School of Education and Lifelong Learning

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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FOLLOWING THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD OF TEACHER TRAINING:
A FOURTH GENERATION EVALUATION OF AN INSET COURSE IN ISTANBUL.

July 2009

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own work and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Finally I wish to express my thanks to my wife and son for their patience and support over the last six years. They have sacrificed so much.

I dedicate this study to my father, who died while I was conducting this study, and my mother, both of whom would have been so proud.
Evaluation of teacher training has been conducted primarily on pre-service contexts and has focused almost exclusively on evidence of impact in terms of changes in teachers’ behaviour or beliefs. Using a responsive/constructivist methodology my research focuses on an in-service context and takes the participants as the starting point of the research in order to examine both the processes of teacher learning (i.e. how do teachers learn) as well as the product (what are their claims, concerns and issues) regarding the training programme. The emergent data is analysed with findings grounded in the literature of teacher learning and parallels made with my own reflections on the processes of learning through the research experience itself.

The evaluation focuses on a Cambridge In Service Certificate of English Language Teaching (ICELT) training course which is designed as an internationally appropriate INSET programme that can satisfy the training needs of (both native and non-native) EFL teachers.

The research is valuable because we do not know how teachers learn on a training course. Through a review of the literature and exploiting the imagery of a metaphorical journey of development, I formulate a framework for analysing teacher learning which distinguishes between practical (applied) knowledge, conceptual knowledge and knowledge of self. This theoretical framework provides a lens to analyse data emerging during the evaluation.

The research advocates an alternative ‘constructivist – responsive’ method of evaluation for teacher education programmes that has the dual aim of learning through the evaluation (process) as well as from the evaluation (product). The research methods follow a Fourth Generation Evaluation model (Guba and Lincoln 1979).

The results show that in terms of the evaluation outcomes (product) we can identify modes of learning that concern tasks (how), knowing (what) and awareness of self and socio-cultural context (why). Analysis of the teachers’ talk as collaborative interaction showed little evidence of learning taking place. There were no obvious sections of exploratory talk that is conducive to the construction of new meanings and learning. However by analysing teachers’ talk as a manifestation of individual modes of thinking we are able to identify modes of thinking that have clear parallels with the framework of
teacher learning depicted above: techno-rational thought (how), reflective thought (what) and critical thought (why). The descriptive framework therefore depicts the integration of levels for both the process of learning and the products of learning and as such is a powerful tool for teacher educators. Teachers need to operate on all three levels in their professional lives.

The study challenges some well-established assumptions in teacher training evaluation. In terms of epistemology, teacher learning is life-long and individual. Human learning occurs on three levels: physical (body), mental (mind) and spiritual (soul) and these levels describe how we think as well as what we do. Evaluation of any training course needs to take into consideration the dimensions of learning, the influence of the socio-cultural context and recognise the interconnectedness of process and product (i.e. how the traveling and the journey interact).
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Rationale for the study
1.3 Conceptual framework
1.4 Significance of the area
1.5 Research Methods
1.6 Research Questions
1.7 Organization of the study
1.8 Conclusion

1.1 Introduction

This study is about the evaluation of an in-service teacher-training course. It examines the perceptions of the stakeholders on the course both in order to improve and develop the training itself and to increase awareness of the processes involved in teacher learning and development. The purpose of this introductory chapter is to situate the study and provide a framework for readers to follow. In doing so I first outline the general rationale for the study, then briefly summarise the conceptual framework including the significance of the research area, the research methodology and the research questions, and finally provide an overview of the contents of the following chapters of this thesis.

This study was initially conceived of as one journey, an evaluation of an in-service teacher-training (INSET) course at a university in Turkey. However it soon became apparent that there was a second journey running in parallel with the first and that journey was my own personal journey of learning, reflection, and gradual acquisition of research skills and emerging sophistication of knowledge regarding conducting an evaluation research project. As my understanding of my own experiences became more sophisticated I was able to draw on these learning experiences to interpret and explain the experiences of the research participants on their learning journey. Throughout my research I kept a ‘learning log’ of ideas, reflections and insights as they occurred to me. I have included excerpts from my journal in an attempt to ‘ground’ evolution of ideas. This is the first entry in my learning log:
These are the first words in my ‘learning log’. It is the beginning of my journey: the first chapter of my story. Although perhaps this story really starts on the 12th September 1980 when I taught my first language class in Tripoli, Libya as a fresh-faced graduate just out of university with no qualifications, experience or training as a language teacher. That exhilarating but traumatic experience brought home to me the importance of training to prepare teachers for teaching. No one should experience, as I did, drowning in a ‘sink or swim’ approach to becoming a teacher. Fortunately after much splashing I started to swim.

Or perhaps the story really starts much earlier in Kuwait when I was six years old and my mother one day proclaimed that I would teach my younger sister how to ride her bicycle because “Tom is good at explaining things”. As a child I remember the oft repeated refrain, “Tom will explain how to do it. He’s a good teacher.” Was I really good at explaining things or was my mother’s proposition sufficient for everyone to believe that I was? Had my mother (who always believed I would be a teacher), by propagating this belief, actually shaped my destiny?

I was motivated to do the Ed.D for my personal self-development. Basically to explore in depth the question that has consumed my career for the last twenty years: how do teachers learn to teach? Equally though, I also needed to explore my own views, beliefs and values in terms of my role as a teacher trainer and acquire a deeper self-awareness of my own professional identity. What makes me tick?

**Rationale: Why am I interested in this research area?**

Over the last twenty-five years, as a teacher trainer, I have had the opportunity and privilege to observe teachers develop. Many of my early trainees who completed pre-service training courses have progressed to senior positions in the profession and indeed some of them are now my teacher training colleagues. So I have much personal evidence that teachers do develop professionally over their teaching career but I have less understanding of the processes involved in this development. A primary motive for
my research is to increase my awareness and knowledge of the processes of teacher development.

My research is a small-scale study focussing on the evaluation of an in-service training course. The course is the Cambridge ESOL In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT) and it was conducted at a private university in Turkey. The nature of the ICELT programme and the context of the study are described in the subsequent chapter (Chapter 2).

The concerns of research in the area of teacher education have shifted over the years from a focus on pedagogic knowledge, to a focus on teaching and teaching processes, and more recently to the socio-cultural context in which teaching takes place. However, despite many INSET courses being conducted world wide, these are rarely evaluated for their impact on teacher development (Richards and Nunan 1990; Woods 1996). Studies that have attempted to evaluate the impact of INSET have produced mixed and confusing results. This is complicated further by a lack of clarity about what ‘impact’ actually means. In Chapter 3 (Part 1) I explore the nature of a teacher and teaching, and then proceed to consider the processes involved in teacher learning before offering a theoretical framework to describe the nature of ‘impact’ on an INSET course.

Apart from personal self-development, I also had pragmatic and professional motivations to conduct this research. I am owner and director of a teacher training institution offering a range of INSET programmes. One such programme is the ICELT, which is accredited by Cambridge ESOL. I was interested in conducting an evaluation of the ICELT programme in order to improve the programme and our delivery. The ICELT is a relatively recent teaching award and there are no recorded evaluations of the programme. In Chapter 3 (Part 2) I explore evaluation practices and consider what can be learned from the literature as to the effectiveness of evaluations into the impact of INSET.

**Conceptual framework**

This study was initially framed around these two questions: first, what do we want to know about the ICELT course (product focus); and second, how will we find the information (process focus). However early in the study it became apparent that there was a third question that could not be ignored: by conducting an evaluation involving participants on a training course I am providing an opportunity to experience an
evaluation process from which participants can learn. This added a third question: namely, what will we learn from the information in terms of development (pedagogic focus). Adding a pedagogic focus meant also considering how people learn. As the evaluation process is based on participants reflecting on their experiences by talking about them, it became necessary to examine the nature of talk itself. A central tenet of constructivist education is that meaning can be constructed through dialogue; indeed this theoretical principle is so fundamental to socio-constructivism that it appears to be rarely questioned or tested. In Chapter 3 (Part 3) I analyse the nature of ‘talk’ and its relationship to learning and development.

These initial questions form the basis of my research questions and this three pronged focus – product; process and pedagogy - has become the organising framework and each main chapter is divided into these three parts. The diagram below shows an overview of the research framework:

Table 1 The research framework

There are three main research questions:

1. What are the claims, concerns and issues of stakeholders in the ICELT programme?

- The product focus. Learning from the evaluation: the evaluation process identifies the claims, concerns and issues concerning the ICELT course. The data obtained provides an insight into stakeholders’ perceptions and allows decisions and recommendations to be made to improve course delivery.
2. How can identification and interrogation of claims, concerns and issues be acted upon in order to improve and develop programme effectiveness?

- The process focus: Learning from the evaluation: the evaluation process involves a dialectic that leads to decision-making, action and actual utilisation. FGE process provides an opportunity for stakeholders to interact, negotiate and reach consensus on divergent views.

3. In what ways does participation in the evaluation process impact on stakeholder’s professional development? In other words what do stakeholders learn from the evaluation process?

- The pedagogic focus: Learning through the evaluation: stakeholders participation in the evaluation allows for heightened awareness and understanding of the programme practices. In a meta-evaluation we examine the ‘talk’ of participants for evidence of learning through group collaboration and interaction.

1.4 Methodology

This study evaluates ICELT, an in-service teacher training programme, at a private university in Istanbul using a responsive–constructivist approach. The approach is based on the conceptual and procedural framework of the Fourth Generation Evaluation (FGE). The FGE model, devised by Guba and Lincoln (1989) is described as a responsive-constructivist approach, which enables participants (stakeholders) to formulate claims, issues and concerns regarding the training programme. On the basis of the claims, issues and concerns identified, recommendations for programme planning and improvement are made. The evaluation methodology consists of stakeholders expressing their claims, concerns and issues in a series of focus group discussions in which the key points are summarised onto posters. These posters are discussed and responded to by other groups of stakeholders and the process repeated over a series of focus groups until all issues have been negotiated and (hopefully) resolved or at least a consensus reached. The methodology of the research is described in chapter four.
1.5 Significance of the study

The evaluation aims to identify the claims, concerns and issues of stakeholders on the ICELT course in order to build a picture incorporating the diversity of views of the network of stakeholders involved in the programme. The primary stakeholders in this study are primarily the teachers who are course participants on the ICELT course and the courses tutors; however the research also provides opportunities for the views of the awarding body (Cambridge ESOL) to be taken into consideration. The objective is that the data that emerge provide recommendations and suggestions that can serve as guidelines for the improvement of this ICELT programme (and also inform ICELT and INSET programmes in similar contexts). There are few published accounts of INSET evaluations and there has been no recorded evaluation of an ICELT course in the literature. The results of the ‘product’ focus evaluation are described in Chapter 4 (Part 1).

