Fourth meeting
of the
International Teacher Leadership project
26 – 27 March 2010

Hosted by the University of Cambridge
Faculty of Education

Conference held at
Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
Preface

This document is not a research report; it is a record which helps those who participated in the 4th ITL Project Team meeting to recall the event and what was discussed. It helps to include those team members who were not there and to ensure a minimum of shared information within the team. It also serves the purpose of helping to develop a sense of ourselves as a team – to get to know each other and to develop a shared understanding.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to the Open Society Institute for funding this meeting. In particular we are indebted to Gordana Miljevic and the Education Support Programme (ESP).
Who was there?

Petya Kabakchieva (Bulgaria)
Boyan Zahariev (Bulgaria)
George Bagakis (Greece)
Marianna Tsemperlidou (Greece)
Zoi Vitsaki (Greece)
Ozgur Bolat (Turkey)
Aytac Gogus (Turkey)
Ciprian Ceobanu (Romania)
Melinda Mula (Kosovo)
Jehona Shala (Kosovo)
Milica Vukcevic (Montenegro)
Milica Krulanovic (Montenegro)
Viorica Postica (Moldova)
Rima Bezede (Moldova)
Alma Kadic (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
Ivona Celebicic (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
Suzana Kirandziska (Macedonia)
Ljiljana Samardjiska-Panova (Macedonia)
Iris Marusic (Croatia)
Ljubica Petrovic (Croatia)
Vlasta Vizek-Vidovic (Croatia)
Ljiljana Levkov (Serbia)
Jelena Vranjesevic (Serbia)
Judy Durrant (UK South East)
Gordana Miljevic (OSI)
Aleesha Taylor (OSF)

The Cambridge ITL Team

Pre-conference reception at the Faculty of Education

An evening reception was hosted on Thursday 25 March at the Faculty of Education to welcome visitors attending the ITL project team meeting.

Also present were some headteachers and teachers from Hertfordshire schools who are supporting the project and representatives from the local education authority.

David Frost opened the event and said how great it was to see so many members of the ITL project team together and how he was looking forward to learning about the developing projects during the two day project team meeting.

He introduced Mike Younger, Head of the Faculty of Education, who spoke enthusiastically about the developing international links for teacher leadership.

The long journeys to Cambridge seemed to be forgotten and the opportunity of meeting colleagues and chatting over the refreshments was a good start to the conference proceedings.
The Project Team meeting – Day 1: Friday 26 March 2010

The venue for the project team meeting was a lecture room at Murray Edwards College near to the centre of Cambridge. Refreshments were served in an open area overlooking the grounds of the college.

Welcome and introduction

David Frost opened the conference and outlined what was to be achieved over the two days. Part of our way of working would be to model activities which participants may then choose to use in their own teacher leadership groups. In this spirit, Amanda Roberts gave a short introduction on how to keep a portfolio and participants were invited to look at examples and update their own portfolios as the conference proceeded.

David made a presentation which revisited the concept of teacher leadership and the question of the role of teacher leadership in education reform. Participants were given a paper – What is teacher leadership? This had been generated from previous discussions within the ITL team at its meetings in Cambridge (Nov 08), Corinth (May 09), Belgrade (Nov 09) and Athens (Nov 10).

Discussion took place on how to influence others and establish new ways of working, building a democratic collaboration based on partnership.

Activity - How to propose a focus on teacher leadership in your country

Sheila Ball led this activity by asking members to think about an appropriate language for teacher leadership in their national setting. Participants worked in country groups with a member of the Cambridge team supporting and helping to summarise the discussion with the key words arising being influence and impact.

Useful concepts / language include:

- Teachers as creative participators and owners in school (Turkey)
- Teachers as key to school improvement (Greece and Bulgaria)
• Teachers as agents to support change from a culture of individualism to one of collaboration in order to bring about strategic change (Croatia and Montenegro)
• Teachers taking the initiative to improve practice and democracy in the classroom (Macedonia and Moldova)
• Teachers taking the initiative and working collaboratively, teachers as decision makers. Reflection and exchanging ideas on practice. Provide a sense of pride, dignity and integrity. The teacher is the professional leader in the classroom (Serbia)

Activity - Principles into action

Amanda led an activity which focused on exploring the difficulties encountered when attempting to translate principles into action. Team members shared their experiences.

