

TRACING THE AFTER-LIFE OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: REOPENING CLOSED CHAPTERS

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Introduction

Although the importance of formative and summative evaluation of programs has been emphasized in the evaluation literature (see, for example, Scriven 1967, Alderson and Beretta 1992, Weir and Roberts 1994), the notion of follow-up evaluation, or rather tracer studies, is comparatively rare. Tracer studies give information on whether programs have had effects that have lasted after the life of the program itself. If indeed programs are intended to have long-lasting benefits for the participants, as is the case with most teacher development programs, it follows that the nature and degree of the impact beyond the time-scale of the program should be systematically studied.

The need for such life-after-course evaluation studies has been recognized in theory (see, for example, Alderson and Beretta 1992, Weir and Roberts 1994). There has, however, been very little empirical work done, especially in the area of language teacher education (Alderson 1985, Weir and Roberts 1994). Since teacher education programs aim to promote the continuous professional development of teachers, it is imperative that we study the value of the program accrued over time and with further experience, after the planned intervention has terminated. This paper addresses the questions of what kind of impact teacher education programs have on teachers and when the effects become discernible.

Background

The tracer study in question is based on a major ELT project conducted in India at secondary level. This was a DFID (Department for International Development (UK)) funded curriculum renewal project known as the CBSE-ELT Curriculum Implementation Study (henceforth referred to as 'the Project'), carried out during 1993–98. It aimed to evaluate the different aspects of a new English curriculum with a communicative framework introduced at Class IX and X levels, in 1993 by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in about 3000 schools in the country.

Drawing on the work of Stenhouse (1975) and Fullan (1991), where the relationship between curriculum renewal and professional development of teachers is established, the Project involved teachers as researchers in understanding the curriculum-as-reality from within. The formative framework enabled the data gathered, with the help of a variety of instruments such as classroom observation, interviews, questionnaires, journals, and so on, to feed into different need-based programs, for a more effective and meaningful realization of the curriculum. As part of the project, several workshops and seminars were organized that enabled teachers to share their findings from action research conducted in their own classrooms.

The Project was based on the premise that it is only when teachers confront commonly held beliefs and attitudes in actual teaching-learning contexts that they will change in ways that provide a basis for continued growth, that is, “self-sustaining, generative change” (Franke et al. 1998). According to these authors (p. 67):

In order for change to become self-sustaining, teachers must begin to engage in practices that have built-in support for the changes they have made; otherwise, the changes are likely to erode over time...for change to become generative, teachers must engage in practices that serve as a basis for their continued learning.

Self-sustaining and generative change does not involve acquiring a set of established principles that teachers can implement faithfully, but engaging in “practical inquiry” (Richardson, 1994), i.e. teachers questioning and reflecting on their practice in relation to their own and their students’ thinking. It is this ongoing, detailed analysis of what worked and what didn’t and why, as well as the principles underlying such practice, that results in change that is meaningful (to teachers) and therefore sustainable. Further, Franke et al. (*ibid.*) argue that whether change for a particular teacher is self-sustaining and generative does not depend solely on the type of program *per se*, but on the understanding s/he develops of the principles underlying the program. This means that experiences serve as a backdrop for the way the teacher develops her personal-professional theory and that a given program might have different meanings for different people involved in the program. Change is a highly personal experience (Fullan, 1991) and each and every participant must have the opportunity to work through the programme in a way that is meaningful to them. Thus in order to enable teachers to develop in ways that are self-sustaining and generative,

it is necessary to provide a variety of opportunities to experiment, question and reflect on an ongoing basis. This was the main aim of the Project (see CBSE-ELT Curriculum Implementation Study 1997 for details).

A study carried out at the end of the Project to evaluate its immediate impact on the teachers involved revealed significant benefits for a majority of teachers working in different school contexts. It also pointed to several tensions that the new curriculum had given rise to within an 'old' school structure. It was also found that regardless of the nature of involvement, i.e. the type and duration of involvement, the impact manifested itself most in areas such as the following: i) effective classroom teaching including better student-student interaction, providing more opportunities for skills practice, and devising more efficient evaluation procedures, ii) an awareness of CLT principles, iii) a feeling of satisfaction, confidence, iv) better self concept, v) becoming self-observant, more critical, vi) seeing oneself as a change agent. More importantly, teachers no longer suffered from a sense of isolation but felt that they were part of a professional group where they could continuously grow by being researchers in their own classrooms and sharing their experience with others in the community (See CBSE-ELT Curriculum Implementation Study 1997 for details of the Impact Evaluation).