The evaluation also aims to provide a framework that can be used as a model to evaluate INSET programmes by demonstrating and assessing the application of FGE on an ICELT course in Istanbul. The dialogic interaction between stakeholders is described in Chapter 4 (Part 2) and the effectiveness of the evaluation process analysed.

By participating in the evaluation process participants are encouraged to reflect on, discuss and explore their own positions and practices concerning the training course and its evaluation procedures as a stepping-stone to development. It is through the focus group interaction between participants that collaborative learning is assumed to take place. While the foundations of social constructivism are built on the premise that learning is achieved through interaction, this assumption seems often to be taken for granted rather than based on research evidence. We examine the nature of ‘talk’ in the interactions within focus group discussions and consider the nature of collaborative reflective tasks and whether there is evidence that trainees learn through oral interaction and if so, how. The characteristics of participants’ talk are described in Chapter 4 (Part 3) and I consider whether there is evidence of participants learning through dialogue, and, if so, what is the nature of this learning.

In Chapter 6, I attempt to bring the strands together and make connections between the three research questions.
1.6 **Organisation of the study**

This thesis consists of six chapters organised broadly into the following three sections: (1) Chapters 1-4 introduce the study, outline the context in which it was conducted, explain the need for the study and how it relates to existing knowledge, and describe the methodology and research design; (2) Chapter 5 presents the findings from the data; (3) Chapter 6 discusses the findings and highlight their implications for the evaluation of language teacher education and for future research.

1.7 **The research problem - the journey metaphor**

This is an account of a six-year voyage of discovery and learning. I will describe it as a journey because it is through analogies that meaning is often conveyed. By using an allegory of a journey I hope to convey a trustworthy and faithful account. I physically experienced my journey, a seemingly endless series of actions: listening, observing, writing, thinking, talking, typing, crying that now I have to conceptualise the whole experience into a limited series of words on pages. This process has required me to learn new skills in order for you, the reader, to gain insights into my journey. I have changed and developed as a result.

For the purposes of this dissertation I will refer frequently to an analogy between a teacher’s development and a journey. When we consider the concept of a teacher’s professional development there is a central theme of change, in other words development means moving from one position to another.

In a journey there are three elements – the destination, the route, and the actual means or process of travelling. These three elements are also present when we consider teacher development. The destination in teacher development is dependant on the motivation and resources of the traveller. Some teachers may travel great distances (and yet not move far from their starting point) while others may cover less terrain. There are also multiple routes to similar destinations. In this paper we are focussing on an INSET course to lead to teacher development.

The means of travelling is important in teacher development because it is the experience gained from travelling that constitutes the real changes. A five day hike across the desert on foot will be richer in terms of the traveller’s interaction with the terrain and herself than a one day trip by landrover. The essence of the journey could be
‘experienced’ by a teacher by reading about the traveller’s experience but this would only be a theoretical interaction with the terrain and not a practical experience. Similarly there could be teachers who arrive at the same destination by another means such as a comfortable ride by jet but their knowledge of the landscape and local context will be superficial in comparison not having ‘lived through’ the experience of the journey over the terrain. As travellers can cover terrain in different ways and interact and experience the journey in different ways I place great emphasis not only on the journey itself (the macro) but also the levels of impact of experiencing the journey. The journey can have a deep and ever-lasting impact on a teachers professional identity if they struggle on foot over every nook and cranny. The impact of the journey would have deep physical, cognitive, personal impacts as well as providing greater awareness of the features of the environment and socio-cultural context of the people who inhabited it.

At first I wondered whether I could make an allegory with one of the great epic journeys from mythology, Homer’s Odyssey or Jason’s quest for the Golden Fleece. However these visions were cast aside when watching ‘The Wizard of Oz’ with my son one night. I realised that here was the journey that provided the key to understanding my own experiences. ‘The Wizard of Oz’ contains a timeless truth that transcends culture. It is the archetypal pilgrimage for knowledge. I interpret L. Frank Baum’s story as a teacher’s search for development, a quest for enlightenment, a learning journey. Dorothy’s trek along the yellow brick road sheds light on how people can successfully negotiate their own learning journeys. Despite the familiarity of life in Kansas, Dorothy wondered what life offered ‘over the rainbow’. We all experience this thirst for knowledge beyond the bounds of our experience. Dorothy’s search for self-discovery inspires others along the way. These flawed characters represent elements of Dorothy’s learning journey. To succeed on the journey Dorothy needs to draw on her intellect and ability to think (as represented by the Scarecrow); physically act (as represented by the Cowardly Lion) and become aware of her self identity (as represented by the Tin Man). I, like Dorothy, have to question ‘who I am’ and seek the answers to enter ‘Academia’ (the Emerald City). This is a new world (beyond the rainbow) and at the beginning of the journey I was ill-equipped to set out on the ‘yellow brick road’ of research. Despite years of teaching and working in education, like the Lion that could not roar, I did not have the necessary research skills and techniques. I needed to develop techno-rationalist thinking to learn the skills and techniques and apply them proficiently. At the beginning of the journey I also had no plan, no route, no cognitive map to show me the way. I was
like the Scarecrow, a straw man who had no brain, like him I needed to develop my theoretical knowledge and understanding by reflecting on what I experienced along the journey. At the outset I had motivation and commitment but as I took those first tentative steps they lacked real purpose as I knew not where I was going. Just like the Tin Man who is looking for a heart, so too am I striving to find a ‘voice’, a new self-awareness and professional identity. I refer to the journey metaphor periodically in this study as it has helped me comprehend and frame my understanding.

1.8 Conclusion

I am of course researching an area which I have a great deal of prior experience and self-investment. I have been conducting teacher training for over twenty years and to start questioning the benefits of this training is rather like questioning one’s own reason for living. I have a high level of tacit knowledge (as defined by Polyan 1967) as to how participants’ view their training and this wealth of insight and experience cannot be negated but equally it cannot be articulated. Although I am an authority on this subject I cannot answer the research questions prior to the research. I am seeking a way to articulate my knowledge, a way to prove my intuitions, a way to foreground what has always been in the background.

Woods (1996) identifies two types of structure that teachers use to conceptualise an INSET course structure: chronological structure and conceptual structure. Chronological structure is the bounded time frames that make up the course schedule whereas the conceptual structures are the units that make up the course. Both types of structure involve the sequencing of hierarchical relationships of units from more general higher units to more specific lower level sub-units. In our context Cambridge ESOL has stipulated the hierarchies of the ICELT course content and its sub-units. However the ICELT course Cambridge has created as interpreted by the tutors and the course that the participants create and interpret will not be the same. Training courses are often based on an assumption that participants are responsible for ‘the correct’ understanding of what had been presented in the INSET programme; and tutors express surprise when participants develop different interpretations of what has transpired in the input session. This is understandable when the model of training is based on a ‘transmission’ model rather than an ‘interpretation’ model. It is not uncommon for trainees, when referring to the same technique or item of EFL terminology, to actually be referring to quite different conceptualisations. Indeed a social constructivist stance of INSET advocates
that there will be an interaction of multiple perceptions, which will never be in harmony (adapting a term from Stevick 1980). It is clear that each individual’s perception when put together in an INSET context will create no end of possible disharmonies. Indeed a situation that is completely harmonious is impossible: and if it did occur no change would take place. In this sense a function of this evaluation project can be seen as creating an opportunity for disharmony so that change or movement can take place. Raising awareness of alternative views and ideas is how trainers allow teachers to understand and accept differences in how practice is conceived.
CHAPTER 2: THE BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction
2.2 The context: INSET at a private university in Turkey
2.3 The ICELT programme
2.4 My multiple roles

2.1 Introduction
This chapter describes the sociocultural context of the research study. I start by detailing the specific characteristics of both the monolingual teaching context and the nature of the in-service teacher education programme. The reason for dwelling in this chapter on the socio-cultural context is because recent critical scholarship (Reagan et al. 2000) has made it increasingly clear that one’s context and position have important and powerful impacts on how one constructs reality (see, for example, Applebaum 2000; Larson and Ovando 2001). I then briefly reflect on my multiple roles in the study as researcher, evaluator and course tutor. In order to protect the anonymity of participants I refrain from naming the institution and use pseudonyms to refer to the participants while trying to ensure that there is sufficient ‘thick description’ to assist readers in building a vivid picture of the distinctive characteristics of the context. However I must acknowledge that I will write my account of this research project, as I must, from my own perspective and drawing examples from my personal experience. This means that the account is both partial and subjective. The propositions I state and the conclusions I draw must be seen in the context of my personal stuttering progress in understanding the processes involved in INSET evaluation. It may be that some positions I take up will seem inappropriate and some details irrelevant. However, as an ongoing commitment to the challenge of personal and professional development involves sharing our understanding and experience, it is in this spirit that I offer my framework and my story.

2.2 The context: INSET at a private university in Turkey
The context for the study is a part-time ICELT in-service teacher training programme in a private Turkish university, where all the course participants are practising teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Although many universities in Turkey are state-run, there are a growing number of private universities, most of which conduct their instruction in English. The anomalous nature of the nationwide university entrance and placement system is such that students who are admitted to the private university in our study are invariably low academic achievers, have poor knowledge and command of English and may not have specifically chosen to study at an English-medium university.
and may not, therefore, be highly motivated to learn English. In response to this, the university, like most other private universities in Turkey, has a one year preparatory course in order to bring students’ levels of English up to the required standard and to instil some academic skills and orientation. Exacerbating the traditional exam-focussed orientation of Turkish students, the preparation programme is assessed by a ‘proficiency’ examination that students need to pass in order to continue to their faculties. This puts pressure on teachers to ‘teach for the exam’.

The university department in this study is probably typical of many educational departments in that it employs teachers with a range of teaching experience, language backgrounds and cultural orientations. The department has a student body of 300 full time students and there are 30 teachers. The department is nominally managed by a head of department who is assisted by an assistant head, a part-time consultant (myself) and a team of five co-ordinators who have both teaching and administrative responsibilities. The department was going through a vigorous and ruthless process of change at the time the research took place. The university had moved to a new campus outside Istanbul in the previous year (2004) under the overall leadership of a newly appointed rector and his management team. Many established teachers (50%) left during this transition period as the travel time to the new campus (often more than an hour) was considered excessive. The department had to recruit 20 less qualified and less experienced teachers to replace them. This dramatically altered the teacher profile as the ratio of less experienced and locally recruited teachers rose. Perhaps more significantly the head of the department, who had established the EFL department when the university first opened in 1994, had a series of conflicts with the rector and she handed in her resignation leaving the department nominally leaderless. It is in this context of uncertainty and change that I conducted this research study.