Common challenges included:

How do we develop a common understanding of teacher leadership through the use of tools and resources?

We need to develop ways to ensure that teachers engage with the academic and professional literature.

Should we translate stories and articles from the Teacher Leadership journal and share these with teachers?

Should we discuss the underpinning principles of teacher leadership with teachers to help them to then translate these into actions?
Activity - Sharing what we do

Each country group had provided information for a matrix setting out the progress they had made with project. Val invited members to look at the copies of the matrix displayed around the room and asked groups to read and pose questions on post-its.

Strategies for supporting teacher leadership

David outlined a list of key strategies for supporting teacher leadership

- establish a team
- initiate a dialogue with school principal
- establish teacher leadership groups
- create teacher networks
- facilitate web-based sharing
- lead school-based workshops
- provide guidance material i.e. resource file for tutors
- offer one-to-one support
- arrange academic awards

Producing a portfolio

Amanda led an activity - How are teachers going to record what they have done? Amanda explained the principles of using the session sheets to help teachers reflect and plan. The point of working with teachers like this is to encourage working outside the sessions, support teachers to document their learning and help them pay attention to how they have learnt themselves. Participants modelled how they might work with teachers by completing the record sheets of their own learning in this session. They made a record of the different strategies for running school based workshops for teachers, the progress made in their country and future actions points.
The research dimension

David introduced a session focusing on the research dimension of the ITL project. He reminded us that ‘the fundamental aim of action research is to improve practice rather than to produce knowledge’ (Elliot, 1991) and ‘it is a form of collective of self-enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations’ (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1981). As a team we have made a commitment to undertake our own action research project to help us to both develop the ITL project and to provide evidence of its impact.

**Features of action research**

- Action to develop practice
- The practitioners are also the researchers
- Reconnaissance then action
- Cycles of action, monitoring, data gathering, evaluation, reflection
- Periodic review
- Synthesis and critical discourse

David drew particular attention to the need, in action research, for periodic review where we:

“examine any evidence we have, discuss the quality and effectiveness of the programme with stakeholders and make decisions about adjustments to the programme”

He also drew out attention to the tools which we have available on the CamTools site to gather evidence for the monitoring and review. The first tool in the tool kit is the ‘Auditing the school culture’ tool.
National and institutional cultures

Val Hill explained how she had carried out an audit of the professional culture at her school. Members of her TLDW group have a ‘buddy’. They completed the audit tool with their buddy. Other teachers and members of the senior leadership team also completed the audit. The summary was shared with people who had completed it. It was a very good school discussion tool and provided an opportunity to celebrate success and reflect on what could be improved. It provided a powerful document for school improvement.

Jo Mylles talked about how the audit had been completed at her school. The leadership team completed it in pairs. Jo asked members to share something that they thought reflected the culture of the school, a moment, an incident, an image. The process was very revealing and things emerged which could be used. The school used a ‘market place’ activity to show strategies in each department as part of school audit.

Jo circulated a handout which listed cultural obstacles and we discussed in groups how we might respond to such challenges. These were the items on the handout:

- There is a lack of vision about change on the part of central government about educational reform.
- Teachers do not conceive of themselves as people who can exercise leadership.
- Teachers have no experience of exercising leadership.
- In many professional cultures, ‘learned helplessness’ is prevalent. Teachers may perceive themselves to have little room for choice and judgement.
- Control of the education system may be centralised with teachers constructed as mere ‘deliverers’.
- The status of teachers, the low level of salaries and poor working conditions lead to low morale and self-esteem for many. This undermines professionalism.
- The idea of shared leadership may be interpreted as an interference or even subversion of the headteachers’ (principal’s) authority.
- Some teachers feel that if they try to influence their colleagues they will break the shared understanding that all teachers are equal.

Judy Durrant talked about her experience of working in schools with different school cultures. She used Hofstede’s onion to explore a school’s culture - as you peel back the layers it reveals symbols, heroes, rituals, core values. Judy showed an example of using visual images to help with obstacles eg a padlock to unlock ideas.
David set us the challenge – How can we enable a school to look at itself? How can we establish a dialogue with the headteachers that would enable them to look at their own organisational culture?

The tools provided through the ITL project could give the headteachers a way to do this.

