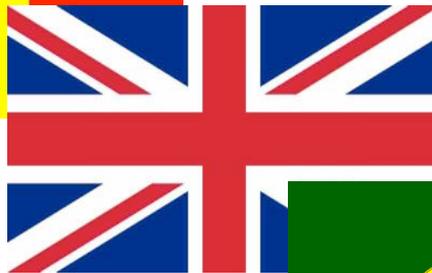




International Teacher Leadership

International Teacher Leadership Project Conference

18 – 20 November 2008
Cambridge



Conference Proceedings

Notes were typed by a number of volunteers during the conference. Below is an edited version.

Aims for the conference

1. To achieve a common understanding of the purpose and method of our project
2. To get to know each other and develop a collaborative ethos as a team
3. To share perspectives on the situations in the participating countries
4. To explore possible strategies for intervention
5. To make decisions about the development of research tools
6. To make decisions about next steps:
 - the development of research tools
 - the adaptation of materials
 - funding
 - our next meeting
 - use of the website
 - etc etc

Who are we?





Val Hill

Assistant Headteacher at Birchwood High School and TLDW tutor. Saw the difference TLDW has made and potential of project internationally. Hopes teachers are encouraged to be more creative and looks forward to working internationally and collaboratively. Wants clarity of methodology and milestones. To have common purpose and confidence to adapt TLDW to our own contexts.



Amanda Roberts

Was a Headteacher in Hertfordshire for 15 years has worked as an independent consultant providing services to the Faculty of Education. She manages and manages HertsCam.



Paul Barnett

Deputy Headteacher at Epping High School, TLDW, has completed MSc in Education. Wants to help support teachers in other countries. Sings in a band.



Jo Mylles

Works as Assistant Headteacher at Epping High School and supports TLDW in the local community. Her role involves working with schools. Wants to share her experience and develop performance, an international understanding and work in other contexts.



Ozgur Bolat

Working on PhD. Interested in TLDW potential in Turkey. Teacher for 3 years. Hopes this will help him establish theory of teacher leadership. Wants to see it help education system in Turkey. Wants to see teachers at the front. Reform should start with the teachers. Knowledge transfer is important. Wants us to share how to overcome obstacles. Folk dancer and has played Othello!



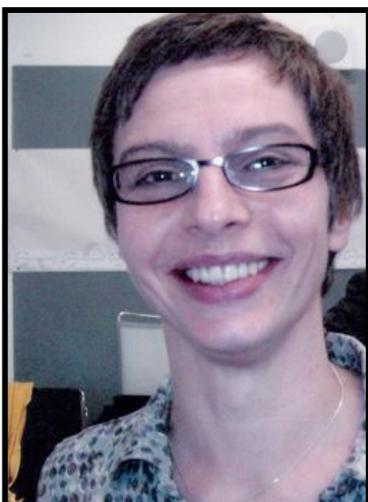
Judy Durrant

Works for Canterbury Christ Church University, supporting TLDW and masters' level programmes. Variety of contacts, linking with lots of schools. Has seen organic growth of TL in her area. Would like people to understand the concepts of teacher leadership and leadership density in schools. Member of a blues band!



George Bagakis

University of Peloponnese. Working with people across education. Worked on Carpe Vitam & hopes to build on this. Teacher leadership is a new idea in Greece. He wants to build on this and develop international understanding. He has 2 children. Loves bicycles – but it's a dangerous activity in Athens!



Iris Marusic

Works for Institute for Social Research in Croatia. Associate researcher: designs and conducts research. Wants to broaden perspectives on TL and qualitative methodology. Wants project to help education system in Croatia by showing teachers a model of bottom-up change. Concerns: funding, and activities after conference. Plus access to schools. Likes to ride bicycles – despite the danger! Also likes cats and dogs.



Ivana Cosic

Recently graduated from Cambridge. She has started a job with the ministry, department for international relations and is still learning role. Used to do teacher training. Hopes this project will bring change to schools and apply a bottom up approach so teachers can lead and feel motivated. Hopes teachers will endorse the project and see the benefits for themselves. Concerns: funding, and how persuade teachers to sustain motivation, embrace change. She is a member of travel network which hosts strangers.