The ICELT programme was being offered for the first time at the university although in-house INSET training had been run for a number of years and was encouraged by the institution. Teachers in their first two years at the university were encouraged to apply for the ICELT and teachers were able to take advantage of a reduced teaching timetable.

2.3 The ICELT programme
The teaching awards currently offered by Cambridge ESOL evolved from a suite of qualifications developed by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) in the mid-1960s and
administered by the RSA until 1988 when they were transferred to Cambridge. The current ICELT - In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching - was introduced in its current format in 2004 but evolved from an amalgamation of two previous awards named COTE (Certificate for Overseas Teachers of English) and DOTE (Diploma for Overseas Teachers of English) which, as the names suggest, had been designed for overseas teachers in their own work place. The ICELT award has a broad base and encompasses public and private sectors, universities and schools, adult and younger learner classrooms in both primary and secondary schools and work based learning.

Poulter (2007) claims that in an ever more quality focussed ELT / Training environment, trainees and external agencies must be satisfied that a qualification ensures objectively measurable and relevant competencies, which allow progression to higher level qualifications and which enhance employability. This has resulted in an increased demand for evidence of rigour and quality. Cambridge ESOL, the author goes on to suggest, has long-standing systems in place to ensure quality of teacher training course delivery which include the following: trainer training requirements, rigorous standardisation procedures, and reliability studies that check assessment is consistent and fair. She concludes:

We live in an increasingly service-led economy within which training is of major importance. Life long learning is emphasised because jobs can no longer be assured and those who do have a profession need to be able to respond and adapt to change. Nowhere is this more important than in the teaching profession. (Poulter 2007)

The ICELT is intended to provide in-service training for qualified teachers who have some experience of teaching English. It provides a minimum of between 120 - 150 contact hours between the candidate(s) and the course tutor(s), which involve input, tutorial support, supervised teaching practice and feedback, peer observation and directed reading. The course consists of the following assessed components: four lessons supervised and assessed by a course tutor, four classroom related assignments, four language tasks which focus on developing the teacher’s language skills in the classroom context, directed observation of eight lessons, and between 150 and 300 hours of reading, research, lesson and assignment preparation. The ICELT is designed for practicing teachers who will have had a total of at least 500 hours of relevant
experience by the end of the course and teachers who are themselves second language users should be at FCE level, Council of Europe level B2.

The ICELT course programme, as stipulated in the Cambridge Syllabus Document, is designed to enable candidates to do the following:

1. extend their knowledge and awareness of those aspects of language which are relevant to their professional practice
2. extend their understanding of the context in which their learners are learning English, and of the principles underlying language learning and teaching
3. extend their familiarity with resources and materials for English language teaching and develop their ability to use, evaluate and, where appropriate, adapt or create classroom materials
4. consolidate and refine their planning and their practical classroom skills
5. identify learner needs and monitor and evaluate learner progress and develop awareness of different means of testing
6. identify needs and opportunities to further their development as professionals
7. extend their knowledge and understanding of language required for their professional role and improve their ability to use English both generally and for classroom purposes

One of the aims of this study is to allow stakeholders in the ICELT programme to develop an understanding of the complex ways in which an in-service course, such as ICELT, interacts with and impacts on the teachers taking it. What difference does it make to their knowledge, understanding, awareness, beliefs and practice? What aspects of the course contribute to teacher learning and in what ways?

2.4 My multiple roles
As curriculum consultant at the university, and as course tutor on the ICELT programme, I combined various roles that included researcher, evaluator and course tutor. However, rather than perceive these ‘insider’ roles as a threat to reliability and validity, I attempted to confront the potential prejudice of my own investment in the study and awareness of my own professional identity by keeping a research journal of ideas and reflections as they emerged. I attempt to draw parallels between my learning experiences and those of the ICELT stakeholders, thereby grounding the data in my personal experiences as well as that of the research participants. I discuss my role as a
researcher in more detail in Chapter 4 where I outline some of the benefits of ‘insider’ research, and I also demonstrate the reflexive approaches I took to exploit and explore my biases and subjectivities.

The following chapter researches the literature that provides the context for this study. The chapter is divided into three parts focusing on my three research questions. Part 1 analyses the nature of the teacher, teaching and teacher learning and I offer my own model for researching the nature of ‘impact’ of training on a teacher’s development.
Part 2 considers evaluation procedures and highlights the features of FGE and the rationale for adopting this model to evaluate an INSET programme.
Part 3 explores the some of the principles of constructivism and the implications for teacher learning focusing specifically on the nature of ‘talk’.
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

PART 1: The nature of the teacher, teaching and teacher learning

3.1 The impact of training
3.2 What is the nature of teaching?
3.3 What is the nature of a teacher and a teacher’s knowledge?
3.4 How do teachers learn?
3.5 A framework to evaluate INSET

3.1.1 The impact of training

It is not at all clear in the literature what ‘impact’ teacher training programmes have on an individual teacher’s professional growth. Indeed there is no consensus and considerable confusion as to the impact and value of formal training with regards to what teachers believe, think and do. What little that has been written about the impact of teacher education programmes on teachers’ professional lives has lacked a framework to conceptualise the impact. This confusion appears to be largely caused by the shifting epistemological research paradigms in which the focus of enquiry has targeted different features of teacher learning. Clark and Peterson (1986) draw attention to these paradigm shifts stating:

Prior to 1975 the dominant research paradigm was the process-product approach to the study of teaching effectiveness. Process-product researchers have been concerned with the relationship between teachers’ classroom behaviour, students’ classroom behaviour, and students’ achievement. (Clark and Peterson 1986: 257-61)

This so called ‘process-product approach’ focussed on teacher behaviour and observable outcomes of empirical observation; this was followed by a domain of enquiry known as teacher cognition, the study of what teachers know and think. The study of language teacher cognition has developed into a major area of research (Andrews 2003, 2007; Borg 2003, 2006; Freeman 1992, 2002; Freeman and Johnson 1998; Freeman and Richards 1996; Johnson 1992, 1994; Richards 1998; Roberts 1998; Woods 1996). This has enabled, as Freeman and Richards (1996) note, a greater understanding of:

How language teachers conceive of what they do: what they know about language teaching, how they think about their classroom practice, and how that knowledge and those thinking processes are learned through formal teacher development and informal experience on the job. (Freeman and Richards 1996: 1)
I believe that my research of the literature reveals a further paradigm shift away from convergent oriented research (which often has an underlying reductionist assumption that there are static generalisations and truths to be uncovered from research data) to a more dynamic, divergent approach to teacher education that views individual teacher’s behaviour and thoughts as being influenced by a set of ‘beliefs’ that are personal, dynamic and often unconscious (Borg 2006; Fang 1996; Pajares 1992; Richards 1998; Williams and Burden 1997) and these ‘inner’ beliefs relate to a teachers professional identity and sense of self, ‘internalised perceptions, beliefs, and feelings related to who one is in the world’ (Maehr 1984).

I will argue at the end of this section that all three paradigms, focussing alternately on what teachers do, think and feel, are all part of the developmental journey. They represent three ‘learning worlds’ that although they can operate separately are inextricably interlinked. I will utilise this premise to create my own theoretical framework for analysing impact on teacher education programmes.

In this section we examine specific accounts of research conducted on the impact of teacher education programmes. The most frequently cited study by Lortie (1975), conducted more than 30 years ago, concluded that the effects of training are washed out by subsequent live experience. Similarly research conducted on the effectiveness of pre-service training (e.g. Crow 1987) suggests it has little significant effect on a teacher’s subsequent development. Compare these conclusions with a more recent study by Richards et al. (2001) who discovered that in-service training courses were rated as having the highest impact on teacher development in teachers’ professional careers. Of course these discrepancies highlight the fact that measuring the impact of training is not easy. One major initial problem is how are we to define ‘impact’? Teachers can be ‘impacted’ in many interesting and subtle ways that may remain hidden from the most conscientious researcher.

Most studies resolve this difficulty by equating ‘impact’ with ‘change’. The logic proceeds along the lines that the aim of the training experience is to promote development and as a result there needs to be a change. This change can be identified and potentially even measured. Studies can focus on changes in classroom behaviour (by observation), or in knowledge (tests) or, currently popular, changes in teachers’ beliefs (by questionnaire or methods of verbal or written report).
There has been a range of impact evaluation strategies used in language teacher cognition research. I will briefly survey some of these and highlight some of the limitations of these studies. Scott and Rogers (1995) used questionnaires and compared responses regarding ‘teachers’ beliefs’ at the start and end of the programme. The validity of this study can be questioned as it ignores the potentially strong influence of training (participants respond according to what they have learned rather than what they believe) and fails to take into account that participants are likely to respond in a manner that reflects the beliefs of the trainers more than reflecting any deep cognitive change of their own. Additionally at the end of a course teachers’ responses may indicate their enjoyment of the course rather than real value of the principles underlying the programme.

A number of studies surveyed used a variety of verbal reports to analyse the impact of training. Cabaroglu and Roberts (2000) interviewed trainees at different points of the programme to assess changes in their beliefs about teaching. Senden and Roberts (1998) used repertory grids interviews at different stages to study development in trainee’s personal theories. Verbal reports as an investigative strategy are valued as they allow tacit unobservable aspects of teachers’ mental lives to be made explicit. However, their validity can be questioned as to the extent the elicitation methods and interview context influence the teachers’ responses. Da Silva (2005) observed teachers and compared their behaviours in the classroom to ideas promoted on the training course. There are threats that exist to the reliability and validity of such observational data. The obvious threat is that the teacher will modify their teaching to assist or obstruct the observer, particularly if they know the observer is a trainer on their training course. Johnson (1994) studied trainee journals during practicum to understand the impact of training. This study assumes that beliefs reported in a journal represent the impact of the training programme but, as experienced teacher trainers know, what teachers’ report they believe is not always reflected in actual teaching practice.

