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GOOD PRACTICES IN ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT

by the ERASMUS + PAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Erasmus+

March 2017

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Partnership for Excellence in Language Learning - PAL

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This Working Paper is the result of the joint efforts of experts and staff of the partner organizations that contributed to this publication with their specific skills and distinctive features.

IPRASE (Provincial Institute for Educational Research and Experimentation)
Project Coordinator
(www.iprase.tn.it)
Is an operational agency of the Autonomous Province of Trento entrusted with the task of promoting and providing continuous education, research and experimentation initiatives that support innovation in didactics and the development of the provincial education system. In order to guarantee that its objectives are fully met, IPRASE works jointly with the Department of Knowledge of the Autonomous Province of Trento and has a collaborative relationship with public and private institutions in Italy and abroad, that are active in the fields of education, training, documentation and research, in particular in the area of the teaching of subjects, teaching methods, inclusion, guidance and educational leadership.

Ludowica Dal Lago, Eleonora Rosetti, IPRASE staff

BELL - Bell English Educational Service Ltd
(www.bellenglish.com)
Is one of the first and largest British-owned providers of high-quality language and education services and has been promoting language training internationally since 1955. It is renowned for its experience in working with governmental departments and state-owned school systems in very many countries of the world. In particular: it provides education for young learners ("Academic English Courses and International Study Preparation"); it develops teacher training including the development of ICT skills, CLIL programmes in upper secondary schools, English for Academic Purposes, and the training of trainers.

Bruce Milne, Thomas Beakes

Goethe Institut

(www.goethe.de)

Is the National Cultural Institution of the Federal Republic of Germany representing around the world Germany's cultural identity and providing access to German language and society. The Goethe Institut is a world-leading provider of language education services and in the field of teacher training, offering education programmes and teaching materials for German teachers all around the world.

Anna Maria Baldermann, Adrian Lewerken, Christiane Bolte Costabiei, Anja Schümann

NILE – Norwich Institute Language Education

(www.nile-elt.com)

Is the UK's largest provider of courses for teachers and trainers involved in language education. It has long term collaborative relationships with ministries of education and education authorities around the world, providing them with educational services for the development of continuous education as well as consultancy and project management for curricular reform, material development, testing and assessment, education management, leadership and methodology, ICT applications in language education and support for language improvement at all levels.

Sarah Mount, Alan Pulverness, Franz Mittendorfer

INDICE

FOREWORD

The ERASMUS PLUS 2014 – 2020 Programme

Erasmus Plus is the EU Programme for **education, training, youth and sport** for the period 2014-2020. The Programme combines and integrates all funding mechanisms implemented by the EU until 2013 and thus provides a comprehensive overview of the available funding opportunities. It aims at facilitating access and promoting synergies throughout the different sectors and removing boundaries between the different types of projects; it also aims at attracting new actors from the world of work and civil society and stimulating new forms of cooperation.

The Programme envisages **3 Key Actions**, each with its own title:

Key Action 1 – Learning Mobility of Individuals
Individual mobility for learning (KA1)
Staff mobility (especially teachers, head teachers, youth workers)
Mobility for higher education students and VET learners
Joint Master Degrees
Youth exchanges and European Voluntary Service

Key Action 2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices
Strategic Partnerships in the fields of education, training and youth and related significant sectors, large scale Partnerships among education and training institutes and the world of work.
IT support platforms: eTwinning between schools and European Youth portal, EPALE for Adult Learning.
Knowledge Alliance and Sector Skills Alliances and cooperation with non-EU countries and European Neighbourhood Countries.

Key Action 3 – Policy Reform
Support of the EU agenda in the fields of education, training and youth, by means of the open method of coordination, prospective initiatives, EU instruments for acknowledgement, dissemination and valorisation, policy dialogue with stakeholders, non-EU countries and international organizations.

Strategic Partnerships – Key Action 2
Strategic Partnerships are part of **Key Action 2, Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices**. These are **small and large scale** transnational cooperation projects that offer cooperation opportunities to organizations active in the fields of education, training and youth, enterprises, public authorities, civil society organizations etc. with a view to:
- Implementing and transferring innovative practices at local, regional, national and European level;
- Modernizing and strengthening education and training systems;

- Supporting positive and long lasting effects for participating organizations, systems and individuals directly involved.

There are two types of Strategic Partnerships, based on the Partnership's objectives and composition:
- Strategic Partnerships for innovation:
- Strategic Partnerships for the exchange of good practices
  In particular, Strategic Partnerships for innovation aim at developing innovative results and/or disseminating and implementing pre-existing outputs or ideas by means of intellectual outputs and related multiplier events. Organizations can establish partnerships with schools and/or European organizations to stimulate the growth of professional skills, innovate educational practices and organizational management.

The approval of the Project "Partnership for Excellence in Language Learning - PAL"
148 applications for Key Action 2, Strategic Partnerships, school sector were submitted by the deadline of April 30, 2014 to the Erasmus+/Indire National Agency. The project "Partnership for Excellence in Language Learning - PAL" was one of the 16 winners with a score of 96/100. All applications were assessed based on the formal and qualitative criteria established by the European Commission for 2014 and applied by all National Agencies. This is a strategic partnership at international level promoting a network between IPRASE as the project leader of a network of 4 upper secondary schools in the Autonomous Province of Trento, and 3 European partners that are world leaders in the field of education and promotion of English and German as foreign languages, with a view to promoting Trilingualism: Goethe Institut in Germany and two institutes in the UK, i.e. Nile in Norwich and Bell Educational Services in Cambridge.

PREFACE

The multilingualism of regions and the plurilingualism of individuals are an overarching topic that encompasses all sectors of our social, cultural and professional life. Literature has evidenced that there is a very close relationship between one's literacy level in plurilingualism and one's quality of work and social life: possessing proper language competences is a prerequisite in guaranteeing employability and the exercise of active citizenship within the context of economic and cultural internationalization, with a view to contributing to one's personal development and collective achievement (cf. Language competences for employability and growth by the European Commission).

In today's Learning Society, foreign languages, mobility and the valorisation of language diversity are priorities for all educational and training policies of Member States and regions.

The Strategic Partnership Project activated a network including IPRASE, as the project leader, together with four upper secondary schools and three International institutes that are world leaders in the field of education and promotion of English and German as foreign languages, NILE Norwich - Institute for Language Education, GOETHE INSTITUT in Germany, BELL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES LTD in Cambridge. The Partnership worked to favour effective foreign language teaching/learning processes and promoted innovative didactic planning for German and English as foreign languages, in function of the actual educational needs of specific target groups of learners. Along these lines and in a differentiated way for the above-mentioned school types, the Partnership's intent was to:

- Develop an operational didactic model for German and English differentiated according to the different types of upper secondary schools (grammar schools (i.e. *licei*), technical institutes and VET schools), articulated into practices and approaches and also based on multimedia and digital tools, in order to promote English and German language learning and the knowledge of the cultural, social and value-system dimensions conveyed by the different language contexts;
- Favour innovative approaches, methods and instruments to define excellent models for the teaching and learning of English and German, for the continuous professional development of teachers;
- Support the development of language communication skills (BICS - Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and language skills for studying and working purposes (CALP - Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency); develop forms for extending learning environments, modalities and contents via ICT.

The project was developed over a period of 36 months, during which the partners worked in different cooperation activities for the accomplishment of the three main intellectual outputs (project outputs) and two multiplier events.