Ljubica Petrovic

Finished Masters at Cambridge and now applying for PhD. Works on a European programme connected to changing education system. Has done teacher training. Idea of TL unknown in Croatia. She believes change starts with teachers; their job is not just to transmit information but to innovate. Concern: headteachers' reactions. She wanted to be an actress!



Ioana Ursache

Works with EuroEd in Iasi. She teaches English to MEd students. She is a PhD student and Mona's best friend. Sees huge potential for TL because teaching in Romania is top down and pedagogy is not taught. Wants this project to work at all levels: faculties of education, Heads, etc. Would like TLDW to become understood concept in Romania. Concern: personal capacity to sustain work. Rock climber and photographer.



Mona Chiriac

Secondary teacher (Geography) and House Leader at Barclay School and Tutor for TLDW. Just competed her MEd. She has links with Romanian schools. Sees this project as opening doors for teachers and as a seed which will grow in different ways in different countries. Would like it to help the education system in Romania as a whole – to shape teacher leadership. Hopes that next steps become clear – concerned project may not happen. Married for 8 years to a man she met at school at 16. Also a mountain climber.



Maria Flores

From the University of Minho. Working on two European projects: teacher quality and Leadership. This project would support the other 2 projects and the system in Portugal – there is a drive to accountability is diminishing professionalism as this can act as a counter to that tendency – would like to establish a methodology and milestones – how can it be funded? She regrets that she can't ride a bike.



David Frost

He has been working on the development of support for teacher leadership since 1989, first in Kent and then in Hertfordshire. Delighted with the development of HertsCam and now wanting to see how teacher leadership can contribute to educational reform globally. He used to play in a band too!



Gordanna Miljovic

Works at Open Society Institute. Based in Budapest, but travels widely. She is a Project Manager, but also develops ideas, supervises projects and organises conferences etc. She works with schools sponsored by Open Society. Wants to bring change to education in South East Europe. Wants to look at the potential this project has and how it fits into the structures of her organisation. Wants to help teachers enjoy work more, develop confidence and leadership potential. She has 2 daughters and they all have different family names!

Jose Penalva

(Could not attend) He is a lecturer at the University of Murcia and has written books about teachers' professional identity. He wants to change the way that professional knowledge is created and disseminated in Spain.

The wall journal



This is a continuous poster, hung around the walls and is used to document the journey of our conference.



Intercultural collaboration – issues

David drew our attention to a brief paper about intercultural competence. It has arisen from a Czech source in relation to a collaborative professional development programme for Principals / Headteachers.

Respect

express respect and positive regard for another person

Sensitivity in discussion

awareness of the particularity of terms and explaining oneself in personal ways rather than generalisations

Empathy

capacity to imagine how others understand the world

Managing interaction

skill in maintaining and regulating conversations

Responsibility in a group

initiation of ideas related to group problem solving and facilitating interpersonal harmony

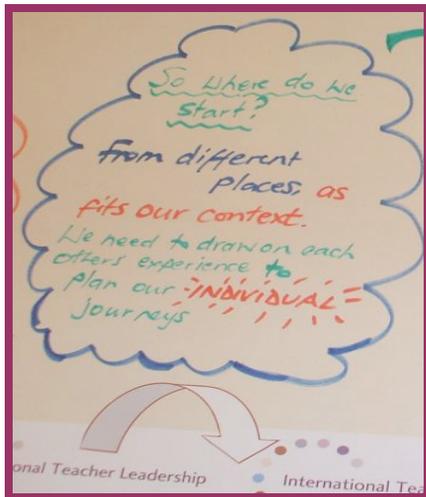
(Danuse Nezvalova, Olomouc University, Czech Republic)

These sorts of principles help us to think about the interpersonal sensitivities that can to help us work together.

The project methodology

David provided an overview of the proposed methodology of the project. This was to be followed by small group discussion of a paper about the methodology.

Four elements



1. Analysis of cultural context in the different countries. How do the political / cultural contexts constrain or shape how teachers see their roles and how institutional cultures develop? There is a cultural variation across institutions as well as countries, so it is crucial for us to understand the cultural environment and that of the institutions we might work with.

2. Development / adaptation of programmes of intervention. We know what works in our context – in Hertfordshire schools. Let's examine it and identify the underlying principles, then use them to adapt and develop approaches and tools for other contexts in a very practical way. Then we have to clarify how we build those programs. This is research which is practice driven and practice oriented.

