here...

Main Base

The DTs were given the option of coming into the Main Base to work to plan, produce materials or to use the resources either on their own or with the team.

For all the EMA centre-based staff it provided a two-way exchange; they were able to share their resources and expertise with the DTs and it gave those who 'don't have much contact with schools as they'd like, chance to talk to some classroom practitioners...' Certainly the DTs who used the building regularly, have spoken of it in very positive terms. Apart from using the resources, they have appreciated the chance to come away from the pressures of school and to have help at hand whenever they needed it:

I've not just worked on my own, there's always been somebody there to actually push...It's a different environment so you can actually sit back and think about what you're doing as opposed to having ten other things on your mind while you're doing it.

One of the DT, has summed up very well the way this Initiative has worked in terms of staff development operating as a learning experience for both partners:

I think the job of somewhere like this, is what it has been this time, which is they then came in to school and help with the delivery, whether it's them watching us deliver it and commenting on it, or us watching them deliver it and doing the commenting. So I think, two stages: stage one has got to be, the planning's got to be done away from school and stage two, the actual delivery, if they come in and support us...I've found that's been an excellent way...not only developing staff but also developing the advisory support team, surely they'll improve themselves by delivering the kinds of things that they're actually planning..

The DTs were leading the projects in their schools with support from the TMT, but they were responsible for calling meetings, organizing others and most of them have spoken about the experience as building their confidence. One Headteacher, when interviewed by the TMT said:

You must remember that this has been an opportunity for a young member of staff to take on some management, a vital part of the professional policy in school in developing the individual. Although this has been a curriculum-based initiative this has also provided vital management training and we would normally expect to pay quite a lot for the type of consultancy that we have received.

*Senior management support

The TMT were line managed directly by the Head of Project:

Adrienne (HOP) has always been very available...as a line manager and I've appreciated that and she's been very kind and extremely supportive.

The DTs spoke of their head or deputy head as 'overseeing the projects', being 'very, very supportive', 'involved in the project...very interested...drafted the letter out to parents', 'knows what I'm doing and we've chatted about it', 'came to the initial meeting', 'been actively involved even coming up and helping in one of the sessions', 'trialled the geography one', 'has been involved right the way through'. There were one or two comments about the head or deputy being 'disgruntled' or 'pulling his hair out on a couple of occasions', but these were related to finding supply cover when dates were changed and the DTs do not seem to have been held responsible for these difficulties, indeed, cover was often found

internally so they could fulfil their commitments to the Initiative.

3. THE WIDER CONTEXT

Certain perimeters were set for the Initiative but all those involved, at whatever level, had some freedom to be creative within those confines.

*Home Office

Any educational project using Section 11 funding, must have as its underlying purpose the raising of achievement of ethnic minority pupils by enabling them to have full access to the National Curriculum. It is the responsibility of the Local Education Office, in negotiation with the Heads of the EMA Projects, to set up a framework laying down more detailed criteria.

*Local Education Authority

On this occasion, when some money unexpectedly became available, the Authority, in consultation with the HOPs, decided to set up the Transition to Mainstream Initiative. The criteria limited the possible clientele to those schools that had recently lost support from the EMA Project and prescribed a partnership approach with language support teachers working with mainstream staff. The financial constraints were determined by the sum available, although each HOP was given the freedom to decide how much money should be used to fund posts and how much to provide other resources. As the money had to be spent by the end of the financial year, this imposed its own time limit on the Initiative.

*Head of Project

In the North-east area, the HOP decided to appoint a team leader, who was paid on main grade plus three points and 2.5 team members, who were paid on main grade plus two points. The additional money, instead of being used to fund additional posts, was used in two ways. Firstly, it went to provide supply cover for the DTs and their colleagues in the schools. Secondly, the DTs were paid two additional salary points on the days when they were working for the Initiative. Once the TMT was in place, they were given a list of qualifying schools and the freedom to launch and develop the Initiative as they wished. The HOP, although their line manager, chose to play a consultative role.

*Transition to Mainstream Team

The TMT contacted the schools that they felt they could assist with the skills available to them in the team. They drew on the HOP's list and on suggestions from the EMA TLs. They selected a bidding process and when the DTs had been appointed, they allocated the number of supply days according to request and need. The choice of project had to be acceptable in terms of Section 11 funding and needed to be school-initiated. The details of the final bids were negotiated by the DTs and the EMA staff.

*The Designated Teachers

The DTs were restricted in their choice of project to some degree. It needed to fit into the school development plan but also needed to be acceptable to the EMA Project criteria. Some projects were decided by senior management within the school, while in others the DTs were given greater freedom of choice. In all cases the fine detail of the projects was left to the DTs to organize with support from the TMT and varying levels of internal support from the school staff.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING:

1. THE BENEFITS OF THE SHORT-TERM APPROACH MUST BE
BALANCED BY THE NEED FOR SUSTAINED SUPPORT.

I'd want a totally different time-scale to it...Now what we're doing is a lot of rapid planning, the actual children's work has been condensed into too short a time so we're evaluating something that really hasn't had time to run. (TMT)

Working on a short-term Initiative did concentrate the mind of all concerned, as one DT remarked, 'I like the short-term; it focuses you...because you know you've only got so much time to get this done', but meant that a fairly frenetic pace was set. Even the time that should have been available was eroded at the beginning in setting up the Initiative and, although the planning stage was thorough, it was the implementation stage that suffered. This had implications for the evaluation. The research had to be evaluated summatively, whereas it had hardly begun and formative evaluation would have been more appropriate. A time-scale needs to be drawn up for a short-term taskforce approach but it must be

realistic enough to ensure that the project is given time to develop. The TMT knew from the start that there was no guarantee of their being able to continue in the same way after the end of March. Their plans, therefore, had to be made without any hope of future follow-up beyond that date. This lack of opportunity for follow-up in a short-term initiative rules out any chance of evaluating long-term effects especially in terms of classroom practice. As Kinder and Harland observe:

...if the aim of changing classroom practices is to be taken seriously, the level of INSET funding allocated should reflect the well-documented finding that for many teachers, effecting such change calls for a substantial degree of in-service teaching and support. (1991, p.250)

To assess if true embedding has taken place as a result of a project someone must be responsible, at least, for reviewing the situation in a year's time. As one DT put it:

I think it's hard to see any difference, but then if you're looking for children integrating with each other and developing the language, it's not something you see very much progress in in a term so I think I've to continue with it and I'll be better able to evaluate it after two terms and even better after a year at it.