I have highlighted weaknesses in the studies I have examined. Specifically, firstly none of the studies considers training in the context of a teacher’s life and therefore fails to focus on a longitudinal perspective and obtain data at various stages after the training programme. Secondly there is no attempt to obtain data by more than one strategy in an effort to triangulate information. One exception is a study by Lamb (1995) who returned
after a year to face former participants on an INSET course in Indonesia. He used a combination of interviews and observations and concluded ‘that very few of the ideas presented on the course were taken up in the way anticipated by tutors, mainly due to the mediating effects of the participants’ own beliefs about teaching and learning’ (Lamb 1995: 72). This brings me to the main limitation of these studies. Apart from the dubious assumption that training impact can be equated with ‘change’, my main apprehension is that ‘change’ is left as a single undefined entity. Is there change or not? Surely we have to define our level of focus. Are we examining change in terms of what a teacher does, knows, or believes? I would contend that the ‘impact’ of training could be more deeply hidden and more complex than many studies suggest.

In the next sections, before addressing questions concerning how teachers learn, I define what is teaching and the nature of a teacher. My experience satisfies me that teachers follow training courses and develop as teachers to varying degrees of accomplishment. The question I am addressing is not whether learning occurs but rather how does this learning occur? How do teachers learn to be teachers? However before we can address this question we need to consider two preliminary questions:

• What is the nature of teaching?
• What is the nature of a teacher and a teacher’s knowledge?

3.1.2 What is the nature of teaching?
The role of the teacher is a perennial topic of discussion in general education as well as in language education (Kumaravadivelu 2003). With respect to the question ‘what is the nature or teaching?’ we find that teaching has been variously described as a job (performing routine and repetitive tasks), a career (life–long involvement and developing expertise), a profession (social responsibility and professional identity) and finally, a vocation (personal significance and autonomy). For most experienced teachers their perspective of their role may have engaged all of these characterizations. How teachers view their role and indeed how society views the role of the teacher is influenced by perceptions of the nature of knowledge and how it is conveyed to learners. Kumaravadivelu demonstrates that there are ‘levels of perception’ and this I believe is important when researching the nature of a teacher and teacher learning and is a distinction rarely made in the literature. Most research studies on teacher learning, as we shall argue, are locked into an epistemological stance that sees teaching from one perspective only. These roles are summarized by Kumaravadivelu into concepts of
teachers as technicians, reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals. However these are not mutually exclusive categories but represent a cline as teaching involves elements of routine task behaviours, reflective thinking and effecting personal and social change.

We can see Kamaravadivelu’s teachers’ roles mirrored by Richards and Rodgers (2001) who also propose three levels of conceptualizing language teaching which they term approach, design and procedure (Table 3.1). Approach then ‘refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching’. Design represents ‘the level of method analysis in which we consider the objectives, the syllabus, the learning tasks and the roles of teachers, learners and materials’. While finally procedures are ‘the techniques, practices and behaviour that operate in teaching according to a particular method’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Observable classroom techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Knowledge of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>Knowledge of theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Conceptualising teaching (adapted from Richards and Rodgers 2001)

Historically in English language teaching there has been an evolution from behaviourism through to learner-centred approaches influenced by psychology and second language acquisition research and this has seen a shift in research focus from more technical concerns of procedure towards, for instance, humanistic concerns about affective factors. Exploration into the nature of teaching in the 1970s, for example, focussed at the procedures level and followed the model of Dunkin and Biddle (1974), often disparagingly referred to as the ‘process-product model’. Research either took a micro or macro perspective. The analytic approach (micro) looked at observable phenomena at the level of procedure, for example, the teacher’s use of questions (Gall 1970), ‘time on task’ and feedback (Good and Beckerman 1978). These studies imply that teaching is solely a kind of technology, and the teacher educator’s task requires the teacher to perform according to certain rules. Later research focuses on higher order (macro) categories at the design level, which stress qualities of creativity, judgement and adaptability. Everston, Anderson and Brophy (1978) discovered that ‘managerial skills’ were related to levels of student involvement. Tikunoff (1985) studied how the concept of task was central to effective teaching. Webb (1980) studied the relationship between grouping arrangements. However in our allegedly postmodern world the
concept of a grand theory (an approach) to encapsulate how languages are learned has been criticised for disregarding the significance of context. The ‘Appropriate Methodology’ movement (Holliday 1999) is essentially a reaction against the rigid prescription of an approach-led methodology in language teaching and the transfer of these prescriptions to different, probably incompatible contexts.

3.1.3 What is the nature of a teacher and a teacher’s knowledge?

The second question was ‘What is the nature of a teacher and a teacher’s knowledge?’ Malderez and Bodoczky (1999) identify three levels of describing a teacher: behaviour; knowledge and ideas; and finally feelings, beliefs, attitudes and values. They depict the relationship visually using the metaphor of an iceberg. A simplified version of their Teacher Iceberg is shown below:

![Teacher Iceberg](image)

There are a number of approaches in the literature focussing on investigating teacher knowledge. One approach focuses on teacher knowledge as personal, practical, and tacit knowledge developed in the course of engaging in the teaching act and responding to the context of the situation. It is very much influenced by the work of philosophers like Gilbert Ryle (1949) who was the first to point out the distinction between ‘knowing how’ and ‘knowing that’. Following a similar track, Polanyi (1966), also a philosopher, explored human knowledge from the starting point that ‘we can know more than we can tell’. This ‘tacit’ knowledge is not the same as formalised knowledge. One of the most influential works on studies of teacher knowledge and teacher’s work is that of Schon (1983). Following Polanyi, he proposes that what teachers do in the classroom is ‘knowing in action’, that is, their practice reveals a kind of knowing that does not stem
from an intellectual operation. Echoing Ryle’s conception of ‘knowing how’, Schon contends that ‘knowing’ and ‘action’ are not two separate things but one; the knowing is in the action itself. This knowing in action is tacit. So knowing how to teach does not depend on formalised knowledge (as a career in medicine or the law) and there are many examples of expert mathematicians who cannot teach maths as well as a generation of effective language teachers with a minimal knowledge of linguistics. This distinction between what teachers do in the classroom (practice) and what they know (theory) has generated many contrasting opinions in the literature.

Influenced by the work of Dewey (1938), Elbaz (1983) carried out one of the earliest studies exploring teachers’ knowledge. She sees teachers’ knowledge as intuitive and tacit, and less accessible in codified and formally articulated form. Her self-confessed aim was to develop a way of studying teacher knowledge that ‘acknowledges the importance of theory while firmly situated in practice’. Alexander (1986) makes a distinction between ‘theory as product’ and ‘theory as process’. Theory as product refers to content knowledge, whereas theory as process refers to the intellectual activity needed to theorize. According to Alexander, a teacher’s theory of practice should be based on different types of knowledge: (a) speculative theory (i.e. writers in the field), (b) the findings of empirical research, and (c) the experiential knowledge of practicing teachers. To this list we could add other ‘resources’ of knowledge such as experiences of other teachers shared in the staff room, peer observations etc. The point Alexander is making is that teacher educators should concentrate less on what teachers should know and more on how they might think (Alexander 1986: 145). One aim of this research is to explore how teachers ‘think’ when they are reflecting in a group.

While Elbaz’s work emphasises the practical aspect of teacher knowledge in the sense of knowledge as a function of a teacher’s response to the situation, the work of Clandinin and Connelly (1992) emphasizes the personal aspect of teacher knowledge, and refers to it as ‘personal practical knowledge’. They argue that this kind of knowledge is ‘personal’ because it is derived from a person’s narrative, and it is practical because it is aimed at meeting the demands of a particular situation. This kind of knowledge is summarised by Clandinin and Connelly as follows:

It is knowledge that reflects the individual’s prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nature of that teachers’ knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge carved out of, and shaped by, situations; knowledge that is constructed and
reconstructed as we live out our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection (Clandinin and Connelly 1992: 125)

McGrath (1999) highlights the apparent opposition in the term ‘theory and practice’ and this is further embellished by Richards (1999) who points out, ‘living in the real world’ serves as an epistemological bludgeon. ‘Theoretical’ then means living not in the real world – and a theoretician is, presumably, an alien.

There is also an issue of the ownership of theory in teacher education. There are those (e.g. Kumaravadivelu 1999) who characterize theory as ‘a tool used by experts to assert control by experts over practitioners’. Pennington (1999) sees the dichotomy more as a cline from ‘magic’ at one end, where there is valuing of the individual, the particular, the local, the intuitive, the imaginative, to ‘science’ at the other end, where there is valuing of the general, the systematic, the objective, the publicly shared. Such distinctions between personal theories (owned by teachers) and professional theories (owned by experts), and between body of theory (public) and the process of theorizing (private), although they do not place theory and practice in antithetical polarity, do perpetuate a divide.

In the mid-1980s cognitive learning theories shifted research to questions under the water level of the iceberg to examine what teachers actually know, how they use this knowledge and what impact their decisions have on their instructional practices (Shalelson and Stern 1981). Many writers (Shulman 1987; Roberts 1998; James 2001) have advanced models of the key components of this knowledge base to incorporate in a language teacher-training course. One of the more comprehensive attempts is that of Richards (1998) who outlines six domains of content that he considers as the core knowledge base of teacher education. These are:

1. Theories of Teaching
2. Instruction skills
3. Communication Skills
4. Subject matter knowledge
6. Contextual Knowledge

However, as research begins to dig deeper into the depths of the iceberg and reveals the complexities of teachers’ mental lives (Freeman 2002) so teacher educators can no
longer ignore the fact that teachers’ prior experiences, their interpretations of the activities they engage in, and, most important, the contexts within which they work are extremely influential in shaping why teachers do what they do (Johnson 2007).

In the depths of the iceberg lurk teachers’ beliefs. Much recent research has focussed on teachers existing beliefs about teaching and learning, although, as Borg admits (2006), there is considerable confusion over definitions of the term. Beliefs, it is claimed, greatly influence teaching (Richards 1998), are unconscious, are deep-rooted and hard to change (Borg 2003) and filter input from teacher education (Pajares 1992) or outweigh the effects of teacher education (Williams and Burden 1997). The research suggests that no conceptual change can occur in teachers without firstly an awareness of the beliefs underlying their own practice and secondly a critical dissatisfaction with these beliefs. Despite the consensus of opinion being that beliefs are hard to change (Pickering 2005), any study focussing on the impact of INSET has to tackle the vexed question of teachers’ beliefs. Observable changes can occur in teaching without any change in belief and this frequently happens when a teacher teaches an atypical ‘model’ lesson when observed by a supervisor or trainer for assessment purposes. Similarly changes in belief may not lead to changes in teaching (Burns 2003; Farrell and Lim 2005) as teachers may be constrained by their teaching context or be unsure how to put beliefs into practice. The lesson for trainers advocated by Richardson (1996) is that INSET programmes which focus on beliefs explicitly are more likely to lead to change in teaching practice and that tensions between beliefs and teaching practice are avenues to explore in INSET and a potential source of learning (Phipps and Borg 2007).

