

Pushing at an Open Door: Creating the conditions for continual, self-motivated improvement in Adult & Community Learning

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MA Module in Advancing Pedagogy

Abstract

This project is an exploration of the possibilities of Joint Practice Development (JPD) as a CPD tool in a small, inner-city Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provider. The hypothesis was that a regular opportunity for tutors to work together on action research, curriculum development and reflective practice would be a low-cost, high-impact approach to CPD that would have a range of benefits for individual tutors and for the life of the centre as a whole.

The study consisted of four workshops over three months, with qualitative feedback gathered from participants. Although very small scale, the study gives preliminary indications of the strengths of this approach, a range of possible problems and some recommendations for how to proceed. The project lays the foundations for the role of JPD in the life of the centre and more widely across the region – and by extension, in other, more or less similar ACL providers.

Introduction

According to Lingfield, *et al* (2010) that nearly 40 per cent of FE college lecturers do not have full time, permanent posts, but are ‘in varying degrees ‘casually employed’’ (ibid. 33). They risk, therefore, missing out on the advantages full time staff have (in theory) of participation in the life of the provider as a matter of course. In the case of the ACL provider discussed in the present study, the percentage of teaching staff who are part time is far higher – well over 90%. I argue below that such a provider, if it is not to let the daily efforts and insights of its tutors simply flow down the drain, needs to institute a permanent, ongoing means by which tutors can collaborate on practice development.

The table below compares our ACL centre, Borgue Court (not its real name) as it has been up until now with how it could be:

The present situation	A Community of Practice based on JPD
<p>Heirarchical model</p> <p>Under the present set-up, tutors rarely see one another. Tutors whose timetables connect or overlap will meet in the corridor at Borgue Court, but there will be other tutors they see once a term or less.</p> <p>At the end-of-term moderation there is often a training component but this has tended to be in a ‘transmission’ format. Discussions often start, and there is invariably the feeling that there is lots to talk about, but there is never the time to pursue it.</p>	<p>Interconnected, rhizomatic model</p> <p>With a regular slot for JPD in the timetable, tutors can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify those tutors with similar problems or interests • learn more about other tutors’ approaches • experience belonging to a professional community • know that their day-to-day practice affects not just their own class and the regional office, but all the learners and staff in the centre and across the institution • explore routes for the dissemination of their findings beyond the institution

John Dewey writes ‘Is it possible for a living being to increase its control of welfare and success? Can it manage, in any degree, to assure its future? Or does the amount of security depend wholly upon the accidents of the situation? Can it learn? Can it gain ability to assure its future in the present? These questions center attention upon the significance of reflective intelligence in the process of experience. The extent of an agent's capacity for inference, its power to use a given fact as a sign of something not yet given, measures the extent of its ability systematically to enlarge its control of the future.’ (Dewey, *et al*, 1917: 10)

As tutors we aim to foster reflective intelligence on the part of our learners, ensuring that we help them develop independence, self-discipline and the capacity to identify and achieve their goals. Reflective practice is essential for excellence in teaching and learning. It is needed to respond adequately to learner need over the course of a lesson, a term, a course of study. As tutors, we model the habits and behaviours we hope to instil (critical thought, inclusiveness and collaboration, effective planning and organisation, etc). If a provider recognises on the part of its learners the centrality of group work, discussion, developing relationships with peers and engaging in collective meaning-creation, on what grounds can it justify neglecting these on the part of its tutors?

Tutors, support workers, managers and non-teaching staff alike are immersed in the cycle of the academic year with precious little time to step back from day-to-day concerns. A provider, continually on the hop with regard to changing funding priorities and the punitive inspection regime, is understandably anxious about its continued viability. However, it is not necessary to *solve*, or even definitively to describe these problems in order to make drastic and sustainable improvements. As Garrison writes, 'Knowing how to cope effectively with a problematic situation in an unstable world does not require privileged representations of external reality. All we require is a command of the social practices proven to work well' (1995: 721). We need to have the social practices in place in the day-to-day which enable us to do the best by our learners, by each other and the communities we serve.

Rather than simply getting through the day, the week, the term, we want to be improving provision – not just reacting to institutional and governmental policy changes, but (as practitioners on the coal face) *actively contributing* to those changes. This study culminates in practical suggestions for how to create the conditions for these 'social practices proven to work well', whereby tutors are motivated to improve their own practice – not through inspection-anxiety or thanks to new layers of bureaucracy. Rather, the provider recognises and facilitates each tutor's own enthusiasm and expertise, encourages innovation and fosters a community of practice.

Background

The background to this research is was an application made by my colleague Evelyn¹ and myself for an LSIS-funded Research Development Fellowship, a project exploring various aspects of the delivery of Functional Maths for ESOL learners. In the event, LSIS and Suncett gave me the opportunity to become a Research Development Advocate (the basis for the present study) while Evelyn led the Maths/ESOL study.

I had moved to the area a year previously and taken on a 0.3 FTE role as Course Programme Worker (CPW), as well as various teaching commitments, with my employer (a national, third-sector ACL provider). I have had an advantage in recruiting tutors to the project in that the CPW role, while involving some line management responsibilities, is neither perceived as or actually in a tier above that of other tutors.

An aspect of my role that I've been least comfortable has been that of Observing Teaching and Learning (OTL). I will make the case below that JPD offers a means by which an ACL provider can encourage, nurture and nourish its tutors in a way that directly boosts quality and success rates – while countering, or at least compensating for, the predominance in recent times of the Ofsted-dominated, one-size-fits-all model of continual inspection-readiness. I discuss the contrasts in more detail below, between tutors whose professional standing is determined either by an external body or by an employer doing its best to emulate that body – and tutors who collectively set their own quality improvement agenda, in close communication with their learners.

The project

The Research Development Advocate role was created in the fourth year of LSIS's Research Development Fellowship, with the explicit aim of creating sustainable research communities within the Learning and Skills Sector. As LSIS is wound down, the RDA (like other late-period LSIS projects

¹ Names of individuals and places have been changed.

like the Advanced Teaching and Learning Coach) is designed to see that LSIS's innovations are continued in its absence.

The present project, then, centred around four workshops for tutors over the course of three months – taking Gregson, Nixon and Spedding (2012)'s draft JPD Toolkit as a jumping-off point. I describe the contents of these workshops and discuss the feedback from participants, and examine concurrent developments at the centre (drawing on additional comments from the area's Learning Manager).