When the Project was officially completed in 1998, five years after it began, it was apparent to different stakeholders – teachers, students, principals, parents as well as the Secondary Board which had initiated the curriculum renewal process, the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), where the Project was located, and DFID – that the claims made in the Project were justified to a considerable extent, and that different stakeholders saw value in the experience in different ways, and to different degrees. The question that needed to be asked, however, concerned the sustainability of the impact. Would teachers and schools be able to continue with a research approach to their work? And to what extent have teachers accommodated the change? Do they have the necessary support to mediate changes in ways that are optimal in their own settings? Was it the right time to withdraw the Project support in terms of outside 'experts', need-based workshops etc.? What is the right balance between 'challenge' and 'support' inside and outside the school system that is needed to sustain on-going professional development? These

questions became crucial when the element of newness or the ‘Hawthorne effect’ of the Project had worn off – and needed to be addressed in a tracer study.¹

The study

The aim of the study was to evaluate the impact of the project, three years after it was officially completed. The two main questions the study sought to address related to (1) the nature and extent to which the communicative curriculum introduced in 1993 continued to be communicative and learner-centered, taking into account the kind of support available in school; and (2) the nature and extent to which the teacher-research approach to on-going curriculum renewal and professional development had been sustained. The specific questions the study addressed were:

- How do teachers interpret the curriculum, and translate that curriculum into classroom reality? How do they adapt available resources to their own needs?
- To what extent are they autonomous in decision-making and in their ability to problematize their work?
- What is reflective practice, according to them? How critical are they of theoretical principles? How do they mediate changes in pedagogic practice so as to increase the effectiveness of language learning?
- What is the nature of their sense of identity in their work-place vis-à-vis society? How successful are they in accommodating colleagues’ perspectives into their schema and working collaboratively with them?
- How finely tuned is their sense of plausibility in the face of current theories of ELT and new teaching methodologies?
- Do they adopt a research stance to their work? Do they do research in their own class? How aware are they of what others might be doing?
- What roles do they play in addition to that of teaching/testing in the classroom – for example, as resource persons/trainers, materials writers, exam paper-setters, markers, etc.?
- Do teachers see teaching as a challenging intellectual enterprise? How do they perceive professional development?

Methodology

The methodology employed had an ethnographic orientation and accessed the perspectives of teachers and other stakeholders in the curriculum such as principals,

¹ ‘Hawthorne effect’: ‘A term referring to the tendency of some people to work harder and perform better when they are participants in an experiment. Individuals may change their behavior due to the attention they are receiving from researchers rather than because of any manipulation of independent variables’ (<http://psychology.about.com>, accessed 8 August 2006)

CBSE officials and academicians from school-based organizations such as KVS, NVS, DAV, NCERT,² and the British Council, which had administered the funding from DFID, UK. The sample for the study comprised teachers who had participated in the Project as field researchers, and teacher trainers on different programs carried out under the Project. Classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire were used to collect data which was later collated and triangulated. Based on Fontana and Frey (2000), an interview as ‘negotiated text’ was conducted, whereby the meanings of questions and responses were contextually grounded and jointly constructed by the interviewer and respondent. This involved teachers as active participants, not as neutral entities, in negotiating through interactions the meanings they attached to their work in the classroom/school. Beginning with the question, “How is the English classroom now in comparison to what it was earlier?” the teachers and the researcher engaged in a discussion that explored issues in a number of areas related to CLT: what CLT meant for them, how they coped with the demands of the syllabus and the exam scheme that did not fully reflect a communicative orientation on the one hand, and creating in practice a communicative classroom on the other. The questions served as a broad framework and sought to negotiate meanings in actual contexts for the teachers in the study.