3. Monitoring and evaluating those programmes in action. We will gather data in many different ways depending on what people are doing. We need to evaluate the operation of the programme of support. We also need to find out what the effects of teachers' interventions are in schools. Thirdly we need to monitor the changes to the professional culture.

4. International discourse to develop our understanding of teacher leadership and what supports it. This will enable us to speak to policy makers from a broad base. Policy-makers are speaking to each other now, so we need to engage with that international discourse. We need to test out our ideas with those actually involved in education. We learnt through the Carpe Vitam project about strategies to structure such discourse. This could be done even better now.

Issues arising from the discussion of project methodology

Small groups read the paper and discussed issues. In plenary these issues were shared and discussed:

The cultural context:

Need to use the national literature and research to write a briefing paper for each country. This should include:

- educational legislation
- training opportunities for teachers (pre-teaching service and in-teaching service)
- role of teachers in decision making process, governance in schools
- opportunities for networking
- teachers' perceptions of pedagogy

A helpful resource here would be the South Eastern European Educational Co-operation website: (www.see-educoop.net).

Choosing schools:

Which schools to be involved? Successful schools? Schools with fertile professional cultures? Should we find partners either to help with research or to help with supporting schools? Local authorities may be able to recommend schools. We might approach where we already have connections and there is willingness to engage with the project. Then later we can extend the activity to other schools. It may be wise to begin with small steps, a few schools e.g. in Istanbul – just 2 schools. We might also find a way forward by fitting in with other agendas.

Developing the intervention:

It is difficult to visualise an intervention before having analysed the wider context. Intervention needs to be tailored to particular schools and the design depends on the experience and perspectives of the teachers involved.

Work on conceptual clarity and terminology:

We need to develop a shared understanding. There are key concepts but the terminology used needs to be appropriate for each national context. It is important to be explicit for both practitioners and researchers.

Tuning in:

Within the team we need to be in tune with all the other contexts. In order to support each other we need to understand each context. This requires sharing information and analysis from each context.

Ethical issues with leadership:

There may be ethical / political issues when talking about teachers as leaders. Should we use this terminology from the beginning of the project? The use of the word *Leadership* has to be very carefully translated in different contexts. For example the term 'teacher leadership' would not be understood in SE Europe so a more appropriate term might be something like 'teacher initiative' or 'teacher-led innovation'. In Greece, the concept has gained meaning through the Carpe Vitam LfL project. We need to create workshops in our contexts where the concept is introduced to people and explored, paying attention to the language that we use.

The scale / process of the intervention:

The scale may vary in all the different contexts – but we agreed that we should take small transformational steps on which we build later.

Support within the team:

What support can members of this group provide for each other? Perhaps we can offer each other ‘critical friendship’ by making a visit to team members in another country and providing support by asking questions and sharing ideas.

Collaboration within countries:

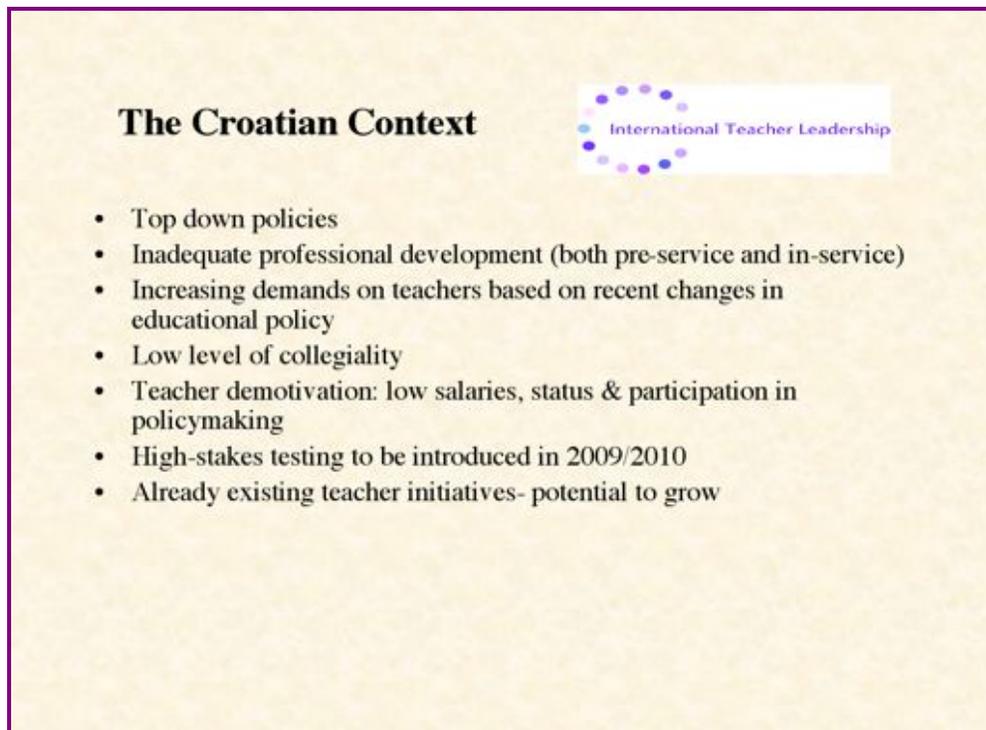
Members of the team within the same country need to develop a common agenda and agreed ways forward. There may be a need to expand the national teams to include the right expertise and connections.