**Afternoon Session**

**Gathering data**

Paul Barnett led us in a session which focused on data gathering. To start the session he gave national groups wooden blocks to piece together to represent a cross on the sheet. The central piece was pivotal piece for creating the cross and this is a metaphor for teacher leadership. You can look at the central piece being the individual, the school, nation or teacher and everything hinges around that. The activity produced interesting discussion about teacher leadership in the national groups.

**The ITL project tools**

David emphasised that we have provided two types of tools to support the ITL project:

- The HertsCam Tutor Guide - tools to use with teachers to support the development of their teacher leadership. An updated version of these tools has been posted on CamTools.

- Research tools – to be used by members of the ITL project team to help us to develop and evaluate our programmes and share some data

David spoke about the need to keep a record of progress in groups and to have quality assurance procedures.
Activity – Using Tools

Val led us in looking at tools to be used with teachers. We said that teachers need help in making their aspirations real, turning their abstract concepts into something concrete. She showed the Resource File (Tutor Guide) and explained how she used the tools to support the development of teacher leadership in her context.

Ljubica from Croatia explained that she has started with the tutor handbook and added some material particularly on teacher leadership as the term is not clear in Croatia. She also did a presentation using slides on what is known about teacher leadership.

Val asked groups to consider what they would need to translate or adapt to make the tools fit for purpose to support teacher leadership in other national contexts.

Funding

We reminded ourselves of the unfortunate outcome of the bid to EU that had been submitted in October 2009. Gordana had been able to persuade OSI to make available to the project the funds that they had earmarked to contribute to the EU grant that we had bid for. She outlined for us the way that this money could be administered and what it could be used for.

The funding would support:

- The Cambridge team meeting and one further whole team meeting
- The operation of the teacher leadership programmes and related data collection / monitoring in the countries covered by the ESP (that is not Greece, Portugal, UK) including Turkey but to a limited extent
- Critical friendship visits
- Production of materials / resources
- Translation / adaptation of materials

Money could only be distributed once there is a partnership agreement in place. The parties would be each participating organisation, Cambridge and the grantee. Partnership agreements would cover a one year period and would be tied to each national team’s action plan.

Gordana asked for one of the countries within the ESP group to volunteer to take responsibility for managing the grant. Some of the funding could be used to support this management task. If we could establish these arrangements, the funding could be available in a matter of weeks.

Macedonia (Suzana Kirandziska for Step-by-Step) volunteered to become the grantee and this was agreed by us all.
Next whole team meeting

We discussed the timing and location of the next full team meeting and agreed that it would be in the middle of the autumn term somewhere in Macedonia and Suzana and her colleagues would be the hosts. This timing would allow all teams to have made a beginning and would enable us to share experiences and initial challenges.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm to allow participants time to consolidate and relax before the evening dinner.

An evening celebration with invited guests – Friday 26 March

The Cambridge team had invited a few guests from within the HertsCam Network to join us for the drinks reception and dinner at Murray Edwards College. These were headteachers and teachers who are supporting or interested in the ITL project. We had some good discussion and conversation over dinner. After the meal we entertained ourselves with singing. David sang a traditional English folk song. Aytac sang a traditional ballad from Turkey. Judy Durrant, Val Hill and Jo Mylles led us in a round of popular folk songs including ‘London’s Burning’. Then Ben Fuller, a local authority adviser in Hertfordshire, played the keyboard and led us in some more popular songs.
The Project Team meeting – Day 2: Saturday 27 March 2010

Activity – Discussion about leadership and management of the project

Paul Barnet introduced the topic of leadership and management of the project both at the international and local/national levels. He referred to this slide:

Although David takes responsibility for direction of the project as a whole, he is assisted in the strategic thinking by Amanda, Paul, Val, Jo and Sheila.

Members of this strategic team with the assistance of Mona Chiriac also provide mentoring for the other country teams.

Vivien Wearing assists in a management capacity with administration being taken care of by Lyndsay Upex.

Partnership Agreement

We returned to the discussion from the day before. We agreed that Macedonia would be the grantee for the purposes of the OSI funding and that decisions about funding would be the responsibility of as Steering Group consisting of David Frost, Suzana Kirandziska and Gordana Miljevic.

We agreed that there would have to be a formal agreement between all parties which would specify expectations and obligations.

It was recognised that the activities in each national site would vary but there would be an expectation that each team would work with a minimum of 3 schools.
It was also clarified that the funding currently on offer from OSI should be seen as ‘pump-priming’. This implies that each national team would seek other sources of funding and that the project will continue far beyond the one year period covered by the OSI funding.