Literature Review

Starting points

This study responds to three main areas of the literature:

1. Joint Practice Development and the idea of Communities of Practice
2. Practitioner Action Research
3. Critical Pedagogy

In this review I will briefly mention key themes and references, and show how they complement one another.

Joint Practice Development and Communities of Practice

Fielding, *et al* (2006)'s study is an investigation into 'sharing good practice' in the context of UK schools, where collaboration between schools had dropped out of favour since the late 1980s, and was only just coming back to prominence (*ibid.* 2). The study emphasises how collaboration (that is, the means by which successes in one area can be rolled out elsewhere) cannot be seen as a 'quick fix' (*ibid.* 3), but requires the establishment of effective relationships.

The authors propose 'Joint Practice Development' as an alternative to 'practice transfer' description of what teachers do, in order (i) to acknowledge teachers' existing practice (as opposed to being 'blank slates' onto which best practice is transferred) and (ii) to acknowledge the role of the practice originator, both as originator and in supporting the recipient (*ibid.* 32).

In the present study, we are most interested in JPD where rather than there being an originator and a recipient of practice, there is instead a symmetrical relationship (*ibid.* 33 – and in the final pages of the report under the name 'joint practice creation' (*ibid.* 103-4)). Such '[f]lat relationships', they argue, 'are likely to provide opportunities for a far wider spectrum of teachers to articulate and explore their own practice, and to support colleagues in the same process' (*ibid.* 33).

Where that study dealt with interactions between schools, the present study looked at interactions within a single centre, but four of that report's key findings are of particular relevance:

- Practice Development should be a collaborative process (hence JPD) rather than a one-way giver/receiver: firstly, the latter model is harmfully hierarchical, even damaging, to the recipient (who is positioned as passive and a novice). It fails to take into account the benefits to the giver. Instead, even where one tutor is more experienced or doesn't see themselves as requiring development, the process of working with other tutors is taken as mutual: there is no straightforward way to deploy another tutor's strategies.

- Trusting relationships underlie successful practice development. One of Fielding's respondents wrote 'You can say what you feel and that is the important thing. This stems out of the group knowing one another and having the ability to compromise and work through problems' (*ibid.* 9). Non-hierarchical, collegiate attitudes to colleagues are crucial – but differences approach and even of underlying values need not be hidden, but instead are recognised and celebrated.
- Tacit knowledge: despite the predominance of the attempt to 'make visible' every aspect of teaching practice (Strathern 1999), the troublesome fact is that a lot of what teachers do is tacit/implicit. Strathern writes, 'As the term accountability implies, people want to know how to trust one another, to make their trust visible, while (knowing that) the very desire to do so points to the absence of trust' (*ibid.* 310). Strathern contrasts the 'experiential and implicit knowledge crucial to expertise' with the transparency required by 'audit culture', citing Tsoukas's remark that 'the ideal of transparency ... undermines the trust that is necessary for an expert system to function effectively' (*ibid.* 313). Tutors who can develop practice together within non-hierarchical, trusting relationships can build on their tacit knowledge through collective meaning-creation that is part of day-to-day practice. The machineries of audit have no corresponding possibilities: indeed, they move in the opposite direction (away from empowerment and creativity and towards spurious measurables).
- Time. Fielding found that the biggest obstacle to practice sharing, according to his respondents, was time: time to create, transfer and adapt good practice. The problem for institutions is how to create the space in which the trusting relationships required to develop good practice are created and maintained (Fielding 25).

Communities of Practice (CoPs) fit well with the vision Fielding offers: trusting relationships based on shared aims, upon which knowledge can be shared and developed (Kimble, *et al*, eds 2008). In that volume, a key chapter is Yildirim (2008), addressing the use of CoPs in teacher development.

Yildirim identifies a shortcoming of traditional teacher development being 'a mismatch between provision and needs' (*ibid.* 234): the content of training is decided externally. In contrast, because the teachers in Yildirim's study had conceived their shared purpose themselves, they willingly devoted their own time to the study without reporting it as a burden. They achieved a 'collaborative culture rather than a contrived collegiality', without the hierarchies usually associated with trainer/trainee or expert/novice relationships (*ibid.* 250).

Action Research

The previous section summarised the vision for Joint Practice Development as an approach to the professional development of tutors. This section looks more closely at what tutors can be doing within this approach to improve their practice – as well as providing an ethos for the present study. The idea that practitioners within the Learning and Skills Sector should have the opportunity to carry out research within their day-to-day practice is one that may be gaining ground, thanks to Lingfield (2012). Although practitioner research can take many forms, the kind I focus on here lends itself to the present approach as I will try to show.

Stringer (1999) schematises community-based action research by means of the spiral of LOOK-THINK-ACT-LOOK-THINK-ACT-etc (*ibid.* 19), elucidated as follows:

Community-based action research is a collaborative approach to *inquiry* or *investigation* that provides people with a means to take systematic *action* to resolve specific problems. This approach favors consensual and participatory procedures that enable people

LOOK	a. to investigate systematically their problems and issues
THINK	b. to formulate powerful and sophisticated accounts of their situations
ACT	c. to devise plans to deal with the problems at hand.

(Text from Stringer 1999: 17, my formatting.)

Stringer's spiral is a useful image, conveying the potentially open-ended nature of action research and its different but recurring phases. A problem or problem-field is identified; a strategy is developed and deployed; a new round of analysis is required to assess the impact of the strategy, and so on. However, the idea that 'thinking' can be isolated from 'looking' and 'acting' is misleading: firstly because the looking and acting involve just as much thinking as the process of formulating accounts (there is no raw experience unmediated by conceptual schemes or, in other words, prior to thought; there is no straightforward distinction between thought and action).

Secondly, developing *reflective intelligence* (Dewey, *ibid.*) should be emphasised as a key goal of the whole process of action research (as it is of education, as noted above). As tutors become more experienced action researchers, they become better at identifying the salient features of a problem, devising and deploying strategies and assessing the results. The community of practice gradually extends the tools available to it and becomes better at evaluating and improving its members' interventions.

In any case, other aspects of Stringer's account of action research that bear on the present approach are

1. the researcher is not an expert but a facilitator, helping people to develop their own analysis of their issues (*ibid.* 25).
2. 'the essence of the work is *process – the way things are done* – rather than the results achieved' (*ibid.*).
3. participants are treated as whole people: it is *human development* that is at stake rather than problem-solving, instrumentally conceived (*ibid.* 26) – action research should be 'life-enhancing' (*ibid.* 10).