Coherence of the project:

There is a distinction between consistency and coherence. We should seek to have coherence at a conceptual level rather than consistency across the project in terms of terminology and intervention programmes.

Preparation for the presentation at the HertsCam Network

We shared our PPT slides which we had prepared in advance and reviewed the content to make a single presentation outlining the context and the hopes for each participating country. An example is shown below.



The Croatian Context



- Top down policies
- Inadequate professional development (both pre-service and in-service)
- Increasing demands on teachers based on recent changes in educational policy
- Low level of collegiality
- Teacher demotivation: low salaries, status & participation in policymaking
- High-stakes testing to be introduced in 2009/2010
- Already existing teacher initiatives- potential to grow

Supporting teacher leadership – key principles

We looked at a paper headed ‘Principles for teacher leadership support’. It put forward 15 principles arising from the HertsCam experience:

1. A partnership between schools and external agency (ies)
2. Mutual support through membership of a group / network
3. Building professional cultures that give sanction and support to teacher leadership
4. Opportunities for open discussion (e.g. about values, strategies, leadership)
5. Tools to scaffold personal reflection and planning
6. Tools to model, exemplify and illustrate action
7. Expecting and enabling teachers to identify their personal development priorities
8. Facilitating access to relevant literature
9. Guidance on leadership strategies
10. Guidance on methods of evidence gathering that leads to change
11. Mobilisation of organisational / senior leadership support and orchestration
12. The provision of a framework to help teachers document their leadership activities
13. Opportunities for networking beyond the school
14. Recognition through certification
15. Opportunities to build knowledge from accounts of teacher leadership

We discussed the challenges we face and possible ways to build support in the participating countries in the light of these principles.

Certification

There is not an established tradition of such accreditation in many countries. Perhaps Cambridge certificate of some sort would be helpful.

Literature

How to get access to the relevant literature in the field in participant countries? Is it a case of some articles being translated in the different languages to facilitate this? Funds for translating the relevant literature would be needed.

Resources

We could draw on the materials and strategies developed within HertsCam and elsewhere but they would need to be adapted to the different national contexts.

Strategies

Teachers would need clear guidance on ways to gather and use evidence to support change and improvement.