This interim funding allows us to move forward and to prepare other bids such as those to the EU. We would look out for calls for the near future.

**Communication protocols**

A key aspect of the agreement must be concerned with protocols for communication. David reported that a few problems had arisen during the previous few months. He outlined the responsibility he has for ensuring that the university’s resources – particularly CamTools – are used in such a way that protects the university’s reputation.

People shared ideas on how to effectively communicate with each other. General principles included:

- It is important that we communicate and exchange experience.
- National teams can send their plans to a mentor in the Cambridge team
- If issues arise they should be discussed with a mentor first; then, if the issue is relevant to everyone, it can be raised through the project team bulletins. This would avoid too many emails and correspondence.
- Once each national team has shared an action plan, it would be reasonable to ask for an update every two months.
- David will produce monthly Bulletins to capture any issues, share news and clarify action points. Country teams can send in to Lyndsay any updates to be incorporated into the Bulletin.
- We agreed that email should be reserved for more personal, one-to-one or small group communication eg mentor. Any emails for wider circulation should be sent to Lyndsay for clarification and moderation and then sent to everyone.
- David to retain role of direction and managing the process, he is accountable to the university for the programme.

The overarching point was made that ITL should be regarded as a managed project rather than a loose network.

**Use of CamTools**

We agreed that this is a useful tool for sharing news and resources.
Everyone would receive an announcement by email whenever a new item was added.

In the future we would learn how to use the ChatRoom and Forum tools.

Monthly Bulletins and David’s Teacher Leadership Blog would continue.

Sharing data

The Research Tools and Techniques materials (see CamTools) provides a guide for data collection. It indicates that data collection is primarily for the purposes of reviewing the quality and effectiveness of teacher leadership programmes on a national basis. However, Cambridge would also make requests for key elements of data to be collected in English for analysis across the project. This should not interfere with the primary use of data.

Resources / materials

We reminded ourselves of the position regarding the sharing of the Cambridge team’s resources for supporting teacher leadership.

Amanda proposed an explicit agreement about copyright – the text of this follows below:

Copyright and acknowledgements agreement

The Cambridge team have, to date, shared 2 different sets of draft tools:

a) The HertsCam TLDW Resources File: resources / materials used in HertsCam to support workshops in the Teacher Development Work (TLDW) programme in school-based groups. This set of tools was distributed on a CD in November 2008 to the first partners to join the ITL project – Greece, Croatia, Spain, Turkey and Portugal.

b) Research tools and techniques: tools for data gathering to support the research dimension of the ITL project this work. Some of the items in this tool kit were adapted from the TLDW Resources File. A draft version of this guide and tool kit was posted on the ITL CamTools site on 25.8.09.

We asked you not to share these draft tools with anyone outside of the project but to use them and comment on them. We are grateful to those of you who have used the tools and shared their comments on them with us. We now understand more about how these tools might work in an international context and indeed in a British one.

We are now in a position to produce two packs:

1. The HertsCam Resource File for Supporting Teacher Leadership
2. The International Teacher Leadership Project Research Toolkit

These revised packs will be published at the by 30 April 2010 on the CamTools site.

All draft tools/materials should now be destroyed/deleted.
1. Copyright agreement
Both revised packs will be subject to copyright and will carry the following copyright statement:

© University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
Apart from fair dealing for the purposes of research or private study, or criticism or review, and only as permitted under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act, 1998, this publication can only be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, with the prior permission in writing of the publishers or in the case of reprographic reproduction, in accordance with the terms of licences issues by the Copyright Licensing Agency.

Within these copyright restrictions, you will be able to share the resources with your partners as you work to develop teacher leadership in your country.

2. Adapting resources
Our long term aim is that you will create your own resources which are most appropriate to you in your national context. If these resources are adapted from the resource pack, as we hope many will be, we would ask that you acknowledge their origin by using a common statement given below:

Agreed resource adaptation statement
These resources have been adapted from materials developed by David Frost at the University of Cambridge. We are using these resources as part of the International Teacher Leadership project, a research and development project directed by David Frost and involving partners in 15 countries.