Certainly an advisory team with a longer life than two terms can offer sustained support in terms of embedding any resulting innovative practice into the school system. They can also contribute more specifically to the internal reviews of projects that they have been directly involved in and help the school with future developments in a situation where relationships have already been established. As one AST comments:

We've been able to do short-term action research approaches in the classroom but that thing of then taking that and bringing it back to the management has got to be handed over. You've got a lot more embedding in terms of systems into the school...so that the teachers who have done the action research will be in touch with the senior management and that the school will put its future into...the examination and development. It's got to depend on the degree of commitment you can generate in that short-term and embedding not just teaching skills but...management skills.

Ultimately, if resulting policies have found their way into the school development plan, then OFSTED inspectors will assess whether theory is matched with practice.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF OWNERSHIP AND SUPPORT FROM SENIOR MANAGEMENT IN SUSTAINING CHANGE

...we started on a good base, which was we would fund things that the heads had in mind to do anyway, provided they fitted our Project criteria. So we were going with the flow instead of having to battle for a place in the mind and heart of the head. (TMT)

This is an extremely positive area of the Initiative. The TMT approach was to ask the schools where they could support them in terms of their development plan. The targeted area, therefore, had already been identified by the school as needing attention. The headteacher was approached initially in terms of making a bid and this involvement with senior management, right from the start, endorsed the importance of their support in the success of the projects. White summarizes the comments of Gross et al (cf 1971) saying that:

...only management is likely to have a whole view of the process; management must remain in close touch with things throughout, and they warn against assuming that an innovation has been adopted once it has been introduced. (1988, p.142)

The Initiative was also to be school-based, which meant that each school project would be tailor-made for its own institution. The effectiveness of each project depended to a large extent on the motivation of the designated teacher appointed in the school. In most cases the senior management approached the teacher concerned and encouraged them to take up the opportunity that was being offered. This boost to their self-esteem, along with the generous resource package, provided incentive enough in the early stages. Later on their own enthusiasm for their project and the expectations of the TMT in terms of the evaluation and dissemination required, helped to sustain the momentum. As most change is instigated in school by innovative staff members working in groups, either set up formally or informally, the Initiative had a good chance of being effective in situations particularly where the DT set up an internal support team to work on the project as well as having the outside support of the TMT. Change in school needs the backing of influential members of staff. During the projects, the senior management have been very supportive, some even coming into the classroom and trialling lessons with the DTs, but the hoped for cascade effect may fall down if the DT is not able to motivate other members of staff. A number of the DTs were

in their first few years of teaching and, while their youthful enthusiasm brought many benefits to the Initiative, in terms of influence on other members of staff, their inexperience may be a disadvantage. As one AST remarked,

You hope that these young teachers will carry on but once the facilities, the extra time and the support is no longer there from Section 11, there's no guarantee that they will get that facility from the school...

Much will depend on the continuing support of the senior management and the environment of the school in terms of the openness and co-operation of colleagues, which is vital to the embedding of all new practice. The more staff that have been involved with the DT in the decision-making, the more people will feel a sense of ownership of the project and the better chance it has of being put into practice. One of the responsibilities of the senior management in sustaining an innovation is to establish some kind of reward system for staff who want to continue to develop their own practice. As Kinder and Harland argue:

Given the importance of the motivational factor, it would seem essential that the design and delivery of effective INSET should go forward in tandem with the implementation of successful strategies for positively rewarding teachers who engage in INSET in order to improve their teaching. (1991, p.252)

3. A WORKING PARTNERSHIP CAN PROVIDE A WAY FORWARD

That's got to be the way forward, not only developing staff but also developing the advisory team (TMT). Surely they'll improve themselves by delivering the kinds of things they've been planning as opposed to watching other teachers trial it...surely it's better if they can see what's going on because it's got to be an on-going process of evaluation at all levels...Plus I'm sure they've had fun doing it as well, as much as we have actually. (DT)

If there is to be a closing of the gap between theory and practice, then ways must be found to establish good working relationships between outsiders with their objective overviews and insiders with their subjective insights. This Initiative provided such a collaborative model. The basic design drew on the action research model and sought to integrate reflection and action. The energies of the TMT were directed entirely on what help was asked for from the DTs at any given time. In the past it has been noted that consultants and advisory staff tend to focus their

attention and work in partnership with school staff at the planning stage but then withdraw at the vital implementation stage. In many of the class-based projects this was not the case, as one young DT commented:

Then Christine would come in and trial the lessons with me...with activities, Christine was there to help me, to support me...We were able then, before we planned the next lesson, to evaluate that lesson and make changes, which I probably wouldn't have been able to do with Christine, if she hadn't been in with me.

It was the opportunity to work in close partnership throughout every stage of planning, implementation, evaluation and dissemination which was the strength of the Initiative in terms of staff development. Skills were exchanged and developed by both the TMT and the DTs as they struggled to meet their changing needs. Through these informal interactions and shared experiences, the DTs felt that their practice had developed. One said, 'It's given me the chance to carry on developing some of the skills that I developed in teacher training'. Another admitted:

I have learnt a lot of things...different ways of teaching a class and we've trialled different styles of teaching that I wouldn't normally have used.