Principals

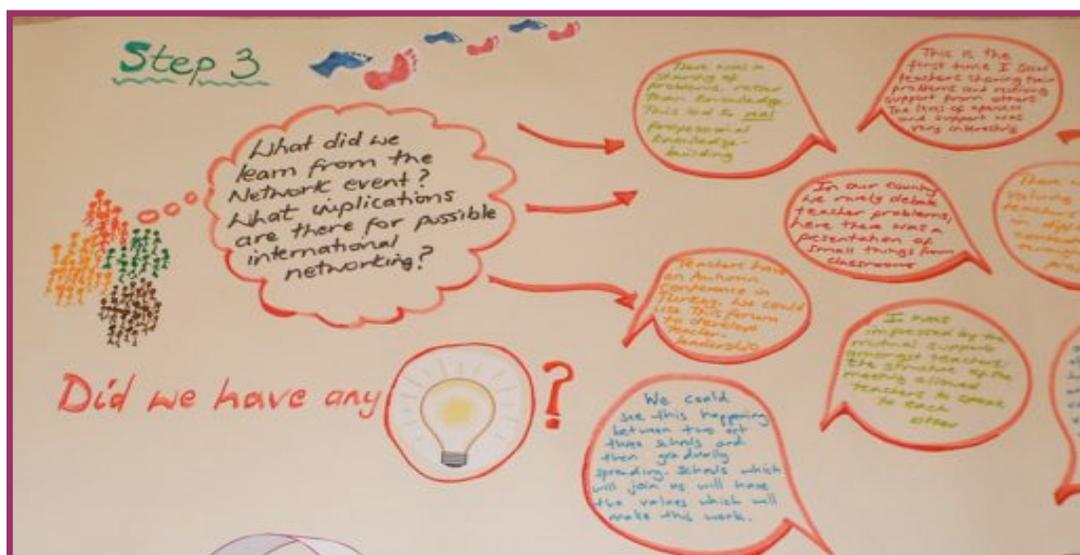
It will be challenging to work with Principals / Headteachers to support them in building cultures that support teacher leadership, provide opportunities for open discussions and so on.

Partnership

The relationship between the schools and the external agencies are very important particularly in relation to offering network opportunities. Within the schools we need to build collaborative relationships with key individuals.

The HertsCam Network event

We all went to the event in Stevenage where 160 teachers gathered to lead workshops for each other and display their project work. We made a presentation with a slide from each country. We made these sort of comments when reviewing the experience the following morning.



- Great! Teachers openly sharing successes and problems
- Receiving support, not a judgemental atmosphere – supportive professional culture
- Saw how curriculum can be used creatively by teachers
- Impressed by variety, organisation, mutual support: the whole structure of the meeting
- The language of teachers being used as a valid currency: real communication
- A real learning community, not like you just read in a book!
- Variety and flexibility: pertinent issues in the classroom
- Common shared understanding and purpose between teachers
- Clear networking in action providing support for teachers
- Sharing and openness of teachers to talk about issues and support each other
- Professional dialogue encouraged
- Organised by teachers themselves

Action steps - the future

Funding issues

We need to look for funding for the practical dimensions of the project as well as for the research.

We need to identify each country's needs for example to pay for conferences, certification, researcher time, etc

We still need to find funding for the central component – led by Cambridge - as well as to support action in the participating countries.

We may have to have a federative model where there is separate funding for each a national project but the challenge would be to enable some proportion of that to be transferred to Cambridge to enable David and the Cambridge team to be involved and to be able to have a unified research strategy.

If the project is seen as a collaboration of research teams and if universities in participating countries have access to funding, it may be possible for team members to draw in partners from those universities.

Gordana says that it is probably not possible for the OSF to provide direct funding for Cambridge because the aims of OSF is to support education in less economically developed countries. However, they might be able to fund small projects in non- EU countries such as Croatia, Turkey, Romania. It may also be possible to fund some conferences that will take place in those less developed countries.

Gordana will speak with contacts in Serbia – to see if Serbia could be a partner in this project.

Ioana – has investigated funding opportunities in European Union. She confirmed that it is unlikely that we would find funding for the project as a whole but may be able to address some parts of the project through this source.

Ozgur is in conversation with the Turkish Vodafone Foundation which funded the OPYEP project in 2007-8 which involved Ozgur and David. There are Vodafone Foundations in a number of countries. David could explore this avenue internationally and team members could explore it in their own countries.

Gordana mentioned DFID and the British Council as possible sources of funding.

George suggested that for the core money we need to look at the EU programmes such as Comenius.

Research team process

We referred to the handout – ‘Timing/Structure of the project’ as a starting point for discussion. This statement represents an ideal which builds on the Carpe Vitam LfL project model.

We agreed to commit to another team meeting within the next few months, possibly in March but would explore different ideas about possible locations and venues.

We discussed communication and agreed to keep in touch by e-mail correspondence and to consider the possibility of using the University of Cambridge’s web-based facility ‘CamTools’ to create a forum or virtual community for the project. We would also explore the use of the Teacher Leadership web site to see if that can be used more interactively.