Similarly, observation as ‘context of interaction’ formed another source of data in which ethnographic observers interact with or enter into a dialogic relationship with members of the group being studied (Angrosino and Mays de Pérez, 2000). This involved the researcher sitting in on the classes of these teachers and observing how the class unfolded. An important aim of this observation was to discern the ethos in which the teacher and students worked, and the kind of ‘dialogue’ that ensued. The researcher tried to understand how in reality a communicative class was created (or not), what beliefs and assumptions guided teachers’ and students’ decisions: for example, to what extent the teacher emphasized the demands of the exam (which were in a way contrary to CLT approach) or ‘subverted’ it, and the like. The questionnaire was administered only to teachers, whereas all other stakeholders (n =10) and about 15 teachers were interviewed. The classes of a small number of teachers were

² KVS: Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan; NVS: Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti; DAV: Dayanand Anglo Vedic; NCERT: National Council of Educational Research and Training.

observed (n = 20) as the term had come to an end in most schools. Of the 150 questionnaires that were mailed to teachers, 46 completed questionnaires were received. The data was analyzed using a combination of variable-oriented and case-oriented approaches, as described in Miles and Huberman (1994).

Questionnaire findings

In what follows, teachers' responses to the questionnaire are presented in relation to what the teachers said they experienced *During the Project* and three years *After the Project* with reference to the two overall research questions. These findings are then complemented with interview and classroom observation data in the next section.

A comparison of the kind of impact the project had on teachers *when the Project was in progress* and *three years after the Project* reveals the following (Table 1):

Categories	During the Project			After the Project		
	-	+	++	-	+	++
A	1	13	29	3	14	29
B	2	10	27	5	16	21
C	3	12	27	3	17	21
D	0	13	27	0	7	34
E	3	9	29	2	3	36
F	4	5	32	3	19	19
G	4	12	22	2	21	17
H	1	15	23	0	19	21

Key

-: Not at all; +: To some extent; ++: To a large extent

- A. Feeling of satisfaction, enrichment, confidence...
- B. See myself as a change agent, my status elevated, and don't have a sense of isolation.
- C. Better self-concept, more critical and self-observant.
- D. Better informed and knowledgeable about teaching, feel better equipped to handle classes, student needs, better understanding of CLT methodology vis-à-vis my role in the classroom
- E. Better teaching in the classroom: can provide opportunities for skill practice and

better interaction in the classroom, question paper making and marking is more systematic.

F. Going beyond the classroom: desire to know more about ELT, urge to try out new ideas, supplementing and adapting materials, continuing education i.e. Diploma, M.Phil, Ph.D.

G. Going beyond the classroom: motivation for further research, desire to take up small research studies, ask for more financial/academic support, more training.

H. Critical insights into feasibility considerations: aware of what works and what doesn't, the feeling that it works only in well-resourced schools is erased, know that the approach can work for other subjects/classes.

*Table 1: Impact of Involvement During the Project and After the Project*³

³ Although in all 46 teachers responded to the questionnaire, not all answered all the questions. Therefore the totals for 'during the project' and 'after the project' are not the same.

It is clear from Table 1 that during the project, impact was felt in almost all the areas and most significantly in those areas represented by categories 'F', 'E' and 'A'. That is, teachers felt that during the project they were able to go beyond the classroom, had an urge to try out new ideas/materials, and to take up higher studies like Diploma in ELT and M.Phil; they did better teaching in the classroom and provided opportunities for skill practice and ensured interaction in the classroom; and had a feeling of satisfaction, confidence and enrichment. Further, they had a better self-concept, saw themselves as change agents and developed critical insights into feasibility considerations. Three years after the Project had been completed, the impact appears to be more under categories 'E', 'D' and 'A' than others. That is, they not only feel equipped to handle CLT based classes, but also actually feel better informed about communicative language teaching. Furthermore, the feeling of satisfaction continues. However, the urge to go beyond the classroom, the desire to try out new ideas and to take up small research studies, self-concept, and sense of identity as a change agent are all areas where the impact does not appear significant.

A further question concerning whether what the Project achieved *at the time* continues after the Project has been completed and, if so, in what ways revealed some more insightful information, as shown in Table 2:

Categories	Then			Now		
	-	+	++	-	+	++
A	0	5	36	7	20	12
B	2	5	33	10	17	11
C	0	5	36	2	12	23
D	0	7	34	5	9	23
E	2	5	35	10	18	10
F	3	6	31	11	14	11

Key:

-: Not at all; +: To some extent; ++: To a large extent

- A. Take a holistic view of curriculum implementation, i.e. consider the views of different stakeholders i.e. teachers, principals, students as important in the implementation of the curriculum.
- B. Strive to keep channels of communication open between CBSE and other school organizations.
- C. Make the curriculum as learner centered as possible i.e. provide for skill development, learner involvement, learner needs etc.
- D. Change the notion of teacher role, learner role and the 'culture' of the classroom.
- E. Conduct orientation programs, need-based courses for a more effective implementation of

the curriculum and for doing classroom - based research.