The partnership that develops in such an initiative is crucial and is something again that needs support from the senior management. The advisory teachers must achieve a balance between establishing an easy relationship with the mainstream staff and keeping up the pressure needed to change classroom practice. The role of the TMT varied according to each situation; sometimes they were required to play the part of a consultant or, for less experienced staff, more of a mentor. Kinder and Harland warn that:

Expressed in terms of a 'critical friend' role, the former must not be sacrificed to achieve the latter. Furthermore, school managers clearly have a pivotal role to perform in nurturing a climate and ethos in which INSET relationships that are both 'critical' and 'friendly' can be built up and used to good effect. (1991, p.253)

Effecting change also needs management skills and many of the DTs commented on their increased confidence, enhanced status in school and the valuable experience of leading a project. For example:

It's useful to organize such a thing and oversee it and see it through and hopefully carry it through to see the recommendations implemented.

Whether they have learnt enough to become a change agent in their school is unlikely. They have made a start, but any lasting significant change will depend to a large extent on the sustained support they receive internally from the senior management and how motivated they are to continue to seek opportunities for input from external agencies.

4. RESOURCES MUST BE PROVIDED

I think we were on to a winner, you see, where we could go in with this pot of gold... (TMT)

It is vital for any staff development that it is properly resourced. Provision of such resources is costly for schools in terms of the personnel, the time and the materials needed. The handing over of all three in an integrated package was a vital feature in ensuring that this partnership was quickly taken up. The provisions of any one resource alone would have lessened the impact in terms of the aims of the Initiative in empowering the DTs to meet the needs of their bilingual pupils. Time alone would have enabled the DTs to work on their projects without necessarily giving thought to, or learning anything of, the needs of their bilingual children. The provision of materials alone may have made some impact in the sense that they would have enhanced their cultural awareness, but the input would have been limited. People coming in wanting to plan and work with the teachers without providing any materials and expecting them to give up precious break times or spend hours after school liaising, would not have been popular, if tolerated at all. One of the most significant provisions for those who made use of it, in this Initiative, was the EMA Main Base. This allowed for planning and evaluating to be conducted in a quiet, supportive atmosphere, which allowed time for reflection. This was expressed by one DT in the following terms:

...it's been a God-send this place (Main Base)...if I was in school, there'd be hassle...I think it works a lot better than your traditional talk and chalk INSET days. It gives you a chance to try things for yourself before trying them with the children. It's a different environment so you can actually sit back and think about what you're doing as opposed to having ten other things on your mind while you're doing it...

5. THE CONTENT AND DELIVERY OF INSET MUST FACILITATE CHANGES IN PRACTICE WHICH RAISE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BILINGUAL LEARNERS IN SCHOOL

...looking in general at schools, what they've actually taken from us and what they've gained is patchy...you have to identify what you do ...for the people you're working with...they thought they knew what we do and they've come to us for it and they haven't necessarily had all those specifics...(TMT)

In terms of content, the TMT introduced various techniques, strategies and materials into schools. The DTs conducting class-based projects were encouraged to use these approaches and resources to create more oral opportunities in their lessons. In providing greater access to the National Curriculum for all pupils and expounding the principle that all children are worthy of recognition, it was argued that the needs of the bilingual learners would also be met without any 'special' treatment. Some projects were not classroom-based and involved, for example, the setting up a mentoring programme for underachieving children. Another involved staff shadowing their bilingual children round school and interviewing them, while a third resulted in the production of a Maths assessment system. Each individual school was looking for a very different outcome but all the projects were keyed in to the school development plan. The danger for the TMT in being so accommodating was that the hold on their own agenda was perilously thin in certain schools. The pressure to challenge in terms of language issues had to be sustained by the TMT working in partnership either in school or at the Base and some of the situations warranted minimal input as one DT explained:

The project itself was different to a lot of schools where there's, maybe, classroom-based stuff where you could need more input from here (EMA) ...There were lots of problems along the way but nothing that could have been changed by input from here...I really couldn't see the need for a great deal of input.

The balance could not necessarily be redressed by discrete single-event INSET sessions as these were scarce and attendance was voluntary. For the DTs, their project was all that mattered and input that did not hinge directly on that was not considered important. Everyone was given the opportunity to suggest topics for specific input from a generic list and it proved possible to group some of these

together but other matters had to be dealt with at an individual level. If the intended criteria had been more strictly adhered to, then the schools involved would have been more tuned in to the issues affecting bilingual learners. As it was, some DTs managed to reach the evaluation day hardly more aware than they were at the beginning. In answer to a question about the formal INSET days, one DT said, 'There was a language one, which I felt, because I teach English (mainstream) ...wouldn't have been relevant'. Others while gaining a lot themselves through full participation, still did not see that an issue such as oracy should have been relevant to all the DTs. On being asked whether the formal INSET days should have been compulsory, one DT replied, 'No, because everybody's doing different projects aren't they; oracy didn't apply for everybody, did it'. Two matters arise from this that perhaps warrant more serious consideration in the future. Firstly, the adherence of the Team to the qualifying status of a school and secondly, to consider whether schools would still have sufficient scope to bring their bids into line with their school development plan, if the bids were limited to a single generic title, rather than being given so much choice. As one of the ASTs suggested:

If they had started off with an overall starting point, something like 'Language Across the Curriculum', or 'Oracy'...and had a common focus and let each school initially pick that up, I think it would have been easier to pull them in as the project developed...