In order to meet the objectives mentioned above, the partners performed the following:

- Action-research activity to draft a "Compendium of best practice in language teaching". The Compendium refers to the main methodological teaching principles for English and German, good practices in teacher training, in Academic Management and in the analysis of the needs of schools (O1).
- Summary of results of the action-research activity aimed at defining Methodological Guidelines for innovative teaching that supports excellence in learning German and English (O2).
- Ideation, design and implementation of an operational model for the teaching of English and German as foreign languages. The model consists of a repertoire of educational and training modules and instruments aimed at promoting good practices for the teaching/ learning of English and German and favouring the coordination of a school-level language project within the context of the different types of schools: grammar schools (i.e. *licei*), technical institutes and VET schools (O3). The didactic and organizational model was tested in the schools participating in the project.

The two planned multiplier events in Italy started a process of valorisation and dissemination of the project outputs that can be further disseminated within the organizational and territorial contexts of all partners involved, also in relation to the possibility of continuing and further valorising the cooperation. Our purpose is to give continuity to the partnership established with the foreign institutes involved, in order to support the missions and expectations in actions aimed at strengthening plurilingualism. The work of the Partnership entailed six transnational meetings that were key moments for the accomplishment of the Strategic Partnership's expected objectives and results.

INTRODUCTION

The following papers summarise workshops delivered as part of an Erasmus Plus Project: Partnership for Excellence in Language Learning. The project involves four partners (Iprase Rovereto; Bell Educational Services, Cambridge; Norwich Institute for Language Education and the Goethe Institut) who are working together to help teachers and managers to facilitate effective foreign language teaching as part of the 'Piano Trentino Trilingue' in Trentino.

In Autumn 2015 language professionals from the partners outlined above visited three different educational organisations in Rovereto and Trento where language learning takes place. The objective was to observe language classes, talk to teachers and managers and to gather feedback from students relating to their own language learning experiences. As a result of this visit, a great diversity of teaching methodology and approaches to language learning were noted. Several language teachers sometimes felt isolated in the classroom and would appreciate more opportunities to share experience and materials with colleagues. There was an interest among teachers in accomplishing a communal approach to language teaching and for new opportunities for professional development.

In November 2016 principals, vice-principals and heads of foreign language teaching departments were invited to participate to workshops focusing on the following areas:

- Quality assurance in language teaching
- Mission and policy statements which reflect an overall vision
- Creating opportunities for professional development
- Formative and summative assessment

These were lively interactive sessions and much sharing of best practice took place. As an outcome the participants were invited to create an action plan of short and long term aims for developments in their individual organisations. The sessions are summarised below. There is a short summary for each workshop.

How does Foreign Language study contribute to the overall vision of YOUR institution?

Sarah Mount

NILE

Overview of Session

- Introduction
- Mission Statements
- How can Policy Statements help us achieve this vision?
- What does a Policy Statement look like?
- Task
- Q & A session
- Action Planning

What is a Mission Statement?

The definition of a Mission, or Vision Statement, is a sentence or short paragraph providing a broad, inspirational image, or vision, of the future with a clear guide and direction, defined as 'An Image of the future we seek to create'.

They reflect the aspirations and the core beliefs of the school.

The most successful School Vision Statements are inspiring, powerful and compelling.

Mission Statements
some examples

- The Bilingual School of Lucca is committed to providing an outstanding bilingual education and developing the unique potential in each student as we prepare children to become responsible, caring and engaged world citizens.

Mission Statements
some examples

- Our mission is to be a community comprehensive school where every individual is highly valued and where positive relationships, founded on the basis of care and respect, are central to our work. We believe that every student can discover, develop and achieve their full potential enabling them to succeed in a sustainable world in whatever path they choose.

Crickhowell High School, Wales, UK

Mission Statements
some examples

Learning to succeed is what Greenford High School is about: a love of learning; the motivation to succeed. Our aim is for students to fulfil their limitless potential – through perseverance and effort. Excellence, in the words of Aristotle, is not an act but a habit. We don't select our students, but we do select our staff. Each highly trained teacher is here to support, guide, inspire our students so that whatever their starting point when they arrive, they leave with the world at their feet – equipped and ready to continue their learning through apprenticeships, at university and throughout their careers. We aim to provide the best opportunities – academic, cultural and sporting – and a sense of moral and social responsibility so that each child realises that humanity is their business and the common good their aim.

Greenford High School, Middlesex, UK

Mission Statements
some examples

Our mission is to be the best school locally by transforming learning and being outstanding.

Its objective is to instil in all stakeholders a passion for learning that will form the foundations for changing lives.

We have four pillars for success:

- **Students** who achieve in the top 20% of similar schools, who go on to the best universities or jobs with top employers and are seen as ambassadors for the school and positive role models in the community.

- **Staff** for whom we are the employer of choice, providing a great place in which to work and an environment where they can be the best.

- **Parents/Carers** who know that Heston Community School really cares about their children, recognise that it has effective strategies to meet individual needs and for whom the school is the natural choice to entrust the education of their children.

- **A Community** for whom we are more than a school and a partner of choice which improves outcomes locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

Heston Community School, London

Your Mission Statement…

- What is your institution's Mission Statement?
- Is this 'vision' shared by everyone?
- Do students and parents know what it is?
- Is it displayed prominently in your institution?

What is a Policy Statement?

A Policy Statement should describe the institution's approach to achieving the vision set out in its Mission Statement

- Should be critical, self-reflective, and set a clear vision for the school, so that everyone works together with a shared common purpose – ('outstanding'*)

- Focused on raising standards and promoting the personal development of the learners and creating a shared vision for the school – ('good'*)

[* OFSTED school assessment categories]

How to achieve our vision
setting strategic goals

- **S** Specific
- **M** Measurable
- **A** Achievable
- **R** Realistic
- **T** Timebound

How is a Policy Statement developed?

It should be inclusive – a shared vision.

Questions to ask:

Who is the policy for?
New members of staff
Parents and the local community
External agencies and organisations

What do we wish the policy to achieve?
To ensure all key stakeholders understand and agree on the approach to language learning

To assist planning and promote development To explain the school's position to outsiders

Working with Key Stakeholders

- Management

- Staff

- Students

- Parents

- Wider community?

Introduction – A Rationale for MFL

- To help children to develop their awareness of cultural differences in other countries

- As the UK is becoming an increasingly multicultural society, we have a duty to provide our children with an understanding of other cultures and languages. At **Winterton Junior School** we teach a foreign language to all year groups as part of the normal school curriculum.

- The learning of a modern foreign language provides a valuable educational, social and cultural experience for the children. Learning other languages raises awareness of the multilingual and multicultural world that we live in. It introduces an international dimension to children's learning giving them an insight into their own culture and those of others

(Heston Community School, London)

CEFR Rationale

The Council is concerned to improve the quality of communication among Europeans of different language and cultural backgrounds. This is because better communication leads to freer mobility and more direct contact, which in turn leads to better understanding and closer co-operation. The Council also supports methods of learning and teaching which help young people and indeed older learners to build up the attitudes, knowledge and skills they need to become more independent in thought and action, and also more responsible and cooperative in relation to other people. In this way the work contributes to the promotion of democratic citizenship.

Language Learning
Aims & Objectives?

Key questions:

What do learners need to do with the language they learn?
What do they need to learn to achieve these goals?

What internal factors might influence your aims for Languages?

- the school's general aims.
- the National Languages Strategy vision statement
- the school development plan
- special features of the curriculum
- strengths and interests of staff

What local factors might influence your aims for Languages?