In addition, action research should be democratic (inviting the participation of all relevant parties), equitable (respecting each participant's 'equality of worth') and liberating – providing people with the means to address the issues that constrain or debilitate them (*ibid.* 10).

In other words, the action researcher is not a neutral observer but is fully immersed, and is engaged in defining and addressing a particular issue. The collaborative aspect of action research has several levels: it is done with, not to, its participants, in that their experiences form its basis. As well as involvement in one cycle, participants remain involved throughout the implementation of changes, the evaluation of those changes and development of further interventions.

Critical Pedagogy

The emancipatory aspect of action research links with the idea that education in general should fundamentally be emancipatory. If there are aspects of how society is structured which constrain and oppress individuals, then education, by opening people's eyes and giving them the means to

challenge and change these structures, can free people and give them more control over their own lives. ‘Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it,’ wrote Jane Thompson in 1979, ‘or it becomes the ‘practice of freedom’, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world’.

If being aware of and having the tools to challenge hegemony is a defining aspect of education, then it must surely also be a defining aspect of the professional development of teachers. This is where the two previous sections combine: by creating a non-hierarchical space where tutors can address together the issues that concern them, they are best placed to address the root causes of problems in their teaching, dissatisfactions with their working lives and the difficulties facing their learners.

The educational theorist Stephen Brookfield has provided a range of tools and techniques for learning through discussion where assumptions are exposed and different perspectives are thought through. His express aim is to ‘challenge hegemonic thinking’, that is, to interrupt the circuits by which oppressive relationships unthinkingly are reproduced.

Research Methodology

My research started from the assumption that JPD was, at the very least, something worth trying, and, at best, an effective means towards both improving teaching and learning, and improving the working lives of tutors. This study does not include a systematic comparison with other forms of CPD; however, it functions as a case study of an attempt to implement a certain vision of JPD, such that concrete recommendations can be made for further development both in the same location and elsewhere.

The names of the centre and staff have been changed. At the time of the study, Borgue Court had nine tutors teaching ESOL and Numeracy/Maths and five Additional Learning Support workers. A series of four workshops were set up with all the above staff invited. The main source of data is questionnaires given to participants after each workshop (see Appendix 2), as well as informal feedback collected from participants on other occasions. Each workshop was two hours long and led by myself. Participation is summarised in the following table:

	Participants	
W1	7 tutors 1 tutor/CPW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two tutors attended all four workshops • Four tutors attended three out of four workshops • Four tutors, one learning support assistant and one Regional Management Team member attended only one workshop. • Reasons given for non-attendance at subsequent workshops were: other work or family commitments (e.g. new born baby); forgot it was happening – none of the participants reported an unwillingness to come due to not finding the workshops helpful.
W2	2 tutors 1 tutor/CPW 1 LSA 1 RMT member	
W3	5 tutors 1 tutor/CPW	
W4	5 tutors 1 tutor/CPW	

I also discuss the impact of mine and Evelyn’s projects on the life of the centre, which is currently undergoing a review of staff roles, drawing on comments from the area’s Learning Manager.

Initial conception and preliminaries

As initially conceived, the idea of the JPD workshops was to enable tutors to engage in their own research projects, which (following Fielding) would need to be on topics of their own choosing and with colleagues they had freely chosen to work with. It was on this basis that, at a meeting with my fellow CPW and our line manager, I was given the go-ahead to plan the workshops.

A change that occurred during the course of the workshops was that the other aspects of team building, developing reflective practice and curriculum development dominated over that of practitioner research. I discuss this further in my recommendations below, making suggestions as to how research can be facilitated within an ongoing series of workshops.

The next and equally straightforward phase was getting the approval of the member of the Regional Development Team in charge of training to agree to the proposal and make a decision as to whether staff could be paid for participation from the training budget. I found he was enthusiastic enough about the idea of JPD to agree to this.

The third and final preliminary stage was announcing the project to the prospective participants. This happened at the December moderation meeting, and again, the proposal was met with unreserved enthusiasm from tutors – all but one of whom (due to prior work commitments) came to Workshop 1 the following month.

Ethical concerns

All tutors who participated signed the ethical statement given in Appendix 3 which was based on the BERA *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2011).

Expectations

At the start of the study, I was convinced by efficacy of the JPD approach and no doubt overoptimistic about tutors' interest in embarking on action research projects. I saw my aim as making as strong a case as possible that JPD should be a permanent fixture of the life of the centre – although at this stage, I didn't have any experience of what this could actually mean in practice.

The phrase 'pushing at an open door' captures the absence of resistance from colleagues and managers, as well as the appeal of the JPD approach, against which I have yet to see any convincing arguments. It remains to be seen whether I will have succeeded in showing why JPD should be taken up on a permanent basis. It is unfortunate that what could scupper the proposal is not any theoretical objection or stronger evidence in favour of an alternative approach, but simply a lack of money.

The Workshops

In what follows, I discuss each workshop in turn and comment on participants' feedback.

Workshop 1: Detectives and Umpires

Content

For the first workshop there were three aims:

- Establish and discuss these workshops as a space for critical reflection on teaching and learning, peer support, experiment and innovation

- Practise Brookfield's 'critical storytelling' technique
- Identify affinity groups and research areas

Reflections

After an introduction, I did a go-round influenced by Brookfield (2006)'s Circle of Voices, but discovered I needed to have been more emphatic about the protocol (having your own say in the first instance – people jumped in to respond to others). But I took as the key idea that it was good that everyone got a chance to make their mark on the discussion early on. I would say this was partially achieved.

We also tried Critical Discussion, in 3 groups of 3. Before we began, one tutor asked whether it needed to be a particular incident or whether the storyteller could give an outline of their research idea or approach to teaching. (The group had identified a variety of T&L topics they were interested in but no overarching themes had yet emerged.) I put this to the group and this was accepted. Unfortunately we only had 30 mins for this exercise, where it would have been but the feedback was good.

Reflecting on the exercise for my own part, I was umpire with a detective who required virtually no intervention. His reassuring and supportive manner meant that when he asked a 'Did you try separating the learners?' it didn't feel judgemental -- although we agreed he could have asked 'Did you try anything else in response to the behaviour before the point where you told the student to leave?' Other than that, I didn't feel as umpire that my summary or comments offered anything new. As we didn't switch roles as would have been ideal, I don't know whether this was more to do with the role or me.