A FINAL REFLECTION

The Initiative was effective in the sense that all the DTs reached the final day with a display illustrating their project and they were all able to disseminate the details of their own project and share what they had learnt and the problems they had had. The money had all been spent, the Initiative had been wound up successfully before the 31st March and had made sufficient impact for the Home Office to consider a further bid. All those who participated benefited in terms of their own personal and professional development and their colleagues, whether in school or in the EMA Project, were challenged to reflect on their practice to a greater or lesser degree depending on the extent of their involvement. No DT pulled out and they

all said that they would take part again, given the opportunity. Short-term goals identified by individual schools were achieved, for example, assessment packs were produced, sets of lesson plans were resourced and trialled, awareness of cultural and second language issues was raised in some schools. In terms of acquiring skills and knowledge to enable the DTs to meet the needs of their bilingual children, this depended very much on the individual interaction between the DT and the TMT. What was achieved was due in no small measure to the combined strength of the TMT members. They were able to offer a considerable range of skills between them and the DTs derived great benefit from their input. The individual members of the Team worked very closely together and much of the credit for this must go to the TL of the TMT, who initiated the early team building sessions. As one of the Team members observed:

Hazel was extremely sensitive at the beginning about everybody feeling they had something to offer...most decisions were made democratically.

The TMT were proactive; going into schools if they hadn't heard from them for a while, and also maintaining a high level of communication with other EMA staff. A particularly good working relationship was established with the ASTs, who were approached for help right from the start. This was very important as it meant that the TMT effectively doubled the expertise that they could draw on by establishing this line of support. The two groups could easily have become rivals instead of which they became mutually supportive. Another strength of the TMT was their flexibility in being willing to turn their hand to anything they were asked to do.

As the TL commented:

...All those things have been asked for and given freely by the Team and that has given us a strength and credibility in school to be confident that the changes won't peter out...because we've been prepared to get in there and do the business and to earn our classroom credibility...

The energy of the TMT and their sustained support for the Initiative was matched only by the predominantly youthful enthusiasm of the DTs.

What inhibited the effectiveness of the Initiative was the attempt to respond to such a wide range of individual teacher and school needs within a tight time-scale with optional formal INSET days. As one AST put it:

...this is our opportunity to influence what were a group of very young, enthusiastic teachers about the sort of issues that we're going in to talk to managers about..I think they need a bit more guidance and perhaps having a core of activities that you expect everybody to do and then giving them the option of additional ones, which might be more related to their specific projects. Perhaps drawing in subject advisory teachers as well...but to have things like language acquisition...for everybody.

In their desire to disseminate the message that all children are worthy of recognition and that good practice alone is needed to support bilingual pupils, the TMT may have given the impression that there is no special knowledge at all that would be of help to teachers of bilingual learners. Consequently issues of first and second language acquisition, bilingualism, use of mother tongue and so on were not thoroughly explored. With time working against them, the TMT tucked into the school's point of change and gave the staff a strong sense of ownership. Time will tell how influential the TMT were in meeting the needs of bilingual pupils through the professional development of their young colleagues.

POSTSCRIPT

In terms of the use of an illuminative model of evaluation, its greatest value has been for the EMA Project in its reflection and planning for the new Initiative in the next academic year. Access to the collated transcripts of the interviews enabled the decision-makers within the service to draw their own conclusions. Although this data reflected the perceptions of three participating groups: the designated teachers, the Transition to Mainstream team and the EMA advisory teachers, as McCormick and James (1983) warn that in itself was no guarantee that the evaluation would be valid. They go on to say:

In view of the apparently subjective nature of much qualitative interpretation, validation is achieved when others, particularly the subjects of the research, recognise its authenticity.
(quoted in Cohen and Manion 1994, p.241)

When a draft copy of the judgements made by the evaluator was also made

available, the conclusions were very similar to those arrived at by the participants from their own scrutiny of the transcripts. Although the authenticity of the evaluation was recognized by the support service and its qualitative evidence has influenced the new Initiative preparations, it was of no use in terms of supporting their Home Office bid for further funding. This was on two grounds. Firstly, the end of the Initiative coincided with the end of the financial year so the new bids had to be submitted before there was any possibility of the interview tapes being transcribed and collated. According to MacDonald, 'Evaluations may be judged by whether they get the right information to the right people at the right time', (1973, p.87). If this is so, this evaluation has not achieved its full potential in terms of reaching all the people for whom it may have been of use. Secondly, the TMT made their internal report available to support their bid but this was returned because of a Home Office request for more quantitative evidence. Quantitative evaluations can be of use in an Initiative such as this in confirming general validity from the localized outcomes but not as the major source of evidence. As Altrichter et al observe:

Teacher-researchers are concerned with the complex problems of practical action in schools and classrooms. Quantitative data are not as valuable in this context as in classical social research, as they often represent too little of the holistic structure of practice. (1993, p.127)

Qualitative evaluation, which facilitates reflection on vital, less tangible evidence, cannot be reduced to tick boxes and read in a few minutes. Yet it continues to be replaced by performance indicators that all too often measure the information that is easy to record, rather than what is of true worth.

This evaluation will be shared with fellow professionals through, for example, the National Association for Language Development In the Curriculum (NALDIC), working for pupils with English as an additional language. Through such means, as well as by direct feedback to LEA officials, it is hoped that more consideration will be given in the future to the value of illuminative evaluation in contributing to the better understanding of the problems of introducing change into schools; in this case for the particular benefit of bilingual learners.