- LA/EA priorities
- school partnerships
- intake characteristics
- parental concerns
- support available for, for example, special needs

Language Learning
Aims & Objectives?

What national factors might will influence your aims for Languages?

- National Curriculum requirements
- OFSTED, e.g. feedback from inspection
- national training targets
- national standards targets

What International factors might will influence your aims for Languages?

- European Commission standards and targets
- European funding initiatives

Local concerns v. European concerns

Local

- School that suits my child – Liceo, Istituto Tecnico or Istituto Professionale
- Location
- OFSTED Inspection Rating
- Exam Results
- Ethos promoting effective learning

European

Focus on multilingualism:
- To increase employability
- To promote transnational mobility
- To further intercultural understanding

How is curriculum development organised?

- How does the school use the CEFR?

- How do languages support and enrich learning across the curriculum?

- How does language learning contribute to cross-curricular themes?

- How is continuity between year groups managed?

- How is progression managed?

- How is assessment managed?

- How is ICT integrated into language learning?

- Can both parents and students access the curriculum?

Who is responsible for curriculum development?

- Who is responsible for identifying the support needed by staff arranging CPD?

- Who manages the implementation of the language learning policy?

- Who ensures that staff have access to language resources?

- Who is responsible for identifying, purchasing and organising language learning resources?

- Who manages the budget?

Exploiting other Language Learning Opportunities

- Links with external organisations

  e.g. NILE in Norwich working with local schools

- Exposure to native speakers
- Learning outside the classroom
- Work placements

Inclusion

- How does the school ensure that all children have opportunities to access and benefit from languages according to their needs?
- How do languages help to give children with special educational needs access to the whole curriculum?
- How do languages challenge gifted children?
- How are gender issues handled?
- What account is taken of pupils' use of different languages at home?

Other areas to consider

- **CPD** – Is there a CPD policy in place?
- **Resources/Learning Environment**
- **Assessment**
- **Homework**
- **Budget –** Is there finance in place to support the policy?

How is the Policy shared?

- Staff (including non-teaching staff)?

- Students?

- Parents?

- Wider community?

Evaluation…

Essential to have Key Performance Indicators/set of criteria in place against which to measure effectiveness

Key questions:

- Is there evidence of a clear link between the declared strategic direction outlined in the Policy Statement and the vision outlined in the Mission Statement?

- Is there a budget in place to support it?

- Is there a clear timescale for implementation and development, with key stages identified?

…Monitoring…

- How is current practice monitored to ensure that the existing policy is implemented?

- How is language teaching monitored?

- How is planning monitored?

- How are schemes of work reviewed and developed?

- How are staff development needs identified?

- Is there evidence that decisions made influence the quality of teaching and learning?

…and Review

How and when will the Languages policy be reviewed, and by whom?

A Policy Statement for your Institution

1. Introduction
2. Rationale for language study at your particular institution
3. Language Learning Aims & Objectives
4. Curriculum – Organisation Management & Development
5. Langauge Learning Opportunities outside the classroom
6. Inclusion
7. CPD
8. Resources & the Learning Environment
9. Assessment
10. Homework
11. Policy Dissemination
12. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

Task

- Change should have shared ownership

- It should be from the bottom up

- It should take place slowly

- Development of a student a student learning platform

- Development of cross-curricular links

And finally...

- Where do we go from here?

- Moodle Platform

- How can you support teachers in this project?

- Your input into Monitoring & Evaluation in the context of this project.

Quality Assurance (QA) in Language Teaching

Bruce Milne
BELL

Summary: This workshop explored the concept of quality assurance and looked at various measures that are taken by professional accreditation and QA bodies to ensure a high level of educational provision with particular reference to language teaching. One aspect, explored in depth in the first workshop, related to classroom observation as a developmental tool to start the process of greater collaboration among the teachers and the feeling of sharing best practice.

This workshop had the following aims

- To explore the concept of quality assurance in education and what it could include
- To decide what is practically possible in your organisations in the short term and in the longer term
- To draw up and action plan based on the above
- To decide how this could be evaluated

As a result of our visits to participating organisations in this project, and conversations with teachers, we noted that many of them would appreciate more contact with senior members of staff and colleagues in their department to avoid feeling professionally isolated.

We started with a reflection on two quotes relating to quality assurance and how best to define it.

- "the maintenance of a desired level of quality in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery or production"

(Oxford English Dictionary: OED)

- the systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet UK expectations, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved"

(Quality Assurance Agency – QAA)

It was noted that key words were *a desired level of quality*, *attention to every stage of the process, systematic monitoring, safeguarded and improved.*

As a benchmarking activity we looked at how a European organisation such

as EAQUALS (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services) promotes quality through its inspection and accreditation scheme. The following are all taken into account when carrying out an inspection.

- Management and Administration
- Teaching and Learning
- Course Design and Supporting Systems
- Assessment and Certification
- Academic Resources
- Learning Environment
- Client Services
- Quality Assurance
- Staff Profile and Development
- Staff Employment Terms
- Internal Communications
- External Communications

It is appreciated that in many areas individual organisations have very little or no control as state legislation predominates. This is the case in areas such as recruitment of teachers, terms and conditions of contracts and career progression. For this reason the academic management group decided to concentrate on quality assurance, professional development, mission and policy statements and assessment.

Observation of teachers in the classroom has been the cornerstone of quality assurance in many private and state schools within Europe. It is appreciated that this is not the prevailing culture in Italy and it would probably need state legislation before the majority of teachers would agree to be observed. As we all know it is a potentially threatening situation and would be a significant cultural change (even though other professions have to undergo regular quality assurance monitoring: pilots, surgeons, doctors etc.) However, within the scope of this project we explored the possibility of gaining access to the classroom through **developmental** observations. If classroom observation is followed up with constructive and supportive feedback it can be a powerful developmental tool.

A lot of discussion was held over the procedure for observing teachers and the criteria by which they are observed. In quality assurance observations this is crucial and appendix A is an example of some of the criteria by which teachers can be measured. (One good way of starting internal discussion of teaching methodology is to ask teachers at a departmental meeting to write down their top six criteria and then compare with each other and try to come to some agreement).

Another factor is that teachers must have trust in the person observing them. Developmental observations must be carried out in a non-threatening environment and with the teacher's full agreement. Consequently, it is better if these observations are not carried out by Principals or Heads of Department or others seen in positions of influence or power. Peer observations may be the best initial step so that teachers can see how others teach and learn aspects of classroom practice from them. If logistics allow team teaching can be a

powerful developmental tool whereby two teachers team up to plan a lesson together (preferably experimental in nature) and then teach parts of it in turn. Teachers should be encouraged to record the procedure adopted and their reflections on what happened and how the lesson progressed.

However, it would be foolish not to make use of the expertise of Heads of Department and senior teachers. If teachers can be encouraged to think of it as a supportive and developmental opportunity then observation and subsequent discussion can be invaluable. Heads of Department and Senior Teachers could start the ball rolling by opening up their classrooms for colleagues to observe.

To maximise the developmental opportunity the following steps should be in place:

- The teacher should be in full agreement
- The teacher may want to dictate the agenda and ask for a specific aspect of the lesson to be focussed on (eg: classroom management, suitability of material, opportunities for interaction, means of error correction etc.)
- A plan with, as a minimum, the objectives and learning outcomes will help focus the lesson and give the observer an idea of what to look for
- Post-lesson discussion should be within 24 hours and should be constructive in nature

For all observations it may be helpful for the observer to record what happened and when. Many observers use a variation of the following form:

Lesson observation form

Time	Activity	Comments

The time column is useful for analysis afterwards so that the teacher can see how long something took and to reflect on whether the appropriate amount of time was given to each activity. In the activity column the observer should try to record exactly what happened, stage by stage. The comment column is useful for the observer to inform the discussion stage later on.