Concealed with beliefs in the depths of the iceberg are teachers’ feelings and attitudes to teaching. These concepts are often merged, as in the combination of beliefs, attitudes and knowledge (BAK) identified by Wood (1996), and the use of the all-encompassing term ‘professional expertise’ by Kennedy and Barnes (1994). Professional expertise is the interaction and organisation of various aspects of who the teacher is and what the teacher does. Kennedy and Barnes refer to these various aspects of professional expertise as ‘personal resources’ that make up a teacher’s individually constructed ‘Mode of Operation’; these provide teachers ‘with goals, strategies, knowledge, skills, reasoning, beliefs, ethical guidelines, and even a persona with which to function.’ This ‘package’ of personally significant resources enables teachers to see, think and respond to teaching.
The first resource is declarative knowledge, which Kennedy and Barnes define as ‘the body of facts, principles, theories, or concepts that, when taken together, form the professional curriculum in a given field.’ The second resource is a set of skills, procedures and techniques used in practice. These two resources of knowledge and skills, traditionally perceived as the basis of professional expertise, are now viewed in relation to a number of other resources. Beliefs, values or commitments are a resource influenced by an ethical code of teaching that is not an espoused set of principles, but rather an implicit guide to practice. This, in turn, is related to a teacher’s professional persona, an image of what a teacher is like. Kennedy and Barnes argue that a persona:

includes an attitude towards one’s work and a belief about one’s role that is expressed through one’s behaviour. Adopting a professional code requires conscious thought and judgement and may entail some alteration of one’s self concept as well. (Kennedy and Barnes 1994: 197)

Simons (1993) defines attitude as a way of thinking that inclines one to feel and behave in certain ways which is influenced by factors such as status, level of pay, political structure of the school and other social forces. Positive and negative attitudes to teaching will change, as indeed the social context in which the teachers operate and find meanings will change.

### 3.1.4 How do teachers learn?

Research on teacher education, mirroring second language research in other areas, has moved on from attempting to define what a teacher is, does or believes to a more ‘bottom-up’ perspective of examining how teachers learn (Allwright 2001). Running parallel to the research into the nature of language and the language teacher, teacher educators are familiar with levels of instruction as defined by the terms teacher training, teacher education and teacher development. These labels have evolved as the pervading epistemological stance has shifted through intellectual traditions conceptualising human learning: specifically from behaviourist, to cognitive, to social and distributed views of human cognition (Johnson 2007). The table below illustrates these levels of conceptualising teacher education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher training</th>
<th>Focus on procedure, technique and what happens in the classroom. Observable classroom behavioural level.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education</td>
<td>Focus on subject knowledge, pedagogic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Development

Focus on personal, social and professional identity.

Affective /human /sociocultural level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive level.</th>
<th>content knowledge and conceptualisation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 3 Conceptualising levels of instruction in teacher education

Teacher training is typically considered as aiming to focus on classroom procedure and teacher behaviour and is associated with short courses to acquire essential classroom skills. In terms of language teaching, numerous short survival training courses grew out of an expediency to satisfy the exploding demand for English teachers during the 1970s and 1980s and this has created a generation of teachers who developed their teaching through practice.

In contrast, teacher education meanwhile, historically grounded in the positivistic or interpretative paradigms, has long been structured around the assumption that teachers need ‘core disciplinary knowledge about the nature of language and language acquisition’ (Yates and Muchisky 2003) and knowledge of pedagogic skills which will then be moulded into expertise through classroom experience. The underlying epistemological assumption is that there is a way or ways that ‘work’ and these can be evidenced through research of practice. Teacher education programmes, the literature suggests (Holliday 1994; Roberts 1998; Richards 1998), aim to provide skills that allow a teacher to make informed decisions based on different contexts and personalities. Despite a marked movement from a transmission model of teacher education to one of more teacher introspection, the underlying philosophy remains that there is a ‘body’ of knowledge and pedagogic skills that exists outside the teacher and can be learned or acquired.

What is the route to the development of these meta-cognitive skills and knowledge, identified by a wealth of literature? The answer to this question has centred around an extensive debate on the concept of reflection based on the ideas of Schon’s reflective practitioner. The literature overwhelmingly (perhaps overly so) asserts the importance of ‘reflection’ and self-direction in professional growth (e.g. Handal and Lauvas 1987; Eraut 1985) and promoting reflection in teacher education (e.g. Pollard and Tann 1987).
Calderhead (1989) analyzed different visions of reflective teacher education and concluded that ideas of reflective teaching varied along a range of dimensions. The term ‘reflection’ does appear to have different resonance for different people; for example Von Wright (1992), Atkins and Murphy (1993), see reflection inextricably bound up with notions of self and the analysis of one’s own feelings. These ideas link with the psychological perspective of humanism, which sees views of self and affective factors as a crucial aspect of any learning. Reflection therefore needs to consider the notion of ‘Who am I?’ and draw on literature on identity construction.

Other writers, for example Copeland et al. (1993), Day and Pennington (1993), and Hatton and Smith (1995) have itemized reflection as including cognitive and metacognitive skills as well as personal theories, beliefs and values. Schon (1983, 1987) sees reflection as inextricably tied to action, hence the term ‘reflection-in-action’. Other writers, for example Ur (1992), expand the term to argue that reflection can be applied to more than practice; we can reflect on public theories, personal theories, teacher training sessions and other people’s experiences. Griffiths and Tann (1992) highlight the complexity by unscrambling different writers’ ideas on the levels of reflective practice (Habermas 1973; Van Manen 1977, 1990; Mezirow 1981).

Finally teacher development is a response to an emerging body of research on L2 teacher cognition (e.g. Borg 2006), that depicts teacher learning as normative and lifelong, as emerging out of and through experiences in social contexts. It describes teacher learning as socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of self, students, subject matter, curricula, and setting (Johnson 2007).

A review of adult learning theories reaches similar conclusions to the literature on teacher education and development. Grossman (1992), for example, argues that teachers must be able to situate new knowledge and understanding within the specific contexts of their classrooms (see also Feiman-Nemser 1983). They must also be able to see connections between their learning and their everyday work. Finally, they must be able to resolve tensions between abstract principles and the complexity of classroom practice (Cohen 1994; Lampert 1984). Grossman contends further that collegiality is a crucial element in learning to teach. To learn, teachers need feedback on what they are actually doing as they teach. They need to understand fully the rationales and consequences of their actions. Like Shulman (1989), Little (1990), and Feiman-Nemser (1983), she
argues that learning with other teachers provides an important source of new ideas and feedback from practice.

These shifts in research focus have been influenced by epistemological shifts towards a socio-cultural perspective that defines human learning as a dynamic social activity in which the knowledge of the individual is constructed through the knowledge of the communities of practice within which the individual participates. However, it is necessary to retain our awareness that any consideration of the function of teaching - what a teacher believes, knows and does - and how expertise is acquired is not unidimensional but needs to be viewed as a complex interaction of a series of levels, or ‘learning worlds.’ In the next section, grounded in this review of the literature, we offer a framework for analysing the impact of training.

3.1.5 A framework to evaluate INSET

In the previous section we examined teaching, the teacher, and how teachers learn, and identified levels of conceptualisation. In this section I argue that it is possible, and indeed desirable, to amalgamate these levels of conceptualisation in order to construct a framework to evaluate the impact of teacher education INSET programmes. In his survey of types of INSET impact, Walters (2007) anchored his framework on the table reproduced below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHING</th>
<th>THE TEACHER</th>
<th>TEACHER LEARNING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richards and Rodgers</td>
<td>Malderez and Bodoczky</td>
<td>Allwright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Knowledge and Ideas</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>Feelings, Beliefs,</td>
<td>Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes, Values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4  Anchor points for INSET impact (Walters 2007)

This framework is useful as it essentially depicts the links between a focus on what a teacher does, knows and believes and illustrates how academic research has shifted from behaviourist through cognitive to a more socio-cultural perspective of language learning and teaching.
Does this framework have any practical application with regards to evaluating INSET in ELT? Based on our knowledge of the nature of language teaching, the language teacher and how they learn, I am able to propose a model to evaluate the impact of an INSET programme. Our framework is depicted as a metaphorical developmental journey below:
Having formulated the framework, I have noticed that these three levels reverberate frequently in the literature in various guises. Van Manen (1977) suggests a hierarchical model of reflectivity. The first level is concerned with the effective application of skills and technical knowledge in the classroom setting. The second level involves reflection about the assumptions underlying classroom practices. The third level entails the questioning of moral, ethical, and other types of normative criteria related to the classroom. The educational philosopher Fitzgibbons (1981) suggested that teachers make decisions of three types: those concerned with educational outcomes (what the goals should be), those concerned with the matter of education (what should be taught), and those concerned with the manner of education (how teaching should take place).

In order to conceptualise the framework I find it helpful to picture the features as part of a metaphorical journey: a teacher’s journey of development, in which classroom teaching (procedure and techniques) and the teacher’s visible behaviour are viewed as the physical manifestations of the journey, in other words the means of travel (on foot, by car, plane etc). This is the physical movement of the journey; it will vary in speed and direction during the journey and may well stop, break down or even give up completely. I labelled this element the ‘applied’ world.

The next element of the journey is to perceive teaching design and knowledge and the individual teachers’ ideas and concepts as the route (the mental plan of the land covered and the imagined picture of the road ahead). This is essentially the mental image or symbolic journey. Every traveller will have his or her own mental impressions based on the reality of the actual physical journey. This world is cognitive, mental and non-observable.

The third element of the journey is the teacher’s inner response and experiences (how they make sense of their journey) and their individual feelings, beliefs, attitudes and values. As the teacher proceeds on her journey the physical movement can be observed and the landscape will change, sometimes slowly and sometimes dramatically depending on her speed. It will change in terms of what we view when we look back.
and what we see when we look forward to our destination. We can observe these changes but what about changes in the traveller herself? The changes in her feelings, moods, thoughts and attitudes to the journey are not readily identifiable to the external observer but nevertheless these are the changes that effect the traveller’s sense of self, her identity and in terms of the traveller’s development, the changes that should interest us the most. This feature of the journey I label as the spiritual world.