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Transition to Mainstream Initiative Bid	
School name	
Head Teacher	
Address	
Telephone	Fax No.
Designated Person	
Head Teacher signature	Date.
School population/ catchment area/ socio-economic factors/ no. on roll	
Percentage of E.M. pupils/ make up of E.M. in school	
Priority concern	
Request for EMA support (Task)	
Year group/ department/ whole school	
Objectives, goals/ reasons for request	
Amount and type of support to be taken before March 31st. '95	

SCHOOL PROJECTS

- P1 'To plan, organise and produce materials and resources which will meet the language needs of all pupils using the RE curriculum as a starting point'
- P2 'To raise awareness of and expertise in appropriate oral language teaching strategies, initially for Year 1/2 children through the science-based topic of 'Parties and Picnics', in particular relating to the segment entitled 'Happy Birthday'.
- P3 'To raise the quality of oracy and develop listening skills using a CDT/History focus.'
- P4 ' To enhance communication skills in the Early Years through involvement in the whole school topic of Textiles.'
- P5 'To plan, produce and trial strategies for the teaching and assessment of mathematics based upon topics using measure as a trial.'
- P6 To develop oracy skills with Year 1 pupils using a variety of teaching and learning strategies with a view to trialling the ideas with a group of Year 4 children with learning difficulties (Special Needs).'
- S1 'To identify, investigate and disseminate good practice in teaching and learning styles.
- S2 'Raise awareness of race and cultural diversity with a view to being instrumental in drawing up a draft policy on equal opportunities, race and cultural diversity for school to adopt by the end of the academic year.'
- S3 'Differentiated approach to mixed ability (Year 7) in Humanities and Science'
- S4 'To trial a strategy to raise achievement with a targetted group of pupils in Year 11. To use the results to inform the whole school teaching and learning approaches.'

Key: P = Primary schools 1-6
S = Secondary schools 1-4

USING YOUR BACK UP TEAM.

Transition

to Mainstream

Team

and other EMA

staff

will

help you

and

your school

with your

initiative

It's what we are
here for !

Telephone call for advice
and general help.

Working with TMT Team
at school or with your
groups or just for you.

Using the TMT for
background research.

Using TMT at school at the
action research stage

Asking TMT to help get in
other agencies.

Using other schools
experiences TMT will help
put you in touch.

Getting INSET from EMA
personal or for your
working group.

TMT and other EMA staff
as listeners/sounding board

Getting advice on
evaluation/action research
methods/

Getting advice on getting
groups going

Getting the subject specific
help you need.

Using EMA staff
development resources and
exemplars

Transition to Mainstream Initiative Diary**Name****School name****Initiative Title****Tasks for January****Tasks for February****Tasks for March****Date Diary/Action**

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

For the evaluation, as well making use of data collected from TMT/school meetings, INSET days, diaries and so on, I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview towards the end of the Initiative with those identified in the outline. As I shall be on my own, I would like to tape these interviews. They would not necessarily be transcribed in their entirety but notes would be made from them and direct quotes used to illustrate points arising.

As far as the school staff are concerned, I need not reveal your identities. I can simply refer to you as representatives of Primary school 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 and Secondary school 1, 2, 3 & 4. If reference is made to your particular project, then you would be identified to those involved in the Initiative and to your own school but not to anyone outside. Any background details of the participating schools will be reported in fairly general terms.

Within the TMT team there is no hope of anonymity for Hazel or for Margaret. Christine and Wendy could both be described as having special responsibility for the Primary schools but the likelihood is that everyone will have a good idea of who has said what. I could still leave your names out if you wished (perhaps you fancy having a pseudonym!!) The ASTs could preserve some anonymity if they were all interviewed.

Bear in mind that what I record will certainly be submitted as part of the evidence for the effectiveness of the Initiative. As such it will go to the Head of Project and then be passed on, in some form, to the LEA, possibly to the Gov. Dept. for the Single Regeneration Budget and/or the Home Office.

A full copy of the final research report will be housed with the EMA Project NE. A shortened form of the report will be sent to the participating schools, who it is hoped will be able to make use of it in their future planning; a full copy may be made available on request.

The evaluation is to be assessed by The University of Sheffield as part-fulfilment of my MEd in English Language Teaching and will be used for examination purposes. Should the question of publication arise at a later date possibly in the TES, another educational magazine or a research journal, then I will come back to you for further discussion. You may want your name included if it brings you fame and fortune!!

Regarding confidentiality, I cannot promise to let everyone see a copy of the draft report or a full transcript of things they have said in an interview situation or in a formal meeting; I can only ask you to trust my integrity and to assure you that I will bear in mind the fact that I will have to work closely with some of you afterwards! I will not publish any personal comments made that will damage you or make you vulnerable. If during a meeting or an interview, you ask for a statement to be off the record, then that will be respected. In such a case, if I wish to make a general comment in a sensitive area that you have commented on, I will clear my expression of that particular point with you.

I hope this is clear; please come back to me if there are points you are anxious about or need to clarify further.

Sue Sheppy
TMT evaluator

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE TMT INITIATIVE

- 1) Semi-structured taped interviews 2) (Review of the dissemination days)

WHERE?

In a small, quiet room in the Main Base.

WHO?

- a) Members of the TMT
- b) ASTs
- c) School representatives involved in the Initiative

WHEN?

EMA staff (8) from Friday 10th March:
Available times:

Friday 10th March	9.15-10.00,	10.15-11.00,	11.15-12.00
Tuesday 14th March	9.15-10.00,	10.15-11.00,	11.15-12.00
Thursday 16th March	1.00- 1.45,	2.00- 2.45,	3.00- 3.45
Friday 17th March	9.15-10.00,	10.15-11.00,	11.15-12.00

Secondary school representatives (5)
Times available:

Wednesday 22nd March	9.15-10.00,	10.15-11.00,	11.15-12.00
	1.00- 1.45,	2.00- 2.45,	3.00- 3.45

Primary school representatives (6)
Times available:

Thursday 23rd March	9.15-10.00,	10.15-11.00,	11.15-12.00
	1.00- 1.45,	2.00- 2.45,	3.00- 3.45

We will need to get off to a prompt start on these two days with six representatives to be interviewed.

I have allowed one hour for each session but I anticipate the interview lasting approximately 40 minutes. The extra time will facilitate comings and goings as well as allow me to put in new tapes, check that the recorder is working properly and make any additional notes.