F. Enable teachers to take on the role of researchers, Resource Persons, Materials Writers, Testers, etc.

Table 2: What the Project did Then and Now

Table 2 shows that the frequencies in all the categories were nearly the same with regard to when the project was in progress, but now 'C' and 'D' have the highest ratings, although they are only about 50% of the total sample. This shows that the curriculum is now learner-centered to a large extent, i.e. it provides for skill development, learner involvement and learner needs resulting in a corresponding shift in teacher roles and learner roles and in the 'culture' of the classroom. All the other categories have a low rating as compared to 'C' and 'D', implying that the activities for ongoing professional development which the Project had provided for are not organized any longer.

The above responses to closed questions are further substantiated by the comments of teachers [in relation to open-ended items on the questionnaire]: *'Both teacher and learners are aware of language as a skill subject and it is sustained in all the activities of the classroom. The authoritarian role of the teacher has been redefined after exposure to CLT. The 'culture' of the classroom is characterized by peer interaction, group and pair work, learning by doing etc.'*. *'Now I have become a tester. It is not just testing the student's (English) knowledge but how far they are able to use it in useful activities'*. One teacher sums up the present situation thus: *'Now classroom interaction is seen from the point of view of the learner rather than the teacher. The effectiveness of a teacher is judged in terms of the amount of learning that occurs, not in terms of how well the teacher explains the lesson'*.

While, according to teachers' responses, the classroom is by and large learner-centered, several factors affect the way this is realized. Many teachers who were closely involved in the project (hereafter the Project Team Members or PTMs) and understood the basics of a learner centered approach to teaching have either been promoted to higher (administrative) positions or have quit school to freelance as materials writers. Every year, new teachers unfamiliar with CLT are recruited from other school boards. In the absence of any guidance or training programs, new teachers resort to the 'lecture method'. In areas/regions where Teacher Development Groups meet once a term, they discuss common problems faced, make common question papers and listen to a lecture by an invited expert. This, however, does not serve the purpose of orienting teachers to CLT approaches and techniques. However, PTMs, whichever school they are in, are able to 'help' other beginning teachers on different aspects of CLT and have extended the approach to other languages like

Hindi. This is true to a greater extent if the PTM is a principal. According to one teacher who has moved to a job that involves ELT management at a national level, PTMs are better at the ‘application’ of ELT principles when compared to others who might have higher academic qualifications. According to another teacher, a small group of teachers (i.e. PTMs) have appropriated all the interesting activities to themselves and there isn’t much motivation for those outside the ‘charmed circle’.

The few training programs which have been organized for teachers in the last three years have been conducted by the CBSE for training examiners, and few teachers have taken part. The regular in-service programs conducted by school organizations such as KVS do not emphasize the effective implementation of CLT principles. Moreover the concept of classroom research or inquiry-oriented teaching is not part of the training programs.

According to interviewees, curriculum change which focused mainly on Classes IX and X, has neither percolated to lower classes, nor reached up to Classes XI and XII. However the few trained and motivated teachers make these classes as learner-centered a possible with the existing text books which are very traditional. Schools do not value teacher research or achievements, e.g. higher qualifications, awards for good articles or research papers. There is clearly a lack of professional or academic interest at management level.

Furthermore, there is no longer any ‘dialogue’ between different stakeholders and teachers, as distinct from what happened during the project: their ‘voices’ were heard and they felt they were part of the decision making process. Now only principals and other senior teachers are involved in policy matters and teachers are called upon only for correcting answer scripts. According to some teachers monitoring the implementation of the curriculum at a national level, since this is a nationally administered curriculum, it should be an ongoing process and not project-based and time bound.

Teachers say they are engaged in professional activities such as observing each other’s classes, doing classroom research, discussing it with colleagues and the like to varying degrees. About two thirds of the teachers observe each other’s classes once a month/term or occasionally for different purposes. Teachers who are in positions of authority, that is, Heads of Department or principals, do it for administrative reasons – for purposes of evaluation and ‘to inform the teacher about the plus and minus points

of classroom management' and also because 'it's their duty'. Sometimes a copy of the report is sent to higher authorities.