As a conclusion it was agreed that developmental observations could be one area for professional development and could help start a process of greater internal collaboration among teachers and start to instil a culture of sharing

best practice. The point was made that teachers can learn from each other and given the right circumstances are willing to do so.

Two quotes by Patrick Lencioni concluded the session.

"Remember teamwork begins by building trust. And the only way to do that is to overcome our need for invulnerability."

Patrick Lencioni, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable

"Great teams do not hold back with one another. They are unafraid to air their dirty laundry. They admit their mistakes, their weaknesses, and their concerns without fear of reprisal."

Patrick Lencioni, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable

Appendix A

Sample criteria for classroom observation

- Good rapport with students
- Significant amounts of teaching in the target language
- Aims of the class clear and appropriate
- Learning objectives shared with the students
- Opportunities for student interaction
- Explanations of new language clear and accurate
- Students engaged and motivated
- Praise given when due
- Error correction carried out when appropriate
- Pronunciation teaching given attention
- Homework is appropriate, relevant and monitored
- Engaging and appropriate material
- Students given advice on independent learning
- Genuine authentic communication rather than display language
- Summary of learning at the end of the lesson

Assessment for learning (Förderliche Leistungsbewertung) in teaching - does it concern school leaders too?

Anna Maria Baldermann

GOETHE INSTITUT MAILAND

Erasmus+

What is „assessment for learning"?

The feedback culture

By "assessment for learning"[2] we mean „eine innovative Prüfungs- und Feedbackkultur" (an innovative assessment and feedback culture) through which the individual learning processes of pupils are promoted in a targeted way (Stern, 2010). According to Dylan Wiliam, it serves as a bridge between teaching and learning: a close feedback loop that enables teachers to draw conclusions about the learning status and process of learners and therefore serves as a basis for the improvement and development of teaching. In order to help learners progress in learning foreign languages and to increase the *Teaching quality* quality of teaching, it is therefore important to observe the learning process of pupils and exploit existing knowledge about their progress: only by doing so will teaching be oriented to the needs of learners and teachers will support and activate the learning process.

- *Food for thought:* does your school programme take assessment for learning into account?

- *Food for thought:* do learners know how far they have come along in their learning process and do they receive help if they need it?

- *Food for thought:* do learners, parents and teachers know how important assessment for learning is, meant as an assessment and feedback culture?

- *Food for though*t: is the language level achieved by learners at the end of the school recognized and positively enhanced?

Language education – a task for the entire school team?

The quality of a school depends first of all on the quality of teaching provided by teachers every day. Teachers are the face of the school, that learners usually see much more often than they see school leaders. On the other hand, the *More success in learning* quality of teaching is strongly influenced by its methodological setup. But it is also measured on the basis of the learning success of pupils, which is of great interest to school leaders since it is a real output and helps schools emerge and establish themselves.

Focus on learning

When developing learning, successful teaching and methodology in foreign languages must therefore focus on the learning of pupils. Their learning must be at the centre of a school's actions and principles. Language education is a

task for the entire school team, both within the framework of both teaching and school development. And yet, the development of teaching cannot disregard learners. Their feedback orients and guides it and helps to perceive lessons as a dialogic process.

- *Food for thought:* what value is attached to language education in your school?

- *Food for thought:* is there a basic common belief, a shared vision about learners' feedback and development of teaching?

An overarching issue: lessons as dialogues?

Reflecting on an innovative culture of learning and assessment can prove useful not only in foreign language teaching but in all school subjects:

Maximizing learning possibilities

Supporting the development of learning

The individual promotion of learners, by testing their progress, together with good quality teaching that uses a variety of inputs, has the utmost influence on the learning success of pupils (Stern, 2010). If the structures of learning, classes and teaching are harmonized, it is possible to maximize learning possibilities and achieve valuable results. School leaders can establish this consistency and create working relations (Meyer, 2011). The topic of „assessment for learning" can be stimulated and supported by the leadership of the school, in relation to all subjects, as a task within the framework of the development of teaching.

- *Food for thought:* what can school leaders do to increase the focus on learning in the school's culture and to maximize the possibilities to learn? What is your school already doing in this respect?

- *Food for thought:* how is the development of teaching stimulated in your school? What possibilities of supporting it among teachers do you see?

TIP: the development of teaching never starts from scratch. Certainly your school must be already involved in complex processes and projects. Exploit and consolidate the resources and knowledge you already have.

Summative and formative assessment

Focus on basic notions

Guiding the learning process

In order to focus on learning and establish a modern culture of learning and assessment at school, it is important to reflect on *the way* assessment takes place. The majority of tests administered to learners are tests assessing summatively and therefore in a punctual way, after completing a topic. In this way, short time memory of basic notions is involved and you test what is easy to examine. Formative assessment, on the other hand, occurs while doing a topic and guides the learning process.

Summative assessment

Summative tests assess in a punctual way a performance, that is used to give marks and to position learners at specific learning levels. This type

of assessment, though, can vary a lot, depending on the moment, on the formulation of the task, on the test format and on the composition of the group of learners. Furthermore, the fact that learners are or are not able to carry out a certain task sometimes simply depends on how they are doing that day.

Summative assessments entail the danger that learners "mechanically" learn what they need to know and then immediately forget it. This can be demotivating, especially for weak learners.

Next higher level of competence

A number of significant studies show on the other hand that learners learn much more, for instance, when they develop together questions about a topic for which they already have the answers for an hour rather than use the same hour to fill in empty spaces in a test (Wiliam, 2011). Furthermore, it is assumed that learners who are helped by their teachers for longer periods, sooner or later can manage on their own and then move up to the next higher level of competence.

Formative assessment

Consolidating success in learning

Formative assessment is therefore effective and lasts in time. The focus of teachers is on the learning of pupils, who can consolidate their success through a constant feedback. If teachers give a constant feedback instead of giving the usual marks at the end of each teaching unit, this will help even weak learners to better judge their performance (Stern, 2010).

Many types of questions

Focus on understanding

Obviously formative assessment does not rule out summative tests but serves the purpose of improving learning even in diagnostic terms. Formative assessment becomes even more reliable if as many types of questions as possible are used and if teachers systematically try to test what pupils have learnt also in relation to higher skills, such as *applying* and *judging*. In this way, the focus is on the content of learning itself and on its understanding (Stern, 2010, pp. 43 ff). This increases the success of learning in the long run.

- *Food for thought*: how are tests administered in your school/class? Are they mainly summative or formative?

- *Food for thought*: what type of test is used/do you use?

TIP: wherever possible, you can try to renounce summative tests and enhance the role of formative assessments. This is a slow process that must be started and tested by teachers. In your capacity as school leaders, you can allow space for these initiatives.

Teachers systematically observe and test progress in class

Observing the learning process

In order to assess formatively, it is important to systematically test and observe the progress of learners while teaching. The goal is to continuously observe the learning process of pupils and give them feedback. In this way, it is also possible to establish which level each individual learner and the group as a whole have reached. This means that light is shed not only on new knowledge acquired but also on weaknesses and unclear elements. Assessment and motivation are not incompatible but go hand in hand: *if you know where you stand, you know better where you must/can/want to get*.