Project support / leadership

We discussed what could be expected from Cambridge.

Cambridge will coordinate the project, but each country will need to take the initiative to develop the project in their own locality and be prepared to collaborate by using common research instruments, working to common principles and sharing their experience and outcomes.

David will provide conceptual leadership but this is seen as a collaborative intellectual endeavour in which dialogue between participating teams will shape our theoretical perspectives as well as our practical strategies.

Those team members with considerable practical experience can offer support through critical friendships and we will all share responsibility for the tasks that emerge.

Timescale

We would like to have a further team meeting within a few months. One suggestion is to link it to the next HertsCam Network Event on March 10th.

A further fixed opportunity is the CARN Conference which is to be held in Athens in 2009. The conference is to be hosted by George Bagakis and his team in collaboration with the Hellenic American Education Foundation. The dates of the conference are 30th October – 1st November and the venue is the campus of Athens College and Psychico College.

In any of these cases, funding has to be found for accommodation and food. Participants would pay for their own transportation.

Action planning in national teams

Croatia:

Identify schools, perhaps 3 schools in Zagreb
Explore funding: ERISSE, COMENIUS, OSF, MZOS (NGO)
Develop a coherent project presentation for schools
Plan team meetings
Search for useful literature
Begin exploratory conversations with schools
Establish a timetable

Turkey:

Already working with 2 schools
Continue to explore possible funding from Vodafone
Explore the use of an existing conference of best practice as vehicle for TL

Romania:

A meeting at EuroEd to feed back from the meeting and build a team
Meetings with other educational institutions to build capacity for action
Accessing existing events and networks
Access to literature and other material that could be translated
Explore funding (e.g. Comenius, Grundtvic, Transversal Programme, Structural Funds).
Consider if Structural Funds can be used to support an accredited course

Greece:

Explore sources of funding (private schools, EU, foundations, universities, banks, etc)
Research team constitution
Determining the participating schools
Interpret the discussion in Cambridge for the Greek context

SE England: (Judy)

Consider using a school in Lambeth
Bid for 'Knowledge Transfer Funds' from the university (CCCU)
Develop methodological plan with school
Bid for study leave in relation to PhD

Portugal:

Explore already established links to identify schools
Explore synergy with other national and international projects
Engage other people in ITL project in Portugal
Investigate sources of funding e.g. Comenius and British Council

Key questions about the intervention

How many schools should we work with?

This may depend on the support there is already in place for schools and the capacity we have to provide support. Each national team will have its own approach. It may be a question of starting small then the first cohort will become catalysts for the following groups.

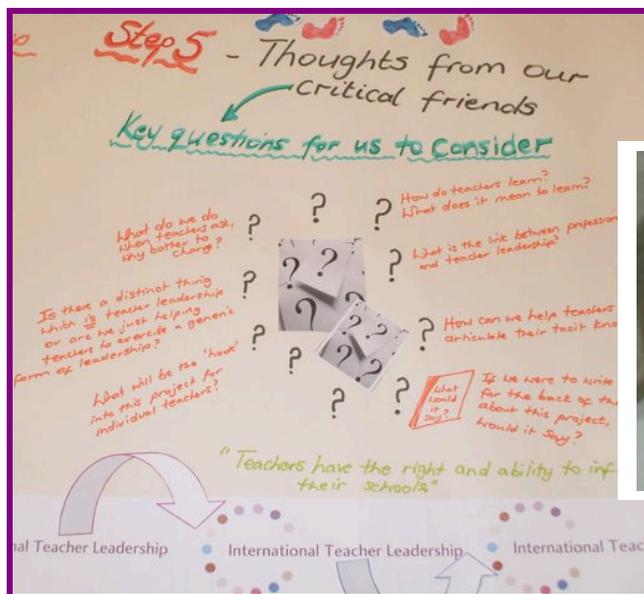
How many teachers in a group?

Where we support TL through support groups, they need to be an optimum size. In HertsCam we prefer groups of at least 10 but insist on not less than 8 teachers.

Public or private schools?

We are predominantly interested in working within the public sector but private schools may have the resources to be able to participate and contribute. They may also have more freedom to innovate.