Typically research into the impact of teacher education has focussed on specific features of the journey, predominantly either focussing on the vehicle and observable phenomena or the learning processes and the real or imagined impressions of the teacher as they go on their journey. However, in reality all these worlds are interacting with each other continually and spontaneously. They are interlocking – all essential features of the same journey.

There are, in my view, two fallacies with research into teacher education. Firstly, in terms of methodology, researchers identify a feature of the landscape, analyse it minutely until they understand its features and then place it back in the background. Researchers are constantly foregrounding features of a background and, as the journey progresses; more features can be fore grounded. The process is not only painstaking and slow but also probably ultimately pointless, as each feature only has real meaning when in its natural context. Researchers examines a rock or a tree without understanding its function in the overall landscape. It is literally a process of not being able to see the wood for the trees. The second flaw is that, as the journey continues from rocky beginnings to lush plains, so new features are identified on the landscape, the large rocks and gnarled trees are replaced by more delicate shrubs and bushes. These new features are highlighted but in isolation rather than in terms of their relationship with features already identified. Indeed the reports of the rocks and trees identified at the beginning of the journey are forgotten, ridiculed or considered an apparition, as they are no longer visible in the current landscape and are dismissed as an interesting historical anomaly and not a crucial episode of the unfolding journey. Following this, essentially positivist, research methodology the whole picture (or journey) will never be revealed in its full complexity.
PART 2: Evaluation in educational research

3.2.1 Introduction
3.2.2 What is evaluation?
3.2.3 Focussing on the destination: a product approach
3.2.4 Focussing on the journey: a process approach
3.2.5 Judgemental evaluation: checking the vehicle, route and destination
3.2.6 Developmental evaluation: impact on the travelers
3.2.7 How to evaluate the journey?
3.2.8 Principles of evaluating teacher education and FGE.
3.2.9 Conclusion

3.2.1 Introduction

In this section I review the literature of evaluation in educational research with the primary purpose of identifying the key features that need to be considered when evaluating a teacher training course. In the previous chapter I demonstrated how research into teacher education has shifted its epistemological perspective to focus on different elements of the developmental journey. First focussing on the ‘applied world’ of observable teacher behaviour in the classroom, then shifting to the ‘cognitive world’ to examine teachers’ knowledge and thoughts before seeking to understand the ‘spiritual world’ of teachers’ individual feelings, attitudes and beliefs and their sense of who they are (professional identity). In this section we describe the historical journey of evaluation in education and highlight how similar shifts in perspective do not occur in isolation but reflect changes in perception in the wider scene of education in general. Early evaluation practice focussing on educational products or outcomes (the destination of the journey) is best understood against the positivism of post-war planning. Similarly the move towards more process oriented evaluation practice geared to understanding can be interpreted as a reflection both to the currency of ideas concerning the construction of personal meaning, and the emphasis on participative styles of decision-making. Evaluation therefore, in the literature, performs a broad range of functions but by conceptualising teacher education as a journey I am able to identify three key questions (that echo my research questions): Where are we going? How are we travelling? What do we learn from the experience? In the final part of this section I identify the major considerations informing this evaluation study and introduce the Fourth Generation Evaluation model that provides the methodological framework of this study.
3.2.2 What is evaluation?
The literature of evaluation in educational research encompasses a wide range of activities, undertaken for a similarly wide range of purposes. To facilitate categorising evaluations, various writers have distinguished different features: qualitative versus the quantitative; scientific versus naturalistic (Guba and Lincoln, 1981); democratic versus non-democratic; research as engineering and research as enlightenment (Finch 1986); evaluation geared to action (i.e. to decisions) and evaluation geared to understanding.

I have depicted teacher learning on a training course as a journey and specifically made the analogy with the learning experienced by the characters in the Wizard of Oz as they journey along the Yellow Brick Road. How can the learning opportunities and experiences on their journey be evaluated? In the next two sections I explain how evaluation research can be seen either to measure the learning journey in quantifiable terms focussing on where we start, the route and the destination, or can be more interested in describing the experiences along the way.

3.2.3 Focussing on the destination: a product approach.
One way to evaluate a journey is to identify the starting point and the destination and measure the difference between the two. This essentially is the basic premise behind Tyler’s method (1949) to educational evaluation. Tyler’s approach, which has had a tremendous influence on educational and curriculum evaluation, involved comparing intended outcomes with actual outcomes. The measuring of the effectiveness of educational curricula to meet stated objectives historically situates evaluation as a discipline within the scientific paradigm (Guba and Lincoln 1984). However, the major shortcomings of a positivist approach to educational evaluation have been well documented (Parlett and Hamilton 1988; Williams and Burden 1996). In short, while positivist methods can quantify and measure achievement of objectives, the data fail to explain why this is the case. In other words, it is ‘a cumbersome and inadequate’ methodology (Parlett and Hamilton 1988:60) to apply to the world of education. Other shortcomings are that it focuses on parameters rather than people; it tends to be summative rather than formative; it lacks the flexibility to focus on diversity and the unpredictability of human agents. The limitations are summarised by Buchanan (1994), who states:

there are differences between natural processes and human practices that make the positivist model inadequate for understanding human actions. These
differences primarily are the fact that human actions and language are social practices. (Buchanan 1994: 275-267)

A brief critical survey of approaches to the evaluation of language education programs in recent decades reveals an essentially product based accountability focus. One such context involves development projects funded by the UK Department for International Development (DfID) (formerly Overseas Development Administration or ODA). These evaluations are essentially narrative accounts of programme activity that highlight context and focus on programme development. Bowers (1983), Swales (1989) and Mackay (1994) label such evaluations as ‘War Stories’ and ‘Romances’ to depict their descriptive features. These evaluations follow a standardised project design (Alderson 1992; Weir and Roberts 1994) and tend towards the bureaucratic (MacDonald 1976) and the use of external evaluators with limited time in the field which means only partial accounts are produced (Alderson and Baretta 1992).

The problem with confining evaluation to goals is that it ignores unexpected outcomes. Dorothy’s learning goal, for example, was to find adventure ‘somewhere over the rainbow’, an objective that is remote in time, and difficult to measure although her travelling companions admittedly had more specific learning tasks such as finding a heart (Tin Man), courage (Cowardly Lion) and a brain (Scarecrow). Similarly Tyler’s approach ignores process, the actual journey itself. The experiences that occur during the course of the journey along the Yellow Brick Road are assumed to be irrelevant. As Dorothy’s journey begins and ends at her home in Kansas, a Tylerian evaluator would probably conclude that Dorothy had learned nothing from her experiences as she had not moved any closer to her intended destination. While pressing for clear statements of objectives is useful from the point of view of orientating a training journey in terms of curriculum and learning tasks, there are sufficient reasons to doubt its usefulness as a recipe for evaluating teacher learning.

**3.2.4 Focussing on the journey: a process approach**

Historically the alternative to Tyler’s focus on constructing an intended route and then seeing if it serves to meet the destination, has been to focus on the process of the journey itself. In terms of evaluating in an educational context, qualitative data is attractive ‘as stories often prove far more convincing than pages of numbers’. Qualitative data can be well grounded, provide rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts helping researchers go beyond initial
preconceptions and frameworks. (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A major model that adopts this principle is ‘countenance evaluation’ as put forward by Stake (1967, 1975). Fearing that a pre-specified route or map could lead to narrow and rigid outcomes, Stake recommends picking up on whatever turns up and allowing the investigation to be shaped by both known and unfolding concerns of the stakeholders. The evaluator explores the landscape describing it as the journey proceeds but is prepared to explore off the trail if his fellow travellers point out potentially interesting paths to follow. A more radical extension is ‘goal-free evaluation’ proposed by Scriven (1972), in which the evaluator pays no attention to stated goals but examines what is actually happening on the journey, arguing that if the goals are relevant, they will show up along the way. As Scriven describes:

The goal-free evaluator is a hunter out on his own and he goes over the ground very carefully, looking for signs of any kind of game, setting speculative snares when in doubt. (Scriven 1973, cited in Jenkins 1976:55)

The problem with these ethnographic evaluation models that outline the details of the journey and the landscape traversed in thick descriptions is that, apart from being time consuming and costly, they avoid making judgements and providing useful information to decision makers and policy analysts. What is the purpose of evaluating the ongoing journey if the process does not inform the travellers. The evaluation needs to provide an opportunity for learning. We can describe the details of Dorothy’s journey along the Yellow Brick Road but how do we identify what is significant? How do we uncover the meaning?

Despite the proliferation of evaluation models, it appears that most consciously line up on either side of a divide either focussing on the product outcome (the destination of the journey) or the process (the journey itself). While it is tempting to see these models of evaluation as contrasting perspectives, clearly a journey does indeed consist of both travelling and an ultimate destination. We are analysing the same journey but from differing aspects. An alternative perception is to view the evolution of evaluation models as all essential building steps along the same journey. In other words the development and conceptualisation of evaluation research methodology represents its own developmental journey as focus shift through the applied, cognitive and spiritual worlds. According to Norris (1990), Tyler, one of the pioneers of educational evaluation, succeeded in shifting the focus of evaluation away from students and their individual abilities to the evaluation and refinement of the curricula and instructional
programmes. He saw evaluation not as technology for discriminating between individuals, but rather as a means of appraising the degree to which the curriculum interventions were realised in practice (the applied world). Scriven (1967) then highlighted the distinction between the processes of evaluation and the outcomes, suggesting that evaluation is more than assessment of goal achievement and can be both formative and summative. These ideas were extended by Cronbach (1963), who advocated in favour of the need to focus on the decision making processes (cognitive world) rather than objectives, and Stake (1967), who was the first person to use the term ‘responsive’ to describe how an evaluation could be organised around the concerns and issues of stakeholders (spiritual world). The evolving shifts in emphasis and focus are largely influenced by the function of the evaluation. In other words, the answer to the question ‘why?’ strongly influences how the evaluation is conducted, and this is our focus in the next section.

Why should we evaluate the journey? Evaluation has three broad functions that can be identified in the literature (Kiely 2001, 2003). Firstly there is a judgemental function, which is linked to issues of funding or quality assurance. This dimension of accountability is seen in sponsored programmes and project based work as well as mandated program validation. The second function is developmental and is usually related to curriculum or teacher development. The goal here is to develop, through evaluation activity, a personal knowledge base and stimulate professional involvement and development. The third function is a management one, where evaluation provides data that feeds into the planning and decision-making processes. Each of these levels can be related to a variety of methods, purposes and benefits, as illustrated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Analogy</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Main Purposes</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judgement</td>
<td>Checking the vehicle, route and destination</td>
<td>External or internal evaluator.</td>
<td>Accountability. Compliance to objectives</td>
<td>Monitor and quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Impact on the route and the destination</td>
<td>process of information gathering</td>
<td>Contributes to planning and decision-making</td>
<td>Allows project to respond to changes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Evaluation as Journey
Working within the field of language teacher education, the different generations of evaluation and the various purposes outlined above have all played a significant role. In the following sections we identify specific examples of evaluations where the purposes can be seen to vary from judgemental, developmental to managing change before concluding by identifying key purposes of our evaluation study.