Internal differentiation

Furthermore, teachers are better capable of making internal differentiation and assist learners on an individual basis: *which learner knows this already and who does not know it yet? Did everybody really understand? What are the difficulties? What do I have to go back to? What can I leave out, even though I had planned to cover that topic? etc*.

Thanks to assessment for learning, teachers are capable of understanding the need for individual support and assistance of learners and can adjust the learning goals of their teaching to the class. In this way teaching can be planned and organized based on a significant foundation. Learners' feedback and orientation to learning goals are therefore closely related.

- *Food for thought*: is the learning process of pupils in your school followed also in a formative way, i.e. in assessment for learning terms?

- *Food for thought*: do teachers/do you receive support in introducing innovative methods for the assessment of performance at school?

Formal and informal tests: what counts is feedback!

Informal assessment

Formative assessment can be formal or informal. What counts is to remember that learning progress tests refer to a specific topic and a specific group of learners; this means that the outcomes of tests only apply to that topic and to that group. You can assess both the final outcome and the way followed to get to it.

Self-assessment and peer evaluation

Informal tests can also be constructed and assessed by learners themselves. In this way, learners can follow their progress by means of self-assessment and peer evaluation and reflect on their learning. This is a further element promoting motivation through autonomous learning and consolidating success: focussing on pupils' learning means supporting autonomous learning in the long term, promoting self-correction skills and therefore generating an intrinsic interest for what is being learnt.

Intrinsic interest for what is being learnt

Observations by teachers

Observations made by the teacher are a powerful means of informal assessment of school performance. Teachers can opt for a spontaneous approach or can follow check-lists that they specifically create for their learners. This type of data collection and documentation of progress in learning can be directly used in the continuation of the teaching activity. By doing so, teachers see what potential is already there in a class and have a better understanding of the way by which learning processes take place among their learners. Observations can be performed by focussing on specific learners, on the topic learnt or on special skills, such as fluency etc.

Transparent learning goals

Irrespective of the way in which testing takes place, we need to always underline the importance of transparent learning goals and a clear formulation of performance expectations: agreed-upon learning objectives and verbal or non-verbal communication on performance expectations are a source of clarity for learners. This clarity helps them organize in an increasingly autonomous way their own learning and to have a clear overview of their learning process.

Clear performance expectations

To this end, informing pupils at the beginning of a class and agreeing on binding rituals and rules is decisive.

- *Food for thought:* what possibilities for informal testing do teachers/ do you use and how often?

TIP: preparing a check-list can be useful for systematic observation. In this way data about individual learners can be collected more effectively. Encourage teachers to act in this way and support the exchange of information collected/ this approach among colleagues.

Examples: *the following short examples clarify how assessment for learning can take place in class and do not claim to be exhaustive. Reflections and tips are meant here for teachers.*

Non-verbal signals in oral production

Non-verbal signals

Assessing informally in class means helping self-correction, not only in order to ascertain the learning level of pupils but also to identify further potential levels of competence. Help with self-correction can occur by means of non-verbal signals or a direct feedback. In particular, non-verbal signals lend themselves to helping learners understand that they made a mistake or directly indicating how they can correct it. This especially applies to oral production and can be practiced in class, with the group. After establishing the method, you will also save time when correcting; teachers, though, should always give learners enough time to react to the help offered to them or to ask for help. Often, time is not enough (Grotjahn & Kleppin, 2015).

Time waiting for self-correction

TIP: practice non-verbal signals in class, so that they can rapidly produce an effect and so that the corrected learners are directly guided towards the search for a solution, for example by means of hand movements (to indicate the position of the verb) or using mimics (attention: mistake!).

Group work in oral production: the example of "Sprachstadt", the language city.

The "Sprachstadt" project: the language city

A well-known example, that lends itself well to cooperation with other schools as well, is the idea of the „Sprachstadt", the language city, which has been practiced for decades in Dutch schools (Carl Van de Burg). Within the „Sprachstadt" project, learners complete a simulated route through a city and visit the most significant places, such as a hotel, a shopping mall, a supermarket or a cinema. Along the route, learners are exposed to realistic situations, in which they must be able to handle a conversation. There are roles that learners take on when they visit the different places as guests and there are "fixed" roles, assigned to the various stations: for example, waiter and guest at a restaurant or policeman and pedestrian.

Duration and procedure

The project is meant to last approximately one month, three classes a week. At the start, pupils choose together with their teacher four topics that they will

develop, for instance: 1. At the youth hostel, 2. Asking directions, 3. At the restaurant, 3. In a clothing shop.

Making dialogues

Teachers present various dialogues for each topic. A table is made with language functions of the various situations and the related language expressions. Learners are then divided into pairs or groups of three and prepare dialogues. Groups can resort to the table that they prepared together, and its language expressions.

Final performance

The class as a whole chooses the dialogues for the final performance of the „Sprachstadt". Depending on the language level of learners, two different forms of thematic dialogues are prepared: a more complex version (for instance A2) and an easier one (for example A1). In this way you ensure that all learners can participate in the project.

Material for practice is available at:
https://www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf25/pk4396427.pdf

Preparation in class

Practicing dialogues

When preparing for the final performance, on which occasion the Sprachstadt is staged in the whole school or in a wing of the building, learners will have to learn the dialogues that have been prepared: to this end they are divided into two groups and arranged into two rows, one opposite the other. In this "formation", learners practice the dialogue with the person in front of them. The teacher decides how much time they can use for each dialogue. When time is over, learners of row A move one place down and by doing so practice the same dialogue with ever changing partners. Not only partners are changed but also roles: those who acted as waiter in the restaurant will then be the client. At the end of the first round, you start again from the beginning and change dialogue. This time learners in row B will move down one place when time for a dialogue is over. In this way the memorization phase is not boring at all but lively and fun.

Learners help other learners

You can also involve in the project older pupils, of higher school years or from another school: while younger pupils move around the Sprachstadt, older pupils assess their oral production and act as "evaluators" after preparing themselves for the same dialogues. Teachers can use this occasion to integrate their class observations.

The language passport as a motivation

TIP: at the end of the project, make sure that outcomes are included in a language passport that bears a symbol for each one of the four situations (restaurant, clothing shop...). After completing each dialogue, learners receive a stamp on their passport, with a symbol that corresponds to that specific dialogue. After collecting the four stamps, learners have successfully completed the route through the Sprachstadt.

Written production: two-phase work and group work

In most cases, the outcomes of summative assessments are not gone through again. We know that from our own experience as pupils. Often times, only the best learners correct their mistakes and you do not go through the class test

Practicing different methods	with those who would really benefit from it. Informal assessments of written school performance can also be done. As was the case with oral production, practicing in class is useful. Not all methods are equally clear for all learners.
Two-phase work	When correcting written texts, attention should be paid to having learners make the corrections themselves, obviously with their teacher's help, who can consider, for example, to administer a class assignment on two different days. Teachers will hand it out the next day so that it can be improved, either with no correction at all or after marking the mistakes but with no correction. In this way learners can review their text. This gives teachers important indications about the learning process of pupils and on the solving approaches that they can already apply.
Variety of questions and a wide repertoire	In written production also, having a variety of questions and a wide repertoire of exercises proves useful, so as to take into account different types of learners and to collect as much data as possible on individual learners.
Group production of texts	If a text is written in groups, the group work phase during which learners discuss what they will write, can be used by the teacher as an observation phase. A preparatory individual working phase can be useful in the case, for instance, of a jigsaw method meeting or expert groups.

TIP: it is useful to develop together with learners, in class, rules for self-correction and for third party correction. This accelerates the process of identifying mistakes and making corrections. Develop those rules with your learners and make them visible in the classroom (for instance by means of a poster that you create together).