Two of the detectives said that they'd been very conscious of trying to not be critical, and one said that she had doubted that it was possible to point out someone's assumptions without them feeling it as critical. However, both their respective storytellers said that they hadn't felt criticised at all; they'd felt closely listened to and that they'd been offered unexpected insights.

The third group didn't follow the rubric but said that it had been a useful starting point for a discussion. Indeed, the matter discussed was agreed to be a central issue in the next workshop (namely, the disparity between our student-centred planning and delivery, and what many of our learners reportedly want, namely a clearly defined curriculum defined in advance).

Feedback

All eight participants gave detailed feedback with four describing aspects of the workshop as 'useful', three as 'interesting'. Three said that they would be able to make use of ideas from the workshop in their teaching. All participants identified between one and three areas they were interested in researching further. The opportunity to discuss issues with colleagues was identified in a positive fashion by six respondents – although four of those called for greater focus or 'putting discussion into practice'.

Possible research themes identified

Research themes identified	Number of votes
○ Teaching pronunciation	3
○ Differentiation/Teaching mixed levels/How to plan more effectively/making exam prep less boring and figuring out what to do with students who are not taking exams	3
○ Critically analyse 'student centred method'/How to combine ESOL and traditional methods of teaching/creating autonomous learners who feel they are receiving instruction	2
○ Dyslexia (Entry-Level ESOL learners)	1
○ Long-term effects of a course on learners' lives	1
○ Examine gap between what teachers teach and what learners learn	1

Workshop 2: Power Imbalances

The poor attendance of this workshop was due in some cases to other tutors' other work commitments and also due to people forgetting and my not having reminded them. The low turnout was certainly to the detriment of the usefulness of the session, though one participant wrote 'more useful than I expected with those [who were] present.'

Of the participants who were available, two couldn't make it to the first half hour, meaning that only one tutor was present along with the RMT member and the other CPW and myself. Under these circumstances, the sole tutor was, unsurprisingly, unwilling to participate in a round of Brookfield's critical discussion.

The contrast with Workshop One was striking in another way: with an RMT member and a Support Worker present, the discussion flowed less easily in this workshop, confirming Fielding, *et al's* insight that such unequal positions can interfere with the process of practice development. What made the other workshops more successful (as measured both by the feel and by the content and quantity of feedback given by participants) was everyone's shared role of tutor.

As far as involving support workers is concerned, the JPD approach as presently conceived would, I suspect, work best with a group of support workers. Their responsibilities are different so much of tutors' discussions are from an irrelevant standpoint; however, a chance to work with other support workers on the specifics of, for example, how best to support one learner at a time, or how to cater for different learning difficulties or disabilities, would be invaluable. It is also possible that tutors and support workers could usefully take a JPD approach to dealing with a specific learner or class. It is to be hoped that tutors already discuss how classes went with support workers, but if this is done under the auspices of JPD, it is clear to both parties that they are working together to improve teaching and learning, and that the support worker's insights from working directly with a learner will give a viewpoint not available to the tutor.

Curriculum Development

Following my MA supervisor's suggestion of making curriculum development the focus – a means of addressing many of the concerns identified in Workshop One in a properly JPD-fashion – I outlined the topic-based approach as presented by Pam Banks, in the inauspicious context of the poorly-attended second workshop.

A first blow was the immediate response from the tutors present that having a cross-centre theme would not work for their learners. I had suggested that a theme could be adopted and addressed in all classes in different ways over the course of a particular week. Tutors felt that they would not want to have what felt like an external imposition on their programme of study when time was short as it was.

However, the idea of taking a theme and planning a range of differentiated activities around it was taken up. The theme agreed by the group was volunteering – something which many of our learners are already involved in.

Workshop 3: Influences and Inspirations

Content

- Critical discussion
We had another round of critical discussion, and it was notable that storytellers on this occasion were doing the detectives' work for them – commenting on their own assumptions as they spoke. This supports Brookfield's remarks that the idea behind the protocol is for the roles to become internalised.
- Key ideas/texts; characteristics of an outstanding lesson; my strengths as a tutor
I asked tutors to give their answers on Post-Its to three questions:
 - An idea or text that guides/informs your teaching
 - A key characteristic of an outstanding lesson
 - A particular strength of my teaching

It was notable that there were twice or more than twice as many responses to the first two than to the third, with one tutor remarking in her feedback 'I must think more about my strengths & weaknesses as a teacher'.

I was inspired to ask this question by Boyatzis's Model of Intentional Change (LSIS Teaching and Learning Coach Training Materials) where he suggests that the concentration on strengths to weaknesses should be in a ratio of 4:1. Certainly, there is a tendency for tutors' graded observations, and the termly moderation of their paperwork, to be done on a deficit model, identifying where they went wrong and what they missed out. From Boyatzis, I take the notion that if you want actually to change the 20% that is problematic, you will best do so from firm foundations of the recognition of what the tutor is doing right. I suspect that tutors' reticence in identifying their own strengths (see the proportions of answers to each of the three questions in Appendix 2 below) is evidence that they are not encouraged to do this frequently enough.

- Joint lesson/activity planning

Feedback

Of the six respondents, two respondents used the phrase 'thought-provoking'; there were two positive references to 'shared ideas' and one respondent said the workshop 'threw insights onto issues that had gone underground.' Half the participants raised doubts about the critical conversation protocol, all finding the 'artificiality' of the roles restrictive or difficult to stick to, and one calling for 'supportive interaction in a more natural way'.

Workshop 4: Questioning Professionalism

Content

The backdrop to this workshop was to test out themes from the FE Guild consultation then taking place, although neither the topic of ‘professionalism’ nor the policy backdrop (the Lingfield report) captured the imagination of the group – indeed, it evoked robustly worded indifference from one participant. Although I had come away from the FE Guild consultation myself feeling as if it was a promising step for the sector with potential if practitioners were to get involved, on presenting this to colleagues it felt like the IfL all over again: unwanted external interference.

This workshop also featured John’s presentation on his action research project, conducted with his Teaching Assistant, which focused on letter dictation errors, another session of collaborative curriculum development, and finally a discussion about the optimal form and frequency of future JPD workshops (see Recommendations, below).

Feedback

‘I thought it was amazing what came out and how just “getting together” promotes this outpouring’, wrote one tutor. ‘I’ve found it helpful to hear similar stories/problems/issues being discussed and possible solutions,’ she added, ‘but would quite like the opp[ortunity] to do more hands on stuff like trying something specific in class and feeding back.’