WHAT?

a) Processes and criteria used to select schools/representatives:

- | | |
|----|--|
| i | How did you/the schools become involved in the initiative? |
| ii | Have you any comments on the selection process? |

b) Resources

- | | |
|----|---|
| i | What did you feel about the resources accompanying a successful application to the scheme – in terms of:
- the incentive allowance
- the supply cover |
| ii | Did you/the schools manage to use all of the allocation? |

c) Staff Development

- | | |
|-----|---|
| i | Launch? Did you attend? How important do you think that day was?
If you missed, did this make any difference to you?
If you were a facilitator on that day, how did you feel about it? |
| ii | Optional Main Base INSET days? Did you attend any of these?
Did you find them helpful?
If you did not attend, why was this?
Do you think these INSET days should have been compulsory?
If you were a facilitator or involved in the planning for these days, how effective did you feel they were in terms of staff development and instigating change? Did you gain from the experience? |
| iii | How did the TMT work in school – informally/ formally with school representative/a group within the school/the whole school?
What was your/their role when you/they came into school? |
| iv | What do think of this kind of 'taskforce' way of working?
Has it changed your attitude to working with outsiders?
(ASTs – how do you see staff development? Is the TMT initiative an effective way to be working? Will you be able to offer follow-up if asked by the schools who have taken part in this Initiative?) |
| v | Did you work at the EMA base at all? Did you find this facility helpful?/ Did this facility provide any difficulties for those working at the Main Base? |

d) Communication

- | | |
|----|--|
| i | What type of contact did you have with the members of the TMT/other EMA members? |
| ii | Were you happy about the level and the quality of the communications? |

e) School project

- | | |
|-----|---|
| i | Did you achieve all you set out to through your school project/your involvement in the initiative? |
| ii | What contribution were the TMT able to make?
Would it have happened without their involvement?
How important was it that the TMT were willing to support a school-initiated project?
Did the partnership ease or complicate the project? |
| iii | How much support have you/the reps. had from
- the Head/Senior Management
- the rest of the staff |
| iv | Apart from the dissemination session set up through the TMT, will you have/have you had opportunities to disseminate your work to the rest of your staff? |
| v | What have been the main benefits to come out of this Initiative:

- In terms of your own personal development? Were the staff reviews helpful to the TMT?

- Has your classroom practice altered in any way through your taking part in this initiative?

- Has the practice in your school/EMA changed in any way through the Initiative?

- Have the children benefited through your participation in the Initiative? |

f) General conclusions

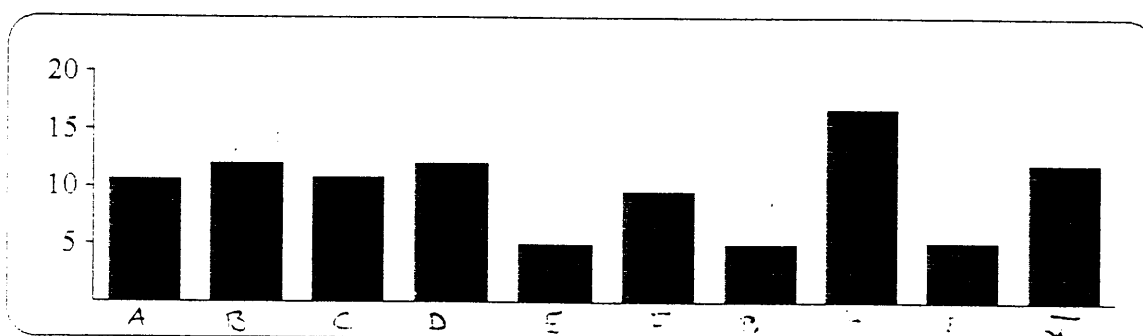
- | | |
|----|--|
| i | If a similar project were to run again, is there anything that you would have liked out of the Project that you have not had? Or any improvements that you would make? |
| ii | Is there anything else you would like to say? |

Appendix G

This preliminary analysis is taken from the statistics up to the 6th. of March. These figures were arrived at by doing a detailed task break down of skills USED BY THE TEAM with initiative Schools. For each task or skill used a point was allotted for each time contact was made. Thus as an example only the table below:

Activity to be counted	School A	School B etc.	Total
planning curriculum	6 sessions	3 sessions	= 9
evaluation of initiative	4 sessions	1 session	= 5
small group teaching	8 sessions	3 sessions	= 11
	18 sessions	7 sessions	

Schools varied as to their input needs and the type of activities they wanted but taking the overall Input scores (the across figures) as a whole the following percentages were arrived at to the 6th. March.



The columns are as follows

	Task Title	which includes	overall percentage
A	Teaching in class	observing, trialling, being a resource, small group teaching	10.7
B	Planning the curriculum	planning assessment and resource planning,	12
C	Curriculum access	making the curriculum more accessible	10.8
D	Evaluation and consultation	on classroom practice ,pupil support	12
E	Planning the initiative	leading a development and time management advice	5
F	Professional Development	INSET (direct) and differentiation. planning classroom organisation	9
G	Networking	TVEL, Advisory teachers, Project staff (not school colleagues this is a separate category)	
H	Research resource	finding materials and articles	16
I	Research support	developing classroom materials	5
J	Drawing on Team skills	other than above....experience in schools from other posts etc.	12

CATEGORIES UNDER WHICH THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS WERE COLLATED

*Processes and criteria		pp. 1-2
*Taskforce approach:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp. 3-7
*Resources:		
a) Time:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp. 8-12
b) Incentive allowance:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.13-14
*Communication:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.15-19
*INSET:		
a) Launch day:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.20-23
b) Formal days:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.24-29
*Partnership:		
a) In-school support:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.30-35
b) Main Base support:	facilitative and inhibitive factors	pp.35-39
*Dissemination		pp.40-41
*Professional development		pp.42-46
*Benefits		pp.47-51
*Senior management support		pp.52-53

The first seven pages of the transcript follow as an example of the form in which this material was presented to the decision-makers in the language support service.