The culture of reflection in class: learning diaries and questionnaires/ check-lists

Learning diary	The self-assessment skill is an important prerequisite for life-long learning. A learning diary helps learners organize their learning and identify their level. And yet the quality of self-assessment depends on a number of important factors. If you want to introduce a learning diary, you have to take the following into account (Weskamp, 2007):

- In the case of younger learners, it is important to formulate the „I can/cannot" statements as concretely as possible: „I can use simple greetings", instead of „I possess a number of learning techniques to read in a foreign language", that is too generic.

- Beginners benefit most from checklists and questionnaires in their mother tongue.

- Anxious learners tend to assess their own learning more pessimistically.

- It is easier for more autonomous learners to make a self-assessment. Learners who let the surrounding environment influence them a lot have more difficulties in this respect.

- Contact with mother tongue speakers and therefore with a "standard", helps self-assessment.

Reflection on learning

Self-assessment is a metacognitive strategy that learners must learn in the first place. This means reflecting on one's own learning and learning to reflect. In the classroom, this means that the teacher introduces a culture of reflection that can serve as a basis for autonomous learning for learners. There are two different possible applications:

- <u>Inventory method</u> (global self-assessment), for instance at the beginning of the school year, so that learners understand what they already know and what goals they must set for the future.

- Task-based assessment stably <u>integrated in the learning process</u> and with a formative character: the objective is improving success in learning by collecting experience and assessing what has been learnt.

Questionnaires/ check-lists

Both things can be done by individual learners using questionnaires. In the case of global self-assessment, all skills can be included, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing and learners make a self-assessment based on a scale (for instance from 1 to 10) or a "I can/I cannot checklist". Task-based self-assessment can occur via questionnaires too, for instance before and after a report. They can be supplied or consciously developed together with the learners in class, within the framework of a new culture of reflection.

School diary
At the end of the school day, pupils write down what they have learnt, asking a number of fundamental questions: what did I learn? What did I enjoy? How do I feel?

Notebook with a section for comments:
In a normal exercise-book approximately one third of each page is kept free for comments, which are therefore directly linked to the written content and that pupils can further comment.

Travel diary
It replaces the exercise-books of one or several subjects, with a variety of notes in chronological order (sketches, clusters, drawings, feedback, self-assessments) -> the travel diary must narrate the story of their personal encounter with the learning content.

Notebook of learning goals:
It is a table and it contains learning goals that can be developed over a long period of time. When a goal is reached, a note is made, with a date -> learners have their own learning path before their eyes, both what they have accomplished and what they have ahead of them.

Feedback and balance sheets
In the form of a table: learning content and one's own performance are noted down, by checking boxes or with agreed-upon symbols.

- *Food for thought:* as a teacher are you supported in introducing a culture of reflection in teaching (by colleagues, by the school leadership)? What form could that support take?

TIP: involve your learners in a debate about a new culture of reflection: you can prepare it and talk in class about self-assessments, the way they work and the reason why they are useful.

TIP: it is easier to make a self-reflection after a written assignment than after an oral exercise because learners can look again at what they wrote and directly refer to it.

Example of the portfolio of languages

Promotion of linguistic diversity

A useful self-assessment tool is also the European language portfolio (ELP, http://www.coe.int/de/web/portfolio), which by now has been made available by the Council of Europe in many digital versions and variants to promote linguistic diversity. The learning portfolio helps the reflection of learners and offers descriptions of skills and difficulties which are as realistic as possible. In this way, learners have a picture of what they have learnt and can better formulate their learning goals. ELP uses check-lists for A1-B1 levels. As stated above, check-lists for beginners should be written in the language of their country.

Video

http://www.sprachenportfolio-deutschland.de (video by the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, Austria/ a Council of Europe institution).

When you work with portfolios, you basically distinguish between process and product portfolios. You use one or the other depending on your learning goal and content, i.e. topic:

Process portfolio
It contains documents, analyses and comments about one's individual learning path: one's own texts and texts written by others, work-sheets, pictures, reports, critiques, a list of books/texts read.

Product portfolio
It contains a selection of assignments that learners judge to be especially well-made and also opinions, the description of their working methods and concluding reflections.

Both versions can be used by teachers to keep track of the learning path, as a diagnostic and assessment tool, to increase motivation, as a space for reflection and self-perception or simply as an exercise and stimulus.

TIP: portfolios can be done on a daily or weekly basis or during a project and can be personal or group portfolios. You can have learners create the portfolios, you can make them together or encourage them by means of guiding questions and completing sentences.

TIP: use product portfolios to advertise your field of teaching/language/school and present them during open days. Or have learners present in groups to their parents their learning outcomes using a process portfolio, in order to involve them more.

Blitz feedback: learners as co-constructors of lessons

Feedback loop

Lessons are dialogic. There is a regular and constant exchange between teacher and learners on various topics.
Many of the possible feedback methods take a short time if learners are used to them and if they are part of the class routine. Furthermore, they are not necessarily limited to foreign language teaching but can be used also in an overarching way for different subjects, turning learners into veritable co-constructors of lessons.

ABC cards

Blitz feedbacks, for example, are useful to assess if you can move on with your syllabus. It is important though that learners are already accustomed to self-assessment and do not refrain from answering sincerely. This is granted by the pre-existence of a reflective and open learning culture. One possibility is, for instance, to use the ABC cards mentioned by D. Wiliam. They work like a multiple choice test but in real time. The teacher asks a question, with four possible answers and learners raise their hand and show the card corresponding to the solution they propose. In this way, at the end of the class, the teacher can rapidly have an idea of how many pupils and who among them have already understood.

Short questions at the end of the class

Even short questions such as mini-interviews, closed or open, on what has been learnt can tell teachers at the end of the class if they can move on with the topic as planned: they are put in writing (the advantage being the time saved) or can be whispered in the ear of pupils by the teacher (in this case the advantage is that clarifications can be asked). Data collected in this way can be included by the teacher in the checklist of individual learners. The planning of a learning unit becomes more concrete in this way, because it is oriented to the learning level of the class.

- *Food for thought:* what other methods do you know to get a rapid overview of the progress of learners?

TIP: in addition to learners, parents should also be informed about the new methods of assessment for learning that have been introduced. Evening meetings with parents can be the right occasion to raise awareness about this topic together with teachers.

TIP: have learners make the ABC cards themselves, for instance shaped as dice with coloured faces. The creative effort will serve as a chance to talk to

the entire class about reflection and feedback. There are no limits to learners' creativity.

Final reflection: assessment for learning to improve teaching

The dynamics of learning

It is useful to follow over time the progress made in learning and to present different types of assignments or many assignments of the same type: the more frequently you test performance and the more information you have about learners, the higher the degree of precision with which teachers will identify possible learning paths and propose improvements. In this way, the dynamics of the development of learning is taken into account and its success increases. Learning does not occur in a linear way and always with the same potential for growth. In assessment for learning, language learning is meant as an open process that lasts for all your life. Following the learning process step by step enables learners not to stop at the level of notions but to understand connections, apply their knowledge, analyse it and self-evaluate themselves (Bloom, 1976). In this sense assessment for learning is an overarching topic, of interest to the entire school team.

Development of a common project

The development of a common project for assessment for learning can be encouraged in a school within the framework of the development of teaching. Cumulative effects are more important than individual ones and this means that cooperation among teachers in preparing and reviewing classes, class observations between colleagues, the creation of a network for the development of teaching in similar schools etc. (Meyer, 2011) are useful in starting innovation in this direction. Everybody (teachers, learners, parents and school leaders) must actively participate in the topic of the culture of feedback, meant as a life-long learning culture.