All six respondents were positive about the usefulness of the workshop series, with three referring to issues held in common. One wrote ‘Feel more part of a team.’

Assessing the Impact

This short series of JPD workshops was flawed in various ways indicated above. However, the feedback from participants and the observations of our Learning Manager indicate that they – in combination with Evelyn’s concurrent RDF project – have changed something subtle but fundamental about how tutors feel about and act within their job.

1. There is ‘a sense that tutors feel that the organisation is investing in them and their development’ (personal communication from Borgue Court Learning Manager, 17/5/13). I would add that this ‘investment’ is not just monetary: inviting staff to participate in JPD is not saying ‘we want you to do training’, it is saying ‘we value *your* expertise and support your active participation in the life of the centre as a whole’. Further discussion of this point follows in the Recommendations, below.
2. Concurrent with this is ‘the sense that tutors are more engaged in their own professional development and in sharing their experience with each other’ (*ibid.*). This is evidenced in Borgue Court by ‘Increased dialogue and sharing of resources, feedback and issues between tutors – [the] early morning discussions over the photocopier when they’re preparing for class is more focussed on what they are doing and how learners are responding than previous idle chit chat’ (*ibid.*). Even if tutors were not hugely enthused by the idea of ‘professionalism’ (W4 above), this self-motivated but collaborative approach would certainly fit under this label.
3. Also concurrent have been ‘Initiation of study groups for students supported by several tutors – students from several lower level classes meet for handwriting, reading and conversation practice and the topics are then used in class sessions. Independent study by

Maths and higher level students has taken place over the last two terms supported by the tutors' (*ibid.*). To the extent that this is related to the workshops, I take it that tutors who themselves have regular, first-hand experience of collaborative working are better placed to facilitate it among their learners; learners in turn gain independence and experience of working with others.

Conclusions

Recommendations

Following discussion in W4, the following is our considered proposal for making JPD an established component of CPD. This applies to Borgue Court in the first instance, but I would recommend that it be trialled elsewhere in the region too.

Each meeting should involve several of the following elements. These overlap and can be combined, or emphasised differently in different meetings according to the will of the group.

- **Action research:** participants share research ideas, methods and findings, allowing peers the chance constructively to cross-examine one another. Although the undertaking of such research must of course remain voluntary (as with all participation in these workshops), as more tutors 'have a go' and more positive results are identified, the group will become better at research techniques, at distinguishing better and worse projects and methods and at valuing each other's ideas and contributions.
- **Curriculum development:** participants develop teaching activities and resources together, and/or report back on the uses of these in subsequent workshops. In the case of Borgue Court, where concerns about the extent to which we are meeting the needs of our community, this is an opportunity for us much more effectively to respond collectively to learner voices.
- **Reflective practice:** this is an opportunity to air teaching concerns with colleagues in a structured and solution-focused way, i.e. a view to identifying alternative approaches and trying them out. Within the workshops, critical discussion is practised: analysing problems from different points of view; challenging preconceptions; unveiling hidden relations of disadvantage. These techniques are internalised and become part of tutors' day-to-day practice.
- **Team building:** identifying common interests, influences and inspirations with colleagues; pointing people towards interesting or useful texts. Crucial to this aspect is the celebration of difference: avoiding the homogenising, conservative or exclusionary tendencies of Communities of Practice by emphasising the relationships of mutual support and collegiality as more fundamental than differences over teaching styles, educational values and so on.

Meetings for all tutors should happen twice a term, around the third week of each term. This gives courses a chance to take shape and the issues applying to particular classes to become apparent; it doesn't crowd an already busy schedule, but is still frequent enough for the team to address relatively quickly any problems that arise and changes to be discussed.

The best case for this frequency of meetings (rather than them being less frequent) is that it optimises possible interventions within a term. The tutor knows the class well enough by around week 3 to be able to identify issues and plan specific activities; will have the intervening weeks to try

things out, and in the second meeting of the term, will have a chance to share findings. In other words, it lends itself to a rolling programme of small-scale action research projects, planned in the first session of a term, carried out over the intervening weeks and then fed back to the group at the second meeting. John's research into pronunciation (described under Workshop Four above) is an example of a project of this kind.

If these meetings are implanted in the life of the centre at these times, it embeds joint practice development, strengthening bonds between tutors, increasing the likelihood that they will collaborate in between times – continuing discussions, sharing resources and participating in each other's projects.

It is also a forum at which further training opportunities can be identified (as in, for example, the request for pronunciation training identified by several tutors). Moreover, if tutors are well accustomed to 'workshopping' ideas together, trialling them in their own classes over the course of a term and feeding back, when a speaker from outside does come in, the team will be extremely well placed to collectively implement and test ideas, techniques and resources. Compare this to a traditional training session where the training begins and ends with the session itself, or perhaps with the completion of an evaluation form, and there is no follow-up weeks or months later to see how useful it has been.

Why has this felt like 'pushing at an open door'? It seemed a 'no-brainer' in the first place and this initial intuition has been confirmed to my satisfaction at least:

- If you give tutors recognition for their expertise, emphasise their shared enthusiasm for the job and give them an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can continue to improve what they do, many will leap at the chance. This approach to Quality Improvement is at the opposite end of the scale from the potentially confrontational OTL, where (due to grading) someone (possibly not even a specialist in your subject) casts judgement on the whole of your practice based on barely an hour's observation. In contrast, the tutor herself is in control in the JPD process: the motivation to participate comes from within and is hence far more sustainable and likely to result in real change. The shared values are based not on an externally imposed framework but on meeting the needs of our learners and working with colleagues.
- If you create a safe, relaxed environment where tutors can open up to peers about issues that concern them, but an environment where a variety of approaches is valued and seen as a strength, then they will both increase in confidence about their own approaches but also be more open to new techniques and approaches.

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Appendix 1: Handout to staff announcing the project

BORGUE COURT – a community of practice?