COMMENTS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ETHNIC MINORITY
ACHIEVEMENT PROJECT 'TRANSITION TO MAINSTREAM' (TMT) INITIATIVE
BY:

THE MEMBERS OF THE TMT, (EMA Project)

THE ADVISORY SUPPORT TEACHERS (ASTs) (EMA Project)

THE DESIGNATED TEACHERS (DTs) (Mainstream)

PROCESSES AND CRITERIA:

Perceptions of the TMT

It sounds specific to say low percentage but in fact it's vague and two of the schools we're involved with, I don't think really fall into the category, they've got 0.5...The ones that responded immediately - was one of the 0.5 schools - with such enthusiasm that you take them on...There is a process...I think it's the process the ASTs devised. I've seen it before, it's flashed before my eyes...There's an agreed process, that's alright.

Because we were supposed to target schools with a low percentage, we hadn't had a lot of personal contact and that helps a lot with your credibility, walking through the door, if you have done some work with them in some shape or form in the past...what we keyed in on was a real need.

We got a list of schools first from the Project, from Adrienne's records. Schools that had dropped out, or had a very low percentage and had been in in the past...and that included Special schools at that stage. We also asked the TLs if they would like to recommend schools...Given the personnel that we had, we really didn't feel we could manage to spread ourselves too thinly.

The criteria that we had for those schools in the first tranche had to be schools that had lost input or perhaps never had it. I think the actual wording we had at the beginning was quite vague...we were giving them something back.

...we started on a good base, which was we would fund things the Heads had in mind to do anyway, provided they fitted our Project criteria. So we were going with the flow instead of having to battle for a place in the heart and mind of the Head. We also had the incentives of the money, and things to give, which helped a lot...not knowing me and only knowing a little about EMA, you could hear some of the Heads struggling with EMA speak...they weren't really reacting to what I was saying, they were reacting to the agenda in their own heads, "Am I going to get money out of this woman?" Once the initiatives were started and the Launch days were held, and the contact teacher had started going in, the Heads' reaction has been very different; it's been very positive, very friendly but, "I didn't know EMA worked like this!"

PROCESSES AND CRITERIA:

Perceptions of the ASTs

The criteria were very much like ours...It had to be whole school development, it had to be partnership approach, people would be working together, it had to be a commitment to carry it on afterwards, which was important...In terms of choice of schools...I personally felt that some of the schools - it was too low...In one school, I think, two or three pupils (ethnic minority) in the school.

The commitment to change, to do something, was important. What might have been missing a little bit, although I can understand through the fact that it was low percentage, was relating it specifically to how it might affect bilingual pupils...That was the only reservation I have...It was a good set of criteria basically...so deeply committed to what I do - thinking of some schools that I know, this is wrong somehow - there's hundreds of kids at this school and you can't get teachers out to try to help develop something...that is a major, major thing...the balance of all that money going to such schools.

It worked quite conveniently in that we were probably more interested in the higher percentage schools...there are some schools there...we would not be interested in following up...so low...so they've actually bid for money, for doing something which is very valuable to the school but in terms of ethnic minority achievement is not going to have an impact. Oh yeah, definitely an issue...they fit the criteria, were entitled to that, obviously, but...when we've got inner city centre schools struggling and you know when you visit those schools, the difference, and who needs the support.

I has some reservations about the schools they chose and criteria for including the schools but I think those factors were external rather than to do with the team so I'm not sure how much control they had over those. We tend to...contact schools all over but it tends to be the higher percentage schools and schools that have still got Section 11 staff school-based staff as well...but in the next tranche...there's going to be some sort of crossover and that's something we've got to work out whether we both merge into one or whether we continue to work separately and come to some sort of agreement which schools because obviously it can cause difficulty lots of different people going into school - it can be confusing.

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the TMT - facilitative factors

I think the time limit on it has made it very - its put an urgency into it so that the work has had to proceed at quite a rapid rate, which has been good...it's made it very tight and its made sure things got done and didn't drag on.

The fact that it was short-term...you've got a target. You've got to work to it, you had to. You'd a beginning and an end.

Having now got certain relationships going there, it would be very easy, very effective to now do another project, another taskforce...because we are short-term...it's very tightly planned. It's got a long-term benefit to curriculum planning

I think it's got tremendous strengths...The fact that it was time limited has been a tremendous strength because you've got to spend the money, prove you've spent the money properly and you've got to achieve the targets you've set. You can't go meandering on. There is an evaluation point.

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the ASTs - facilitative factors

Short-term nature means that it makes it more appropriate to set short-term goals and achievable goals, which is good.

One of the strengths is the fact that it is short-term and it's similar to our action research projects in that, if you know that you've a time limited aspect, it makes you move and it makes you clarify your goals and you move along and keep to the time-scale; so in that sense, I think its useful. It's a beginning, a middle and an end, as it were...I think the fact that there were 2 or 3 to follow up and work in a more action research type of way and go into school and help and support, I think that was good. Many strengths: getting the commitment from the school, negotiating with the school, saying from the word go this is what we hope to achieve, this is the outcome. We need commitment from you before we're prepared to put in our commitment.

In terms of a way of working it does give focus to something. It makes them concentrate on it and I've often felt this about school working groups that don't have a time limit, they just keep dragging on for ever and nothing comes out at the end. I think if they've got reasonable deadlines to meet then it actually does help people to get things done...I know that at the end of this term, I've got to have this piece of policy, draft policy, ready and I've got to prove that it works and show it to colleagues and present it and get feedback so there is that side of it that's a positive thing.