Other senior / experienced teachers guide junior teachers by allowing them to observe demonstration lessons or inviting colleagues to their classes for 'special' lessons, such as 'radio show', debates and skits. Sometimes student performance is assessed and the observer is the 'external' judge, or when the teacher wants to boost the motivation of students, she invites her colleague to be an observer.

There are other teachers, however, who quite often engage in observation to see what they can learn from each other, or 'to find out the efficacy of their teaching strategies', or 'to discuss in faculty meetings class dynamics, issues related to classroom management, how to bring variation in activities, materials and assessment to help students at different levels in the same class'. This is then discussed in detail in the staff room. According to one teacher, an observer is especially useful when a new type of task is designed, to see what works and what doesn't and what the outcomes are. There are quite a few teachers who do team teaching on a regular basis, sit in on each other's classes and do the following: give feedback to each other; ensure a link between the different components of the program; and develop the ability to critique methodology and improve their performance.

Of those who do not do any observation, some feel that they already discuss things quite openly in the staff room, and therefore do not see a need for observation; others have reasons such as colleagues being unwilling to be observed, or there being no time to think of such things due to heavy work-load. One teacher is of the view that there is no need for observation since all her colleagues are competent.

As regards classroom research by teachers, about two thirds of them do not do it, for a variety of reasons: they have some idea of research but need more help and guidance, their school does not permit them to engage in research, or there is no time to think of such things as they are busy in everyday teaching and record keeping, making assignments, and so on. Others report that there is no opportunity to do any research and no motivation as there is no lead from any academic/research organizations. A few say that they read magazines and articles to keep themselves up to date.

Teachers who do carry out 'action research' as part of their work mention the topics / areas in which they have worked. A few examples are:

- Developing oral skills through communicative materials at the +2 level
- Observation and analysis of classroom interaction
- A team project on developing reading skills
- How can newspapers be used differently as a teaching aid?
- A comparative study of the English curriculum in English medium schools and bilingual schools

Some of the PTMS have won awards for the best action research project. Quite a few teachers have worked for their M.Phil or Ph.D theses on ELT topics, although it is not a requirement for their teaching jobs. The school organizations neither officially support the time and effort of the individual teacher nor acknowledge the expertise the teachers have developed through their work. Another significant point about teachers doing research is that a few teachers do team research. Some of them from different schools have even presented papers at national and international Seminars and Conferences.

Discussions with colleagues are held both informally and formally: Faculty meetings, subject committee meetings, or coordinator meetings are held once a term / every month to plan together the whole month's work, to take stock and to discuss common test papers and to ensure uniformity in test formats. In many schools, teachers meet informally in staff rooms, chat on corridors as often as possible or sometimes at fixed times. The topics for discussion include, for example, new ideas and experiences, classroom practices and strategies, problems in expected learning outcomes, loopholes in evaluation / teaching strategies, how to correct students' errors, creativity vis-à-vis correctness, formal versus informal grammar teaching, how to increase reading speed, and handling mixed ability classes. In schools where the teachers are PTMs, they are looked up to as resource persons and it appears that the discussions in this case are usually one-sided. Some of these teachers say 'I'm the driving force', 'They frankly discuss their problems with me', 'They tell me their success stories as well as problem areas and then I guide them as to what to do'.

There are some schools where teachers share their experience of participating in seminars/ workshops/ in-service programs. In one school organization (DAV), the trained teacher conducts a one-two day capsule course for her colleagues when she returns from such a program. Another teacher says she discusses journal articles / books that she reads with colleagues.

There are, however, exceptions to this practice: one teacher frankly admits that the feeling of '*I know better than you*' among colleagues does not allow anyone to have a discussion, to think of new ways of teaching, or to find new solutions to problems. Another teacher says that the privileged teachers go on getting more privileged and others are left far behind.

Interview and observation: findings and discussion

The data drawn from the responses of individual teachers were examined in relation to what they did in their class and the kind of school they worked in. For this, classroom observation, detailed interviews with teachers and in many cases, an informal meeting with the English faculty and the principal were carried out. In many cases, the discussion took on the form of a staff meeting, with me listening in and participating in the discussion. This also led to a discussion of the possible role of CIEFL in an on-going curriculum renewal process, even though the project had come to an end.