3.2.5 Judgemental evaluation: checking the vehicle, route and destination

An aspect of evaluation use, which has grown in recent years, is compliance with mandates. Weir and Roberts (1994), Blue and Grundy (1996) and Kiely (2001, 2003) represent accounts of evaluation practice carried out routinely within language programs in order to meet an internal and external commitment to quality assurance. Norris (1998) sets out the wider policy context for this management function in public sector education in Britain, and Thomas (2003) provides an overview in the field of English language teaching.

The Cambridge Teaching Awards scheme (including ICELT) demonstrates the processes involved in evaluation based on mandate compliance. The QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) provides a government-approved comprehensive categorisation of learning achievements, designed to build the national skills base, to ensure parity across different learning contexts and communities of professional practice and to protect participants from exploitation or deception. Then, Cambridge ESOL, a respected examination Board in the ESOL field, successfully establishes an INSET program at Level 4 qualification and thus has a mandate to issue certificates at Level 4. Following on from this, institutions, such as language schools and universities, propose that their program be validated and, where successful, have a mandate to offer a course leading to the qualification. Cambridge ESOL as a result has a responsibility to the QCA to monitor and evaluate their centres to ensure mandate compliance.

Cambridge ESOL monitor and evaluate the ICELT programme by principally an approved moderator who visits the centre towards the end of each ICELT course (7.4.1 ICELT Administration Handbook UCLES 2004). The moderator is provided with the following course documentation:

- Profiles of the candidates
- Predicted grades
- Application forms
- Completed selection tasks
- Candidates portfolios of work

The moderator observes teaching practice lessons (with the course tutor) of at least three candidates. Where possible, these should include any candidates who the tutors consider may be potential fail or distinction candidates. During the visit the moderator scrutinises a minimum of five candidate portfolios across a range of ability. Moderators complete a report for each course. The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Chief Moderator and to provide feedback to the centre. The report consists of a series of boxes to tick to demonstrate that the centre complies with the mandate or a comment box where the moderator is unable to tick a box.

A sample of completed portfolios along with the moderator’s report is submitted to the Chief Moderator who scrutinises the work and writes an additional report to Cambridge ESOL. The course results are endorsed at a final award meeting where in certain circumstances, the centre may be asked to submit additional samples of work for scrutiny.

Mandate compliance in terms of our learning as a journey metaphor is firmly grounded in the applied world. Rather like a judge at a motor rally it provides a checklist of vehicle requirements and determines whether the vehicle passes the various checkpoints along the journey. This essentially product focussed evaluation methodology relies on static characteristics rather than more dynamic views of the programme as offering learning opportunities (Kramsch 2002; Crabbe 2003). This results in a tendency to equate documentation of programme implementation or professional practice with what actually happens, which in my experience leads to more time spent on bureaucratic activities than, say, language teaching or teacher education. In consequence, a valued professional skill becomes that of documenting compliance, an activity that does not directly benefit the language learner or trainee. There is also a risk that compliance with mandates determines the curriculum, specifying required or good practice in such a way that trainers make fewer professional decisions, and increasingly feel their task is to comply, to deliver a program in which they may have limited experience or indeed confidence. In this sense mandates may have a negative washback effect on the curriculum similar to that generated by the format of external language tests. Ferguson
and Donno (2003) reflect how the privileging of mandates can limit the innovative action required to solve enduring programme design problems, in this case the format of English language teacher training courses.

Teacher education, contrary to the mandate compliance model, ideally requires an evaluation methodology that equalises power distribution and enhances communication between stakeholders. A concordance approach emphasising negotiation rather than tick box compliance, encouraging professional decision-making, and providing the space to innovate and problem-solve in ways not facilitated by mandates.

3.2.6 Developmental evaluation: impact on the travellers

In contrast to the product oriented focus described above, there are examples in the literature of teacher-led evaluations (Kiely et al. 2004; Hedge 1998) that correspond to notions of action research and reflective practice. These are more likely to occur in a culture of innovation: where teachers are encouraged to experiment with materials, tasks and activities as part of their role in facilitating language learning (Kiely and Rea-Dickens 2005). Kiely and Rea-Dickens summarise that teacher-led evaluations are likely to be most effective when:

- They are linked to shared teaching and learning concerns
- They relate to valued professional learning
- They are constructed as opportunities for teachers rather than as obligations or impositions

Here the focus is on the process of the journey, the actual experience of travelling, where the evaluation provides opportunities for learning and development within teacher education programmes.

Specific examples include Jacobs (2000) who presents an evaluation which focuses on the management of change in Learning in English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) program in South Africa. The evaluation had a constructivist orientation and Jacob’s analysis identifies three broad evaluation aims: (1) to understand the ways LEAP as an innovation changed the curriculum, teaching and learning; (2) to understand the ways the institutional context impacted on LEAP; and (3) to identify and involve all stakeholders in the evaluation. In a similar vein Reid (1995) presents an evaluation which focuses on the management and use of resource centres in different countries in Eastern and Central Europe. The evaluation was commissioned by the sponsors to
inform on both the effectiveness and patterns of use of the resource centres, and the ways in which the management of resource centres could be further developed. Reid developed a case study approach that derived from a theoretical account of what constituted a good resource centre and examined what this meant in each context.

Both evaluations provided opportunities for learning and development within programs and furthered understanding of the contribution of wider institutional policy on resources and support for learning.

3.2.7 How to evaluate the journey?

In Chapter 3 Part 1, I identified four elements of a learning journey; first, the applied world of action; second, the cognitive world of thoughts and sense making; third, the spiritual world of values and feelings of the travellers both as individuals and as a social group and finally the socio-cultural context, the landscape over which the journey takes place. The evaluation process is similarly a learning process and evaluation of a teacher training course is by definition grounded in professional practice. Therefore, an evaluation process is morally required to provide information that feeds into utilisation and action, construction of knowledge, stakeholder participation while also acknowledging the influence of the socio-cultural context.

How the evaluation process equates with our learning as a journey metaphor is illustrated in the Table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning worlds</th>
<th>The Journey</th>
<th>Evaluation process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied</td>
<td>Travelling by vehicle</td>
<td>Utilisation and action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>The route</td>
<td>Construction of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>The travellers</td>
<td>Stakeholder participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural context</td>
<td>The landscape</td>
<td>The evaluation context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 Evaluation and the Learning Journey

In the next section we will consider the elements within each category in order to establish the principle methodological requirements of an evaluation model for teacher education.
I advocate that there is a need for an evaluation model in teacher education that incorporates the four worlds of our learning journey. One such model, FGE (Fourth Generation Evaluation), proposed by Guba and Lincoln, claims to satisfy these requirements. Guba and Lincoln created FGE in response to their perceptions of the basic flaws in the previous three generations of evaluation models. They argue that all three generations of evaluation are principally guided by the positivist paradigm and are therefore dependent on finding a convergence (a single truth). They argue that adherence to the scientific paradigm has tended to lead to context stripping rather than divergent views and negotiation. They further add that the client of the evaluation retains power and that there is a failure to accommodate a pluralism of values.

The value pluralism of our society is a crucial matter to be attended to in an evaluation. None of the approaches of the first three generations accommodates value differences in the slightest. (Guba and Lincoln 1989:35)

In the next section we explore how the FGE model claims to meet the requirements of evaluating the learning journey.

**3.2.8 Principles of evaluating teacher education and FGE.**

One of the major objectives of this study is to learn from the evaluation findings in order to improve the INSET provision and develop the ICELT course. In other words there is an emphasis on the utilisation of results in a formative manner ‘to improve or refine the evaluand to its optimal state’ (Guba and Lincoln 1981:51). Formative evaluation does not simply evaluate the outcome of the program but is an ongoing evaluating process; ‘from the very beginning, it seeks to form, improve, and direct the innovative programs’ (Williams and Burden 1994:22). This means the evaluation is ‘responsive’ to stakeholders’ input. A responsive approach is explained by Guba and Lincoln as:

The term responsive is used to designate a different way of focusing on evaluation: viewing its parameters and boundaries not as ‘a priori’ established, but specified through an interactive, negotiated process that involves stakeholders and that consumes a considerable portion of the time and resources available. (Guba and Lincoln 1989:38-39)

It is a truism that the findings of an evaluation should be used; but this is a problematic issue, as Cronbach observes:
Whereas persons who commission evaluations complain that the messages from the evaluations are not useful, evaluators complain that the messages are not used. (Cronbach 1980:47)

On our learning journey should we follow the route as indicated by our compass, the stars, the most dominant personality or perhaps the most beautiful scenery? The decision is influenced by a range of factors such as empowerment and sense of ownership of the decisions. Kennedy (1988) raises the issue of ‘ownership’ in innovation, that is the degree to which participants feel that the innovation ‘belongs’ to them, which ‘has a considerable influence on the likelihood of an innovation to succeed’. This is related to the concept of empowerment. Kelly (1980) suggests that for an innovation to be successful there must be initial dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs. However one cannot be dissatisfied with a system unless one is aware of the operational reality at different levels.

As the context concerns an evaluation of teacher development, another major objective is learning through the evaluation process. With typical eloquence Guba and Lincoln (1989:260) describes the evaluation process as aiming at:

> illuminating the stage on which the evaluation drama is unfolding and providing a vicarious experience of what it is to be a major or minor actor there. (Guba and Lincoln 1989:260)

A constructivist conception of evaluation requires an interaction of stakeholders’ views in a hermeneutic dialectic circle in which ‘truth’ is a matter of consensus among informed and sophisticated constructors.