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NOTES

[1] In this paper, the terms teachers, learners and school leaders refer to both male and female individuals.

[2] Preliminary terminological note: in this paper, test (testen) and e*xami*nation (prüfen) mean the same. A language test is therefore a language examination or a class assignment. Assess and assessment *(evaluieren,* Ev*aluation) mean evaluate (beur*teilen/bewerten) and are hypernyms of tes*t and* examination. Fö*rderliche Leistungsbewertung i*s assessment for learning in English.

Approaches to professional development

Alan Pulverness
NILE

Outline

- What is CPD?
- Training vs. development
- How does CPD happen?
- Benefits and obstacles
- Resources
- Classroom research
- Recommendations
- Responses to change

What is CPD?

- What does CPD mean to you?
- Why do you think it has become a buzzword?
- What experiences have you had which could be classified as CPD?
- How does it happen?
- How do you think it *could* happen?

TT or TD?

Teacher Training
- compulsory
- competency-based
- short-term
- one-off
- temporary
- external agenda
- skill/technique-based
- top-down
- product-oriented
- done with experts
- to get a job

Teacher Development
- voluntary
- holistic
- long-term
- ongoing
- continual
- internal agenda
- awareness-based
- bottom-up
- process-oriented
- done with peers
- to stay interested in your job

Training or Education? Development?

Training…
- …prepares *against* surprise
- …sees the past as finished
- …repeats a completed past in the future
- …leads towards final self-definition

Education Development…
- …prepares for surprise
- …sees the past as unfinished
- …continues an unfinished past into the future
- …leads towards continuing self-discovery

Adapted from J P Carse
Finite and Infinite Games (1987)

What is teacher development?

Teacher development is the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased **experience** and **examining** his/her experience **systematically**.

Glatthorn 1995

Professional development includes **formal** experiences (such as attending workshops and professional meetings, mentoring etc.) and **informal** experiences (such as reading professional publications, watching television documentaries related to an academic discipline etc.

Ganser 2000

How could CPD happen for you?

- What have been your own best development experiences? Can you identify one that was particularly significant for you?

- What were the characteristics of these experiences that helped you to experiment – and possibly to change the way that you taught?

- Can you see any opportunities – now or in the future – for similar experiences that could help teachers in your school to go on developing?

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Benefits of CPD

For teachers

↓

Improved performance

Professional

satisfaction Career-long

support Motivation

Reward

For the institution

↓

Improved teaching and learning

Learning culture

Innovation

Policy implementation

←→

What are the obstacles to CPD?

- time factor

- contractual constraints

- financial

- resources

- teacher perceptions

Formal v. informal CPD

http://www.tefl.net/elt/articles/career/the-big-list-of-cpd-for-elt/

How does CPD happen?

A. 30 minutes daily 'quiet time' to list personal action points.

B. 2 colleagues try out a new idea for a month / discuss progress once a week.

C. Group of colleagues meet once a month to discuss a book or article all agree to read.

D. Group meets once a month to talk over problems individuals have encountered.

E. Taking a course on a non-ELT subject

F. Enrolling on a teacher training course.

G. Reviewing a book for a teachers' journal.

H. Setting up a small-scale action research project and reporting on it at the next TESOL conference.

I. ....

J. ....

K. ....

L. ....

Examples of CPD resources

- British Council CPD framework 6 levels: 'starter' to 'specialist'

http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/continuing-professional-development
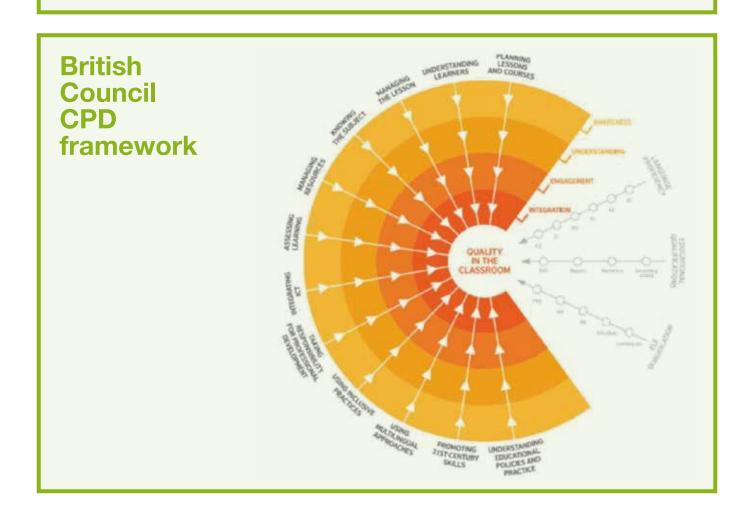
http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org/continuing-professional-development/cpd-managers

- British Council / BBC Teaching English

http://www.teachingenglish.org.ukhttp://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/si tes/teacheng/files/CPD%20framework%20for%20 teachers_WEB.PDF

- Cambridge English Teacher

http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/172992-full-level-descriptors-cambridge-english-teaching-framework.pdf

British Council CPD framework

British Council CPD Framework

Starting	A trainee teacher in initial training
Newly-qualified	A teacher in the first two years of practice

Developing	A practising qualified teacher with more than two years of experience, developing skills further
Proficient	An experienced qualified teacher with strong all-round knowledge and skills

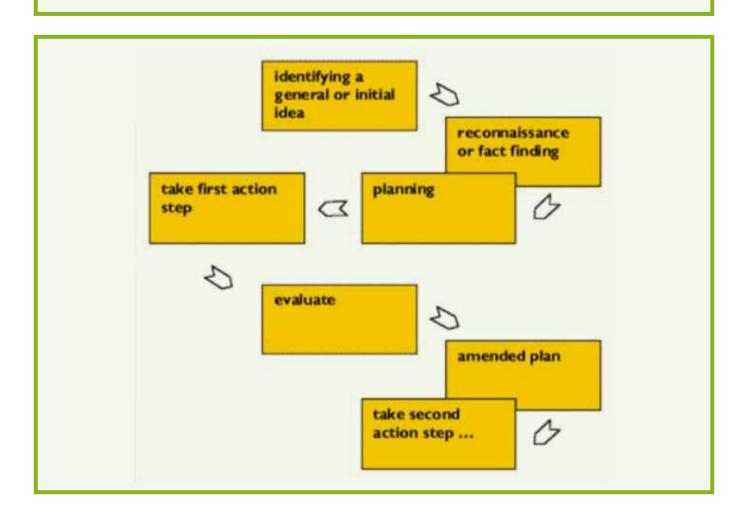|	
Advanced	A highly experienced qualified teacher, who is starting to take on specialist roles
Specialist	In leading and advising roles, such as teacher trainer, manager, materials writer, researcher, adviser

An example of professional behaviours across the stages

PLANNING LESSONS AND COURSES			
Starting	**Newly-qualified**	**Developing**	**Proficient**
Understand the principles of designing effective lesson plans	Plan lessons to meet the needs of learners and to achieve course objectives according to the curriculum.	Design series of lessons with a clear view of the long-term needs and goals of the group of learners, and how individual lessons contribute to these goals.	Plan lessons and courses with a full understanding of relevant issues in the teaching of the subject according to the level of the learners.