As I met different kinds of teachers in different school environments, I realized that the 'micro' aspects of curriculum, that is, curriculum-as-process in the classroom, actually stemmed from and fed back into the 'macro' aspects that involved the teacher as an individual in the larger context of school and society. The multi-layered data gave rise to four or five distinct but not mutually exclusive 'families' or cases of teachers / schools. I describe below these cases for a better understanding of the meaning the Project and the curriculum change has had for the teacher in relation to her school.

- 1 Some schools, in response to the introduction of the communicative curriculum in classes IX and X, have not only introduced communicative textbooks of private publishers in lower classes, but have also switched to other books: they have gone back to books that deal with formal grammar and structurally oriented exercises in their anxiety to lay a firm foundation in the language. There seems to be a perceptible experimental mode in teachers' dealing with tasks in class, as well as in their understanding of the role of textbooks. Clearly this new trend is in contrast to the situation where one set of prescribed books used to be taught uniformly in all the schools affiliated to a particular secondary board. Teachers have been trying out new types of materials and new ways of handling them, in the interests of students.

According to some teachers, referred to as the ‘traditional types’ by the more ‘progressive’ ones, this is dangerous because ‘it reflects arbitrariness and an inability to settle down to anything proper’. In the process the former have also realized, by their own admission, that no single book answers all their needs. The tensions that operate in the choice of books, because many of them are written by PTMs, is an issue that needs to be addressed.

2. Contrary to this is the government set-up (for example, involving KVS) whereby there is a wait for another government agency, that is, NCERT, to revise textbooks in their own time. As a result, the curriculum innovation has been perceived to be piecemeal, and it has not been supported by changes in lower level classes. However, the situation is not as bleak as it seems. Teachers have taken initiatives to varying degrees to supplement and modify existing materials. The principal plays a crucial role here. Principals who are also PTMs have channeled available funds to set up the necessary infrastructure in order to help teachers ‘innovate freely’. In one school, even the Parent Teacher Association has been mobilized to raise funds for making multiple copies of texts and tests for students. Teachers take a large quantity of outside materials to class and ‘give students practice in skill development’. However, the task of finding texts and making tasks on a regular basis is found to be quite a struggle for teachers who have been used to teaching the prescribed book thus far, especially since they are not skilled at designing tasks and do not have a system of filing and recycling materials, or sharing them among colleagues. Quite a few defective tasks make their way into the classroom, and this compounds the problems of the weak learners whose exposure to English is limited to the classroom. A change that is quite perceivable now, as one teacher said, is that teachers’ cupboards in the staff-room are stacked with old newspapers, magazines and anything that may be useful as a task, whereas earlier they used to be filled with student assignments or some ‘unwanted stuff’. NCERT, a research and training organization entrusted with the job of preparing textbooks for government schools, has, in the mean time, produced books for primary Classes within a framework that is not particularly in line with the books at Class IX/X levels. In any case teachers’ contention is: why should schools wait for books from NCERT? The

books, however new or old, serve only a limited purpose. Teachers anyway have to go beyond them, depending on students' individual differences.

3. A slightly different scene is one where teachers have interpreted the exam demands at the Class X level in ways that are just manageable for the weak learner, whereby they take Guide Books to class to help students practice exam-type questions. Since the end-of-course paper-pencil test is quite limited in its orientation and objectives, teachers of government schools with students from disadvantaged homes do not see any value in using the Main Course Book, which integrates the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking and has quite a good collection of texts and tasks based on different interesting themes. Thus the curriculum is interpreted in a way that is at best not useful, and at worst detrimental to the student who is already disadvantaged.

If the principal is a PTM, s/he takes on the role of a permanent initiator of ideas which other teachers are able to implement. S/he guides them and corrects their mistakes and is available for consultation. This has resulted in one-sided, prescriptive, on-site teacher training especially for beginning teachers, and has also led to some amount of resentment. Many resourceful PTMs have also found other avenues for personal and professional growth, such as teaching on sponsored language proficiency courses, writing books for private publishers, conducting training programs for a fee, and so on. This privileged status and 'privatism' has given rise to perceptions of non-collegiality and a sense of isolation among junior colleagues.