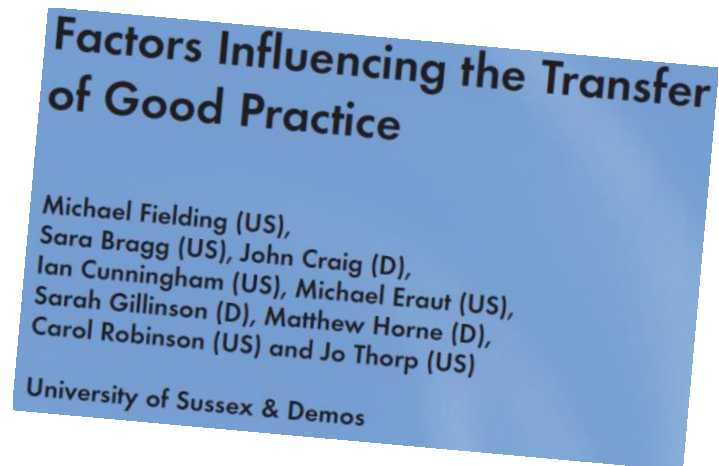
The Background

Fielding, et al (2005)

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/RR615.pdf.pdf>

The study involved teachers and heads at 36 UK schools involved in various aspects of good practice transfer, and asked

- *What is good practice, and to what extent can it be transferred?*
- *What is the process of transfer like from the point of view of the receiver?*
- *What are the challenges for the originating institution or person?*



Key findings:

- **Joint practice development** is a better term than transfer of good practice because it captures the mutuality of the process and recognises that an approach, however successful elsewhere, needs to be reinvented in each new implementation. The study found that 'JPD' best described what teachers aspire to and what they actually achieve.
- **Trusting relationships** are fundamental to practice development.
- **The 'tacit' dimension of practice** means that mutual observation of partners is a valuable addition to communication by other means.
- **'Badging'**, that is labelling an individual or institution as 'expert' or 'novice', can hinder the process, compared to situation where participants are equal partners on a shared venture.
- **Learner engagement:** the process is most successful where all participants have been involved in agreeing and planning the activity.
- **Making time** is key to a successful process: understanding how much is needed – to create, transfer, learn and adopt new practices as well as developing the underlying relationships of trust needed to do so.

The study's definition of 'good practice' was based on

1. the enthusiasm of students and teachers
2. evidence of improved learning
3. do-ability and sustainability over time.

The study's recommendations include

- making JDP a priority in its own right
- encouraging existing partnerships to grow and develop organically – don't artificially or forcibly sustain them.
- that all partners should see themselves as both originators and receivers of practice
- fostering co-research into areas selected by practitioners themselves.
- combating short-termism and 'the amnesia of the present' (over-hasty rejection of established practices)



Just supposing...

Just supposing teaching and learning became the first priority
Frank Coffield (Learning and Skills Network 2008)

Coffield notes the absence of formal mechanisms by which 'those who enact policy in the 'front line' can report back on strengths and weaknesses of initiatives. Staff need to be involved as full, equal partners in the development, enactment, evaluation and redesign of policy, because tutors and managers are the people who turn paper policies into courses, curricula and purposeful activities in classrooms' (22).

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice: Creating Learning Environments for Educators
Kimble, Hildreth & Bourdon, editors (IAP 2008)

The term 'Community of Practice' was coined in a 1991 study about apprenticeships, and concerned the process by which newcomers to a community learn from old-timers and undertake more and more duties and move gradually towards full participation. The current use doesn't depend on the 'newcomer/old-timer' distinction, but maintains the ideas of

- collaborative working: building relationships of trust
- common ground and shared aims
- the sharing and development of knowledge.

There is tremendous energy associated with social membership. Meaningful collaboration with trusted colleagues – on your own terms – is likely to improve working life.

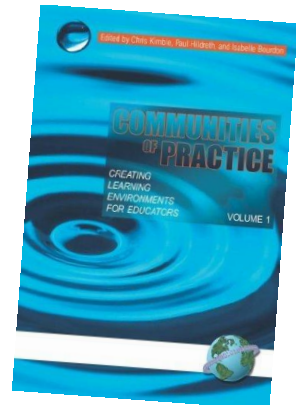
Hildreth and Kimble say that typically, a community of practice

- grows informally
- has a common purpose
- has common ground
- evolves
- depends on relationships
- is based on internal motivation
- contributes to feelings of community and identity

The Research Development Fellowship and Research Development Advocate

These LSIS-funded research fellowships are currently in their fourth year and are intended to support practitioners carry out their own research projects. They are run in conjunction with the University of Sunderland's Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT), with participants working towards completion of an MA module in Advancing Pedagogy. Studies have covered topics across the FE/ACL sector and reports from completed projects can be found on Excellence Gateway (<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/634>).

On the following pages is a small selection of studies – those on the themes of ESOL, Maths or Joint Practice Development.



2009-2010

Becoming Managers of Learning – the role of digital voice recorders

Marcin Lewandowski, Learning Centre Manager. 'Action Acton'

A project about the impact of digital voice recorders for ESOL learners to work with peers to record conversational practice in class, aiming to encourage 'meta-talk'.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/13241>

“What do you mean I should think for myself?”

Anne Taylor, Course Manager, Colchester Institute

An investigation of peer formative assessment as a means to improve students' independent learning skills.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/13248>

2010-2011

Birds of a Different Feather. Building Research Capacity: Investigating the impact of joint practice development

Leanie Pretorius, Tutor; Sam Alvarez, Course Leader, Sussex Downs (Park) College

Using Joint Practice Development as an approach to CPD which benefits teaching and learning. The emphasis is on creating rather than transferring knowledge, respecting teachers as individuals who can make a difference in their individual classrooms.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/23709>



Explore, Experiment, Improve your Practice: Action Research in Adult Community Learning

Vikki Trace, Line Manager; Dr Jennifer Joy-Matthews, Programme Manager Teacher Training, Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service

Encouraging ACL tutors to try something new in the supportive environment of a Community of Practice.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/23718>

2011-2012

Scaling New Mountains: How can Joint Practice Development support the design and delivery of curriculum?

Robin Webber-Jones, Director of Learning, New College Stamford

A project assisting tutors and managers across curriculum areas to work collaboratively on improving independent learning skills in students as well as simply meeting targets – with the ultimate aim of achieving what Coffield describes as 'all teachers are learners and all learners are teachers.'

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/24056>

You Will Collaborate! Harnessing Practitioner-Directed Joint Practice Development for Organisational CPD

Angela Rhead, ITT Lecturer/CPD Facilitator, Stoke-on-Trent College

To what extent can JPD be used to address organisational issues?

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/23739>

“Yes we can!” Exploring study strategies for effective learning and teaching at AS level in Mathematics and Science.