Critical friendship discussion with Prof Peter Gronn and Prof John MacBeath



David gave a brief introduction to the project referring to the Wall Journal as a way of documenting the process. Others built on this to sketch in what we had already discussed and clarified. John and Peter had also read the methodology paper. They were asked to respond and comment. The following points emerged:

- There seems to be a great deal of ‘energy in the room’.
- Context and language are very important.
- It takes a long time for people to come to a shared understanding of concepts.
- We will need to continue to work on the language at the time of building instruments, translating material, etc
- We have to consider the outcomes for policy makers.
- We should consider what it will say on the back cover of the book of the project.
- What is the key message and the main selling point for this project?
- We need to be clear about what teachers will see as the benefit of participation.
- We need to be clear about the constraints within which teachers exercise their leadership.
- What is the role of the students in this project?
- We may be able to draw upon the Bridges across Boundaries project focusing on school self evaluation.
- We need to consider theories of learning to explain how teachers learn including the concept of ‘double-loop learning’.
- We have to consider if we would we characterise this project as research.
- What would the Faculty Research Committee say about this project?
- This may be best seen as ‘research and development work’.
- A key task is for David to explain this to the faculty with support from John and Peter.
- What evidence already exists about teacher knowledge building and leadership?
- How we articulate the tacit nature of teacher professionalism?
- We need to consider how best to work with headteachers.
- A key challenge is the extent to which teachers’ practices are intractable and resistant to change.
- Teachers learn from other teachers which can be accessed within an appropriate support forum.
- Is there a distinction between ‘leadership’ and ‘teacher leadership’?
- What have we learnt about how teachers learn through leadership in HertsCam?
- The network learning may not be perfect knowledge, but it is powerful.
- Accreditation is a helpful tool in HertsCam. How can we use this in the ITL project?
- Should we consider partnerships with local universities?

Focus on tools and materials

In this session we looked at the sort of tools used in HertsCam. Such tools are used to model and help teachers imagine what their work might be, to support planning and reflection. In HertsCam, resources are presented in the tutors’ resource pack, the tutor handbook, the student handbook and the summary database. Resources include facsimiles, vignettes, proformas, workshop guide sheets and stimulus materials using words and graphics. We had a brief discussion about the use of tools, and how we can share them. The issue of translation both in terms of language and context was discussed.

We also touched briefly on the question of research tools. We talked about the idea of school portraiture where we would ask the school to construct a portrait (word, images,

video, web, etc) that represents a view of the school, its characteristics, its aims and dilemmas. We also discussed various ‘culture mapping’ techniques.

We distributed copies of the HertsCam resource file on CD on the understanding that there is a shared responsibility to protect intellectual property and to respect copyright. This can be supported by careful use of the HertsCam and ITL logos. We resolved that we would devise and use a standardised way of acknowledging the course of ideas.

Revisiting our expectations

What is the project for?

Among the comments were:

For epiphany.

For conceptualisation of already existing practice or of new practice.

To empower teachers to improve their practice to influence the outcomes for the students.

To make a difference – teachers making a difference to learning at all levels

To making a difference for children learning

To offer an opportunity for teachers and students to learn and exercise leadership

To make an investment in the social capital of the participant countries (network, trust, collegial support, etc).

To define / redefine the professionalism of teachers from within.

To create a school improvement strategy that would apply to different contexts.

The principles for supporting teacher leadership

The principles for teacher leadership - can they be grouped?

Beliefs and actions – to be put in the ‘principles’

What are we going to do when we go back?

All national teams will investigate sources of funding

Rather than wait for general funding to be agreed, we will look for other funds to sponsor our next meeting. Everyone should investigate, take initiatives and communicate any proposals to the whole team.

We need to consider if we have identified all the right people. It may be that our participant list will grow.

What are the obvious milestones? By September 09 we will all have a programme of intervention to start.

Our research questions:

How do teachers perceive their professional role?

How is the role of teachers constructed?

Is their role constructed for them or do they have saying into it?

How can teacher leadership be related to school improvement (student outcomes, teacher learning, organisation learning, system learning)

How do teachers learn to lead?

How do teachers learn through exercising leadership?

How do the organisational structures in schools and national contexts impact on teachers' leadership?

How can we provide opportunities and support for teacher leadership?

This slide was used by David in presenting the project in Athens on 21st November 2008.