4. In other schools where the PTM does not enjoy a superior status, but works with other colleagues, there is team teaching, observation of each other's classes, a great deal of informal discussion of crucial issues related to teaching/learning and 'peer mentoring' and collegiality. There are also many PTMs among these who have done CIEFL courses including research degrees who, when asked about the impact the project has had on them, say that they cannot easily demarcate the effects of the academic courses from those of the project. But they are convinced that their task as Field Researchers of visiting different schools to observe classes and talk to teachers and students gave them a broader perspective on the curriculum in different contexts. They acted as catalysts in the effective implementation of the curriculum and felt accepted

since they were not behaving as ‘interfering radicals’. Before the project, they merely taught the ‘lesson’, did the exercises, and conducted tests and they were happy. Now the situation has changed significantly: their work does not end with a class. One teacher said that the project had taught him to observe classes in a nonjudgmental way and that it ‘worked wonders’ with colleagues and that he has adopted this approach in all the training programs he conducts. It needs to be mentioned, however, that many of these teachers have managed these on-going professional activities in spite of the school’s (unwritten) rules and conventions. Although a regional officer of KVS says, ‘no one says “no” to classroom innovation’, schools do not permit teachers to take up work outside regular teaching, let alone action research, unless this is for a training program which is believed to directly increase pass percentage. This explains why principals who are ‘supportive’ allow their teachers to attend programs sponsored by outside agencies if they have completed their syllabus and if it does not disrupt the regular work of the school. In the face of this opposition, it takes a good deal of perseverance, commitment and drive on the part of the teacher to pursue anything that is outside the syllabus. And yet, it is these teachers who integrate theory and practice in concrete terms and demonstrate the research and development loop. Their classes are not only communicative but encourage an inquiry-oriented approach to learning. It is perhaps this generative knowledge that sustains professional development (see Franke et al. 1998 for empirical evidence). A journal that addresses the teacher, regular seminars and meetings, and workshops that focus on current developments in ELT are all aspects that they hope will be offered by CIEFL to the wider teaching community.

5. Teachers who work with ‘bright’ students in ‘good’ schools are clearly dissatisfied with the inadequacies of the exam, because it fails to discriminate between stronger and lower-achieving candidates. They would like more demanding tasks for these students, so that the exam can be challenging for them too. The Secondary Board (CBSE), however, sees its responsibility as that of introducing other innovations, not necessarily in response to student feedback or based on spin-offs of the earlier project. The continuing support for this innovation involves training more examiners every year. Introducing

oral assessment remains a possibility, although the difficulties of large-scale assessment outweigh the potential benefits at present. Therefore different schools and teachers are left to interpret and implement what is worthwhile, given their constraints. In fact, a comment made by an official from the Board was that it can only accomplish a limited amount in administering the exam the way it has been doing. Schools are, effectively, free to do what they want in addition to the exam. Unfortunately, given the importance of public exams in India, schools' utmost priority is to teach to the exam. Only half a dozen schools go beyond the exam. For the large majority, a circular from the 'authorities' or a top-down decision sets the tone for teaching in the classroom.

Conclusion

The curriculum, as we can see, means different things to different people. Change, as Fullan (1991) underlines, is a highly personal experience and stakeholders derive benefit from the intervention in ways that are meaningful to them at a personal level. Also, a follow-up study of a large project such as this has its own problems and limitations (see Alderson 1985), in that the teachers in this study who were the main stakeholders had changed schools for reasons such as promotions, transfers or a change of job, and therefore contacting them in itself proved a daunting task. A more substantive issue is that the 'school culture', with its given organizational set up (involving a particular principal and particular teachers) which had enabled change to occur had often altered because the teachers and/or principal had moved. This made the interpretation of the notion of after-life of the project difficult, indeed sometimes even meaningless. It seems that if the unique combination of teachers, type of management and the principal is affected, the notion of school culture vis-à-vis change takes on a different form. A study such as this may not do justice to this complexity. It has, nevertheless, tried to capture some of the nuances of the complex phenomenon and points to the need for a more detailed and in-depth analysis of different aspects.

Overall, it could be said that a national curriculum renewal project involving a national Board and thousands of teachers in thousands of schools may not be the way to bring about change. School-based initiatives may hold more self-sustaining and generative value for the teacher and her school. The teacher's individual goals and

pursuits can only be achieved to the extent the school and the larger educational system of which it is a part support it. The role of an institution like CIEFL seems to be crucial in this process, for example, in conducting tailor-made in-service programmes, offering award bearing courses relevant to teaching in schools, helping with action research projects, creating a forum for sharing insights from classroom-based research, and the like. Clearly there is a need to build on existing structures to support the teacher in her on-going professional development.

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