Vasu Krishnaswamy, Departmental Director – STEM, Stanmore College

An investigation into how students actually study, with the aim of improving achievement. This study resulted in the implementation of more rigorous IAG at enrolment, a pre-term induction course in

study skills and early intervention with students at risk of underachieving.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/24062>

To what extent did the use of genre based approach to teaching writing improve (a group of) ESOL students' ability to write?

Pinaki Chakrabarti, Teacher, Medway English Training Community Interest Company

A study of the marking of students' work, teacher's reflection and notes from discussions with students, examining the impact of a Genre Based Approach.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/24127>

Accelerate or Not to Accelerate, That is the question?

Sheila Minchin, Director of Quality & Performance, Walsall Adult and Community College

A comparison of accelerated learning techniques to traditional learning in the teaching of mathematics, which had a positive impact on lesson grading and resulted in accelerated learning techniques being adopted across the college.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/24060>

Self Regulated Learning, What's that all about Miss? A learner centred approach to developing independent learning skills

Gemma Steventon, Psychology Teacher, City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College

An examination of independent learning from the point of view of students, which led to students' own insights into self-regulated learning being passed on to tutors and learners.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/23750>

I can hear what you're saying but I can't understand a word of what you have written. Ways of increasing spelling and literacy skills amongst not native UK citizens

John Carlson, Associate Lecturer, Sunderland College

This project succeeded in improving the spelling of a long-term ESOL learner who had previously been unable to achieve Entry Two Writing.

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/24044>

Borgue Court: A Community of Practice?

I'll be running a series of workshops in the new year for which participants will be paid at development rate, whose purposes will be to

- strengthen relationships between Borgue Court tutors (without compromising difference)!
- identify and pursue individual and/or collaborative research projects and affinity groups
- provide a forum for peer support and practice development/creation

In order to capture any benefits of these meetings and to make a case for them to continue, I will be gathering information from participants, through interview and/or questionnaire. My aim is to evaluate the impact of the JPD approach on teaching and learning, testing the hypotheses that

- JPD can improve teaching, learning and job satisfaction, for tutors and support workers
- JPD is an effective means of CPD and should be a fully supported part of the organisation's training programme.

Appendix 2

Feedback from the workshops. All respondents are tutors (ESOL or maths) with the exception of Dave, a Learning Support Assistant.

Workshop One

	What comments would you like to make about today's workshop?	What expectations do you have for future workshops?	Will you be able to make use of any of the ideas from today in your teaching?	Have you identified (either today or previously) any areas of research that you would like to pursue in the near future?	What could be done, and by whom, to facilitate this research?
Amanda	Useful discussion – went off on a tangent a bit but still very useful and interesting	I expect we will have more focus, having discussed in a general way some of the issues that trouble us.	Absolutely. I liked what Dalmar had to say about his learners and their desire for traditional teaching. I had felt my own approach was too traditional and not enough ESOL, but now I feel a little reassured that I might be on the right track with my learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching mixed levels • differentiation • ESOL/Traditional methods of teaching – how to combine. 	I suppose I could do something!
Chloe	It was interesting trying the storytelling – coming up with ideas and reflecting.	That we can think about meaningful curriculums and ways of providing students with effective learning, how to manage differentiation and learning problems.	Not at the moment, although if I get badly behaved students again I could adopt John's suggestions.	How to plan more effectively in terms of exam requirements and learners requirements.	
Shirley	very interesting raised all sorts of issues	More of the same. More influential on my	Hopefully – I think I am. As a manager – who is	Dyslexia	Me and my students

	looks like my dyslexia issue is a one man crusade	practice.	putting pressure on tutors to teach ESOL and not EFL. Is it coming from me? How can we make sure systems and paperwork allow good practice?		
Gemma	Very useful being able to talk about issues & get feedback from others. Objective feedback.	More of the same – talking about issues in depth, & seeing things from other perspective	Yes definitely. In particular, maybe looking at teaching grammar more, & recognising how I can encourage learners to see their mistakes.	Yes. Would like to look at 'gap' between what teachers think they teach & what learners actually learn.	Discussion with others.
John	Useful discussion – revealing of the range of experiences and opinions in the group.	I would hope that the focus would shift from broad issues to elements of practice which would result in measurable improvement.	Not really	Possibly techniques for identifying and correcting common pronunciation errors in Somali L1 speakers	Look into a range of teaching methods and purchase appropriate equipment if necessary.
Dalmar	Excellent: Critically Reflecting Teaching & Learning	Differentiation	N/A We talked about ESOL mainly and I teach maths.	Critically analyse 'Student Centred Method'	Debates, Researches including teaching staff and students.
Evelyn	Activity seemed to be (to me) unexpectedly useful – tho' mostly to person telling the story.	Would like more work in small groups (max 4) as well as whole group discussion.	As part of induction, set out more clearly to learners what they can expect to cover during the term/the year.	Long-term effect on learners of learning with WEA (do they achieve more in life with higher quals from WEA/longer period with WEA?)	Bruce could phone lots of learners going back ?8 years!
Lori	A good start!	Putting discussion into practice	Yes, I am going to inform my students more. I will let them in on my plans for later in the term –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating autonomous learners who do feel they are 	I'd really like to be taught techniques on good pronunciation teaching by someone quite

			SOW etc.	receiving instruction (fine line!) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making exam prep less boring & figuring out what to do with students who are not taking exams – how to keep them coming to class when they are just doing ILP work. • Pronunciation teaching 	experienced in this field. As far as the topic of today's discussion, I think it is possible to work together to get ideas on it.
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Workshop Two

	How did you find the critical discussion exercise in today's workshop?	How did you find the joint lesson planning activity?	To what extent did you think today's workshop will benefit your work?	Would you have come to today's workshop if you were not going to be paid?	Are there any other comments you would like to make about today's workshop?
Dave	They were interesting and although I did not contribute much, I've learnt something new.	Good.	Some extent.	Yes.	None.
Gemma		Interesting – brought up some interesting issues.	Perhaps – not immediately but later.	I might have done – depends on my mood!	
Shirley		Good.	I'm not sure.	Yes.	
Evelyn		Threw up a lot of	See above		Would have been

		ideas/themes for me to use in future.			good/better with more people but more useful than I expected with those [who were] present.
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Workshop 3