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the DTs – facilitative factors

I think long-term for our school it's going to be valuable. I think the time that we've been given, we're going to end up with something hopefully that is...not like those ideas that are like a flash in the pan, people get enthusiastic about it for a month and then its forgotten about...hopefully with the time we've had and the Initiative, that we've come up with something that's going to be used in the school long-term. I'm certainly hoping, the amount of work that's gone into it, that we've provided a package of work for other teachers in the school that they're going to use to help them with their teaching and assessing as well.

...a team coming in and working with staff from time to time, I think that's quite important...something like this gets you thinking about, well yes, perhaps I am a bit boring in my approach to teaching. Am I very formal? Am I just talk and chalk? Particularly in geography where I have, since the Initiative, actually got them into groups...more frequently and they've all had to evaluate and I think its things like that, that an Initiative like this brings home. You think, yes, I'll try that more often. I think the children appreciate it as well.

I like the short-term; it focuses you...because you know you've only got so much time to get this done.

That's got to be the way forward, not only developing staff but also developing the advisory support team (TMT). Surely they'll improve themselves by delivering the kinds of things they've actually been planning as opposed to watching other teachers trial it...surely its better if they can see what's going on because it's got to be an ongoing process of evaluation at all levels...Plus I'm sure they've had fun doing it as well, as much as we have actually.

...It kick-started it. We were looking at the 5th year and we were looking at underachievement.

It has its place in professional development and, therefore, has an effect on the development of the school

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the TMT – inhibitive factors

The fact that it ends at the end of the month when we've really only just got going properly...detracts from it because it's rushing the end. It's the kind of development that takes time to get going and because of the way it was timed, started off in a rush.

...and yet I would not like to think that the end of this Initiative was the end of the work with that school.

The teachers enjoyed them so much that it would be nice to be able to follow on that Initiative let's say in teaching and learning styles in Primary schools. One of the teachers evaluated four lessons in one day, so she used four different teaching styles in one day, she must have been absolutely shattered. To start with the quality of the evaluation won't, maybe, be so good as if she'd been able to do one a week and consider them more carefully and so for that kind of thing, yes I would have liked more time.

They (the ASTs) had a lot of time to build the relationships, the structures. We've had to do it overnight and that's been very difficult.

I'd want a totally different time-scale to it...Spend maybe the Autumn term planning, do our action research in the Spring term and disseminate in the Summer term, then the pace would be much more sensible. Now what we're doing is a lot of rapid planning, the actual children's work has been condensed into too short a time so we're evaluating something that really hasn't had time to run.

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the ASTs – inhibitive factors

The strengths are also the weaknesses. With a short-term you do need a bid system and you need something to offer. The bid system tends to force schools to jump to an issue fairly quickly. I think the offer brings schools in but it also can end up being the reason why we bid for the funding....things take a long time in schools so you're not going to see the results of the Initiative – there's no way, you need to be able to come back a year later and see what's happened. And it doesn't entirely fit the action research end of it. We've been able to do short-term action research approaches in the classroom but that thing of then taking that and bringing it back to the management has got to be handed over, you've got a lot more embedding in terms of systems into the school so that the school will, so that the teachers who have done the action research will be in touch with the Senior management and that the school will put its future into...the examination and development. It's got to depend on the degree of commitment you can generate in that short-term and embedding not just teaching skills but actually...management skills...it will be interesting to see what the long-term effects are there.

This is the difference, we've got a long-term view so it's on-going for us. We work on something, then leave the school to develop it and then go back...

The weakness is the short-term nature of it.

I'm not sure. I don't like the short-term nature bit of it, in the sense that you need something after, some form of monitoring, or some form of evaluation and continuity after it's finished...we've been talking about how can we involve...the PSTs to continue with the work after we've gone and the only way you can do that is to build in a role for them at the beginning rather than saying well, we've finished now it's up to you...What they can do about it in terms of the Initiative, I don't know because of the criteria for choosing the schools that haven't got PSTs so that eliminates that possibility. You hope that these young teachers will carry on but once the facilities, the extra time and the support is no longer there from Section 11, there's no guarantee that they will get that facility from the school and it's unlikely that they'll be able to carry it on on top of all the other commitments. Perhaps that needs to be negotiated.

TASKFORCE APPROACH

Comments by the DTs - inhibitive factors

I think it's nice to have somebody in with you who you can call upon who's there permanently (PST) and say, "Can you help me with this?" because there's a relaxed on-going kind of teaching that you - there's somebody always there that you feel comfortable with, that you know, you've worked with for many years and you can say, I've a problem with this, or this child needs this, or I can't cope with this...The only thing is...I wouldn't say it's (the Initiative's) as relaxed because to start off with you don't know - I'd never met Hazel and Margaret, and Wendy had been into school but I'd never really spoken to her. So you feel as though everything has to be written down...You're not as relaxed and I would say my teaching is relaxed no matter who is in because I have had lots of people in for various reasons and that doesn't bother me but I think when you know that you've got this team behind you, perhaps you feel more responsible that the administration has to be absolutely perfect.

The only problem I had with that, maybe because we came into it late and it's got a bit hurried, is that this particular time of year, with teaching English, it's course work and exams. coming up and it tends to be a pressurized time as well, so I haven't felt I've had as much time as I would have liked to have had to spend on the project.

The only thing I've found, I must admit, is that if I had to replace someone like _____ (PST), I don't think there's anyway I could because she comes in and works with a small group...whereas I'm still going to have the full class. I've tried different ways of teaching in these trials but I still don't think it really replaces having somebody in your class. I don't know if it's meant to be...

In an Initiative like this you address global issues rather than things that are tailored to one child, which is what you tend to do in a support group...I don't think anything can compensate for actual pupil support.