3. Future publications
As previously discussed, ITL project members are free to publish any articles, reports etc. which explore their work and may draw on evidence generated within the ITL project. We would ask that the project be acknowledged in any publication by the use of the following statement:

Agreed publication statement
The International Teacher Leadership project is a research and development project, directed from the University of Cambridge by David Frost and involving partners in 15 countries.

I agree to abide by the above copyright and acknowledgements agreements.

Signature: Date:

Print name:

On behalf of (organisation):

We discussed this and agreed that rather than have a separate agreement, we would incorporate it into the partnership agreement as part of the terms of reference. It is important to have a clear understanding in which the copyright of the materials provided by Cambridge is respected and protected.

Discussion around communication

David asked for country stories to use and share in the bulletin eg Greece and Croatia explaining how tools were used.

Bosnia – would like some kind of webpage where information can be discussed and teachers can be informed. They have spoken to Turkey about exchanging visits to see structures of sessions. Croatia is the nearest country and they would like to visit to see how it works for them.
It was suggested that we make video recordings of sessions in the UK so that people can see a session in action especially for people who can’t visit. Snap shot videos could be made into a film although this might be expensive. Sir John Lawes School might be able to help as it has a special status for ‘media arts’.

A question: would teachers be invited to attend meetings? The answer was no because of limited funds but also because the function of the team meetings is not the same as the function of a whole project conference where teachers principals and team members would share experiences and work on principles and practice.

**Activity – Reviewing the HertsCam Tutor Handbook**

Val introduced the Tutor handbook used within the HertsCam programme. She began with the contents page and explaining each section. It was suggested that each national team could look through the handbook when they had more time and then discuss it with a mentor from the Cambridge team.

**Discussion about portfolios**

Teachers often became anxious about what they should include. Val circulated a few completed portfolios for members to view and discuss. Having assessment criteria is important in order to judge the quality of the portfolios.

The Tutor Handbook includes assessment criteria used. The HertsCam Tutor team have a meeting to discuss the final portfolios. They have observed such things as:

- evidence in the portfolios shows that participants have changed their own and others practice;
- we can see a narrative of the journey taken from project indicated by the pieces of evidence and the accompanying commentary
- the development of knowledge and skills is evident
- the portfolios are well presented and structured.

Val explained that a moderation meeting is held in July at which the tutors share their assessment of the portfolios they have marked and discuss what they really value and any concerns about the quality of portfolios. This helps to clarify our expectations.

A participation/reflection sheet is completed at the end of each session and included in the portfolio. Portfolio must be completed as you go along not all at once at the end of the process. In HertsCam the portfolio is used to enable the team to recommend that the University issue a certificate to the people who have participated, but other countries might not want to do this. It’s for each national team to decide what documentation they would like the teachers to maintain and produce and whether to give them teachers an award. Perhaps discussions with universities and government organisations would be helpful on this.
It was suggested that a portfolio and a journal could be combined. A portfolio is similar to a structured journal.

Teachers should be encouraged to include examples of their students’ work in their portfolios as evidence of improved approaches to teaching and learning.

We looked at an example of a portfolio.

The Cambridge team agreed to put examples of documents such as the Memorandum of Agreement on the CamTools site.

**Activity - Review of the conference and action points**

Jo and Paul asked national groups to draw up a priority statement to guide their short term and medium term actions following the conference.

Finally David thanked the groups for their enthusiasm and participation in the conference and wished them well with the projects in the member countries.

The conference closed at 3.45 pm. Delegates were transferred to Wolfson College for the last night of their stay and spent the afternoon/evening in Cambridge.

**Evaluation**

Before leaving Vivien asked members to complete the evaluation post-its. This is the sort of things we said:

**What went well ...**

- Getting clear picture on ITL and implementation in our national contexts.
- Great sense of team / increased clarity.
- Classification of teacher-led education and the communication between the core team and the participants.
- The exploration of the project was very clear.

**Even better if ....**

- More time for taking a look and reflecting on tools and portfolios.
- Support from project team members to country teams.
- Discussion, facilitation, experiences, everything.
- More time for reflection on “sharing”.

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Arriving at Wolfson College for the last night

Walking to Cambridge and enjoying the atmosphere of graduation day

Rima, Ivona, Alma, Ljilijana, Jelena, Viorica, Suzana, Amanda, David, Aytac, Petya, Zoi, Ciprian
Final farewell meal at the University Centre in Cambridge

Everybody, everybody, everybody, everybody, everybody, everybody, with Gordana in the centre