British Council CPD framework	Planning lessons and courses	Under-standing learners	Managing the lesson	Evaluating and assessing learning	Knowing the subject of English	Managing your own professional development
Proficient						
Developing						
Newly qualified						
Starting						

Classroom research as teacher development

Necessary conditions for classroom research

Viability
Don't tackle issues you can't do anything about.

Discreteness
Only take on small-scale and relatively limited projects.

Intrinsic interest
Choose a topic that is important to you and your students, or one that you have to be involved with anyway in the course of your teaching.
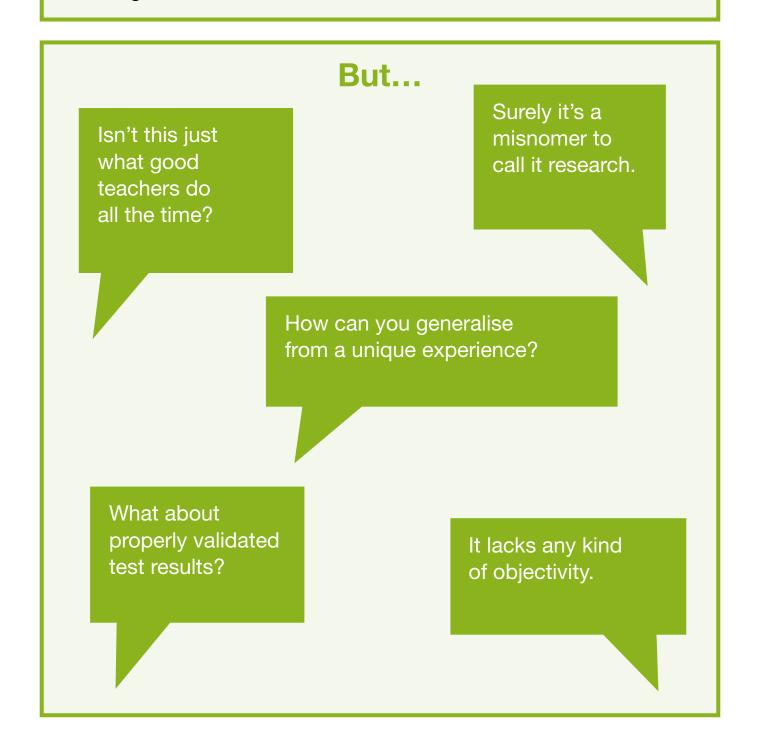
Methods of data-collection

- **field notes**

- **audio recording**

- **learner diaries**

- **questionnaires**

- **still photographs**

- **case studies**

- **teacher diaries**

- **video recording**

- **interviews**

- **sociometry**

- **documentary evidence**

- **observation**

Data collection tools (PAL)

- Teachers' journals
- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
  (for teachers, students, academic managers)
- Change stories

But...

Isn't this just what good teachers do all the time?

Surely it's a misnomer to call it research.

How can you generalise from a unique experience?

What about properly validated test results?

It lacks any kind of objectivity.

A framework for effective self-monitoring

1. Select an aspect of your teaching you are interested in learning more about or wish to improve.

2. Find out more about it by:
   - reflection on problems
   - reviewing feedback
   - inviting an observer
   - reviewing current issues and how they might relate to your teaching

3. Narrow down your focus to what seems most important to you.

4. Develop a plan of action to address the specific problem area you have identified. What will you try to change? What effects will these changes have?

5. Draw up a time frame to try out new approaches and to monitor the effectiveness of the strategies you have chosen.

6. Decide on practical self-monitoring procedures.

7. Check to see if you have been successful.

[adapted from Richards 1990]

Example sequence:
action planning after a period of learning

1 List the major possible learning points.

2 Choose just one of these points to work with.

3 List all the steps needed to put that point into action. Check that each step is **concrete**, **clear** and **attainable**.

4 Look at any possible problems and how best to respond to them.

5 Include any help you will need, where you will get it from, and how.

6 Specify your criteria for success.

7 Specify the time frame.

8 Decide how often you will review the plan.

2 approaches

1. Reflection initiates action:

The development of understanding precedes the decision to change teaching strategies

2. Action initiates reflection:

The decision to adopt a change of strategy
… precedes the development of understanding

(Elliott 1991)

Classroom research…

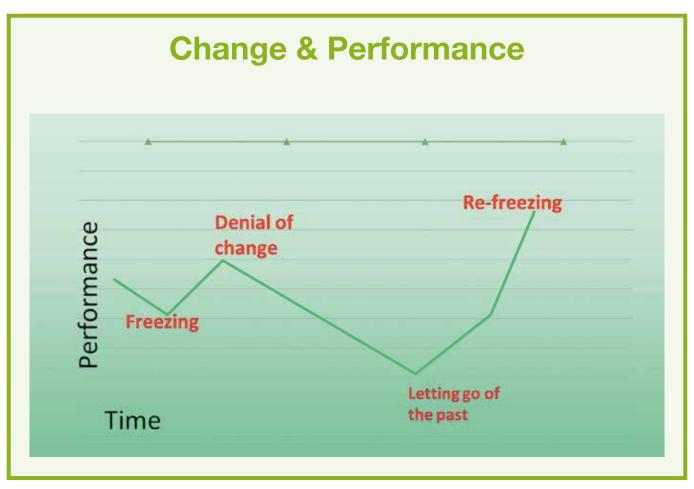…is teacher development made explicit

**(Maria Elena Perera de Perez
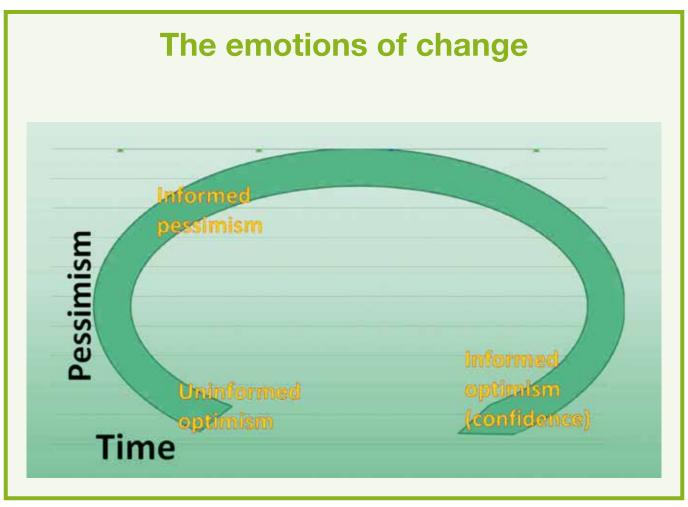cited in Head & Taylor 1997)**

…liberates teachers from their prejudices and allows their instincts to blossom.

(Headmaster cited in McNiff 1988)

CPD – some recommendations

- CPD should be long-term, systematically planned and supported.

- CPD should respond to teachers' professional and personal needs and interests, and their stage of development.

- Teachers need to be fully involved in the development of CPD programmes.

Change & Performance

The emotions of change

Research findings

Investigations into Teachers' Professional Life Cycles and Development

- Phases of teachers' experience – Huberman (1989)

- Development of teachers' expertise – Berliner (1995; 2001)

- Development of expertise among second language teachers – Tsui (2003)

- Reflective practice – Schön (1983) & Kolb (1984)

- Teacher Professional Development: an International Review of the Literature Villegas-Reimers (2003)

Resources for teaching and learning

- For learners of English: learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/

- For teachers of English:
  www.teachingenglish.org.uk/
  http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org
  http://www.onestopenglish.com/

- For teachers worldwide:
  http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/projects-and-resources/professional-development