	Please comment on how you found this afternoon's activities.	To what extent do you think today's workshop will benefit your work?	Would you have come to today's workshop if you were not going to be paid?	Are there any other comments you would like to make about today's workshop?
Amanda	<p>Lots of shared ideas & thought-provoking questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing notes • role plays <p>I was reminded that there are some interesting texts/papers that I could revisit.</p>	<p>Got some ideas on how to present 'note-writing' activities. I must think more about my strengths & <u>weaknesses</u> as a teacher.</p>	<p>Yes. Initially it felt like a bit of a bind but now I'm enjoying it.</p>	<p>I'm not quite grasping the 'critical conversation' idea – can't stay in my role!</p>
Chloe	<p>Thought provoking and good to get together as a team, learning and sharing ideas.</p>	<p>Using each other's ideas to spring board from and will validate my work as well as develop it.</p>	<p>Depends ... 😊 probably</p>	<p>Would like to build on it and do more.</p>
Sandra	<p>The shared planning section was the most interesting.</p> <p>The artificiality of the three roles in the first section wasn't entirely appropriate to how we wanted to engage with the discussion, so we swapped around and the umpire contributed lots of their own perspectives.</p> <p>It was nicely and sensitively led.</p>	<p>A bit!</p>	<p>Yes!</p>	

Gemma	Threw insights onto issues that had gone “underground”	It will if I remember, & not get too bogged down with other things.	Probably, but would rather I was paid.	
Shirley	V. good. V. helpful. I don't want a scenario to try the detective storyteller process, I want some loosening of the roles to allow for supportive interaction in a more natural way.	I'm going to try it out in class. I feel supported by colleagues. I enjoyed telling my story.	I wasn't paid.	
John	Useful discussion	Generally useful but not really specific to my work at present.	Probably.	

Workshop 4

	What are your comments on this afternoon's workshop?	Reflecting on all the workshops you attended, how useful have you found them?	What would your suggestions be for future workshops of this kind (e.g. content, frequency)?	How would you compare the importance to you of more joint practice development, compared to other CPD opportunities – e.g. internal training, external training, participation in conferences, self study, other (please indicate)?
Chloe	I thought it was amazing what came out and how just “getting together” promotes this outpouring.	I've found it helpful to hear similar stories/problems/issues being discussed and possible solutions.	The same in terms of frequency but would quite like opp. to do more hands on stuff like trying something specific in class & feeding back.	It's cheaper and can be of practical use and it's one of many: this could go deeper if it continued. It also serves as a staff meeting which we need.
Amanda	I picked up some good ideas on: motivation, research by Adrian Underhill, 'pretend play', peer teaching.	I want practical solutions!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some formal training • Expert speakers 	I have enjoyed CPD but I haven't got practical knowledge per se to take away with me. I would like <u>some</u> formal instruction.

John	Good discussion – useful reflections on a variety of issues	Always useful to spend time with colleagues talking about practice. Not sure about the usefulness of the ‘storytelling’ format	Cross class, possibly cross curricular action research type projects could keep the motivation going. Frequency 2 or 3 times per term?	JPD should be more engaging and useful – but you do have to do a bit more yourself.
Evelyn	Showed how many problems we have in common	Mixed – 2 nd one I attended had too few teachers to be really useful.	One per half-term – content arising from concerns shared in common, anyone done any useful reading on it? – workshop devising solutions.	They’re all useful – as internal training it is more useful than most internal training.
Shirley	I missed most of it. Sorry.	Very.		I think they’re very good, but can lack focus. Would be good for a specific goal.
Gemma	Very useful. Nice being able to discuss things with colleagues.	Very useful. Nice knowing other people have same issues & either finding how they deal with them, or chewing them over. Feel more part of a team.	Content – more of the same as these. Frequency – every 3/4 weeks perhaps?	Other CPD opportunities – worth having. But JPD gives the opportunity to discuss with others.

Appendix 3: Ethical Statement

The following statement was signed by participants in the study. No amendments were proposed.

These workshops form part of a research project into Joint Practice Development (JPD) and its effectiveness in improving teaching and learning, and as a strategy for Continuing Professional Development.

The research will culminate in a report that I will submit as the requirement of a MA module in Advancing Pedagogy, and a poster that will be displayed at the LSIS conference in May. It is hoped that findings will be disseminated through other routes, e.g. in other conferences and journals.

I would like to ask for your permission to quote you from your feedback forms and in other communications. I would also like to be able to describe these workshops. Please note that:

- **All contributors, as well as the location and identity of York Court, will be concealed with different names. You are invited to supply me (below) with an alternative name by which you will be referred to in the report.**
- **All contributors, unless they request otherwise, will be thanked by their real names in the acknowledgements.**
- **All participants will be invited to examine and give feedback on the research before it is submitted.**
- **All participants are free to withdraw their participation at any time, without explanation. In this event, none of their contributions will be used.**
- **You are invited to propose additions/amendments to this text before signing it.**

I propose the following additions/amendments:

I would like to be referred to in the report by the first name _____

I am happy/not happy* to be referred to by my real name in the Acknowledgements. (Please delete as applicable.)

I agree to the terms outlined above.

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4

Workshop 3: Post-It answers from participants

An idea or text that guides/informs your teaching	A key characteristic of an outstanding lesson	A particular strength of my teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living abroad, my experiences of struggling to live in a country where I can't communicate. • Frank Coffield (article) "What if Teaching & Learning became the first priority?" • Friere's reflect/participatory rural assessment methodology • Dogme methodology • Humanism • Students come to class with the rest of their lives • 'The educator must die and be reborn in the Spirit of Easter!' • 'What does it say?' • Being authentic • Not make 'cultural' assumptions about things learners 'should' know • Paolo Friere – although I haven't read much of his actual work! • The good and bad teachers I had growing up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feeling of energetic learning – energy • When all the students are engaged – speaking, listening, asking questions of teacher and each other • laughter (not at me though) • NOISE! • "I am doing OK." Everyone in the class feels confident in their ability to learn. • enjoyment • Safety physical and emotional. • relevance • light bulb moments • Everyone learning as much as they can • A 'blinder' When learners all contribute, talk, ask questions, are involved and enjoy lesson. • Students listening and engaged in fluency activities. • Students asking a lot of relevant questions • Learners take over the learning process and drive it forwards • Learners extend the envelope and surprise themselves and me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making my students feel comfortable and able to speak out, join in, ask questions, make mistakes without feeling embarrassment. • Building positive relationships with students. • Responsivity • Being approachable • Explain things well, act supportive and patient. • Producing new resources that are focussed on learner's interests and needs.