The nature of stakeholder involvement is an issue for all evaluations. Evaluations can adopt a ‘stakeholder as informant’ position or ‘stakeholder as participant’ position. In my conceptualisation of the learning journey then all stakeholders become travellers and the main actors in the process. The literature in social sciences, and particularly management, emphasises that, in order to enhance evaluation utilisation, an understanding of not only the roles of stakeholders but also how learning takes place is vital. Pennington (1998) highlights the interactional and participatory dimensions of evaluations so as to facilitate, through ‘gaining increased understandings’, opportunities for change, thereby enhancing programme effectiveness. Further, stakeholders as participants in the process have the added potential ‘of making sure that educational change processes are appropriate to the contexts in which they are carried out’ (Tribble,
To achieve these aims there needs to be high levels of interaction, dialogue, and debate all of which resonates with the work of evaluation and curriculum theorists such as Stake (1967), Parlett and Hamilton (1972), Guba and Lincoln (1989), Stenhouse (1975) and Kemmis (1986). Fourth Generation Evaluation, claim Guba and Lincoln (1989) is:

a participatory pluralistic process that provides a framework through which the interests of often disempowered stakeholder groups and individuals can be put into the agenda and renegotiated. (Guba and Lincoln 1989:152)

FGE is essentially ethnographic in its attempts to describe the ‘emic’, the internal value and belief systems of the socio-cultural context. The importance of recognising the nexus of variables related to cultural, social, institutional, and psychological areas that intervene in educational contexts is well understood. Cronbach et al (1980), for example, state that: ‘A theory of evaluation must be as much a theory of political interaction as it is a theory of how to determine facts’. Kennedy (1988), referring to the nature of educational innovations, confirms:

Firstly, any innovation is part of several interacting systems and subsystems and other areas which at first sight appear to have little to do with the innovation itself but may have considerable influences on the degree of acceptance of the innovation. (Kennedy 1988:331)

Guba and Lincoln recognise the political influences and state:

FGE is sharing accountability to expose political agendas and lay opposing views open negotiation and contestation. It aims to be fair, non-discriminatory and non-exploitative while enabling the status quo to be challenged and opening the way for change. It facilitates the expression of diverse values as crucial aspect of evaluative inquiry. (Guba and Lincoln 1989:152)

3.2.9 Conclusion
In this section I reviewed the literature of evaluation in educational research and identified the key features that need to be considered when evaluating a teacher training course: namely, utilisation and action, construction of knowledge, stakeholder participation and the influence of the socio-cultural context. In the final part of this section I detailed the major considerations informing this evaluation study and introduced the Fourth Generation Evaluation model that appears to satisfy my methodological requirements and as a result provides the broad methodological framework of this study. The methodology used is described in detail in Chapter 4.
PART 3: The effects of teacher learning

3.3.1 Introduction
Prior to any evaluation of a teacher training course we need to consider how teachers learn, and what effects this learning has in terms of teacher and institutional change and development. In this Chapter, Part 1, I considered the teacher and teaching in terms of what teachers do, think and feel, in other words a product oriented view. In this section I focus on the processes of learning with the aim of specifically examining the nature of ‘talk’ and how dialogue relates to learning.

3.3.2 Processes of teacher learning: the background
Learning is essentially a personal process determined by how we perceive and make sense of our life journey. As Cadorath asserts (2005) not everyone learns in the same way; teachers bring different experiences, backgrounds and expectations to learning and there is no one single answer to the question ‘How do teachers learn to teach?’ or indeed ‘How do trainers bring about teacher learning?’ In this section I shall look briefly at how different views of learning have influenced and informed models of English language teacher training, education and development. Broadly speaking approaches can be divided into the elements of our learning as a journey metaphor where the emphasis shifts from action centre, to knowledge-centred and then person-centred approaches as depicted in the following diagram adapted from Roberts (1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical base</th>
<th>Learning determined by:</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Journey Perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviourism</td>
<td>External conditions</td>
<td>Modelling and reinforcement</td>
<td>Action centred (The applied world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Science</td>
<td>Empirical scientific knowledge</td>
<td>Transmission of knowledge</td>
<td>Knowledge centred (The cognitive world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Cognitive and experiential learning</td>
<td>Reflection, awareness raising activities</td>
<td>Person centred (The spiritual world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanism</td>
<td>Individual choice and development as a person</td>
<td>Counselling, self-directed development, lowering affective factors</td>
<td>The journey context – the landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural influences</td>
<td>Social interaction / Group dialogue</td>
<td>Reflection, talk, problemsolving, critical awareness of politics ? status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 Models of language teacher education (adapted from Roberts 1998: 12)
Action-centred approaches to teacher education are essentially ‘top-down’ and involve a ‘transmission view of learning’ (Williams 2002) where theory and practice are perceived as a body of external knowledge which is transmitted from expert to novice. Action-centred approaches have a number of manifestations in terms of practical application. There is the craft model (Roberts 1998; Wallace 1991) which equates to the apprentice learning skills from the master craftsman and is based on behaviourist psychology of modelling and reinforcement. There is also the Applied Science model that according to Wallace (1991) ‘derives its authority from the achievements of empirical science’. This approach implies that ‘unscientific and mystical approaches’ (Stones and Morris, cited in Wallace 1991:8) are rejected and teaching problems are solved by the application of empirical science. The aim is for teachers to understand the theoretical foundations and principles on which a particular set of practice is based, to select or design syllabi, materials, tasks and activities according to these principles, and to monitor their own teaching to check that it conforms to those theories and principles (Freeman and Richards 1993).

As a reaction to the ‘top-down’ transmission approach of behaviourism and experimental psychology, there emerged from humanistic psychology in the 1950s a more ‘spiritual’ approach that valued individual choice and self-agency allowing development and self growth. In terms of teacher education the emotional dimension to teacher development and personal change were emphasised through the expression of feelings and ideas in groups (e.g. Moskowitz 1978; Rinvolucri 1985 and Stevick 1990). Examples of language teacher education practices adopted on a basis of humanistic principles include work by Gebherd (1990), Rinvolucri (2002), Woodward (1992) and Freeman and Richards (1993).

Constructivism is essentially rooted in the cognitive world and informs, or purports to inform, much of the teaching that takes place at institutions of higher education in the UK (Cadorath 2005). However constructivism is not a theory about teaching. It is a theory about knowledge and learning (Fosnot 1993) as underlying all pedagogic practice, ultimately, are questions of epistemology. The way in which we think about knowledge and what it means to know are directly and necessarily linked to all aspects of how we teach.
As an epistemology, constructivism, in essence, entails the emphasis being placed on the individual learner’s construction of his or her own knowledge. Beyond this, though, constructivism assumes not only that learning is constructed, but also that the learning process is a personal and individual one, that learning is a cognitive process of meaning construction, that learning is collaborative in nature and that all learning is situated (see Merrill 1992:102).

We have so far considered constructivism as a single entity but it is far from monolithic. It has become commonplace to distinguish between two distinct forms of constructivism: radical constructivism and social constructivism (see Cobb 1994, 1996). Radical constructivism has its philosophical roots in Piaget’s genetic epistemology and is premised on the belief that an individual’s knowledge can never be a true representation of reality but is rather a construction of the world that she or he experiences. Thus from a radical constructivist perspective, knowledge is not something that can be conveyed from teacher to student. Learning results from cognitive development. This means that in terms of teacher education, individual experiences and activities which focus on self-awareness and explore teachers’ learning experiences and beliefs about learning and teaching are an important part of constructivist approaches. Wallace depicts the processes involved visually using his diagram of a reflective model for professional education:

![Figure 3 Reflective practice model of professional education / development (Wallace 1991:15)](image-url)
This reflective model, both Roberts (1998) and Wallace (1991) claim, informs most current language teacher education. The reflective model has two key inputs, received knowledge and experiential knowledge, which provide the foci of the process of reflection both in and on action (Wallace 1991). However, as Williams (1999) contends, while most trainers would assume the existence of reflection as a desirable aim there is difficulty in defining what it actually is, how it is promoted, and the benefits it is claimed to have. Calderhead (1989), for example, analyzed different visions of reflective teacher education and concluded that ideas of reflective teaching varied along a range of dimensions. The term ‘reflection’ does appear to have different resonance for different people. For example, Von Wright (1992), Atkins and Murphy (1993), see reflection inextricably bound up with notions of self and the analysis of one’s own feelings. These ideas link with the psychological perspective of humanism, which sees views of self and affective factors as a crucial aspect of any learning. Reflection therefore needs to consider the notion of ‘Who am I?’ and draw on literature on identity construction. Other writers, for example Copeland et al (1993), Day and Pennington (1993), Hatton and Smith (1995) have itemized reflection as including cognitive, metacognitive skills as well as personal theories, beliefs and values. Schon (1983, 1987) sees reflection as inextricably tied to action, hence the term ‘reflection-in-action’. Other writers, for example Ur (1992), expand the term to argue that reflection can be applied to more than practice; we can reflect on public theories, personal theories, teacher training sessions and other people’s experiences.

Griffiths and Tann (1992) highlight the complexity by unscrambling different writers’ ideas on the levels of reflective practice (Habermas 1973; Van Manen 1977, 1990; Mezirow 1981). In my view the term ‘reflection’ encompasses such a broad range of meanings in the literature it is no longer distinguishable from cognitive processes in general and appears to encapsulate a range of ‘modes of thought’.

Social constructivism has as its theoretical foundation the work of Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and argues that the process of knowledge construction inevitably takes place in a sociocultural context, and that knowledge is in fact socially constructed. This view has influenced interest in the role of collaborative learning and particularly the nature of interaction and talk in teacher training contexts. We shall examine this in the next section. Perhaps the most reasonable way to articulate the common, shared elements of
radical and social constructivism is to talk of learning as socially mitigated but personally constructed.

To summarise this section investigating how teachers learn, I propose that most teacher educators adopt an eclectic view to training methodology and draw from each learning theory depending on context and teachers’ learning needs: from a behaviourist perspective – observation, modelling and skills learning; from a humanist perspective – understanding of personal change and emotions; the constructivist language classroom focuses on ‘guided discovery’ and inductive learning. Constructivist teacher education involves participant-centred, active learning experiences, teacher – teacher interaction and work with authentic classroom activities and in solving real problems. It is opportune to remind ourselves that regardless of the current ‘in vogue’ epistemological wisdom, it is the teacher’s own personal theories of teaching that ultimately need to be made conscious and scrutinised, as Williams and Burden (1997) remind us:

However what has become increasingly clear to us is the fundamental importance to teachers of an understanding of what is involved in the process of learning to inform and underpin our teaching of the language. Teachers own conceptions of what is meant by learning, and what affects learning will influence everything they do in the classroom. At the same time, in order to make informed decisions in their day-to-day teaching, teachers need to be consciously aware of what their beliefs about teaching and learning are. (Williams and Burden 1997:1-2)

3.3.3 Collaborative Learning

The process of learning, theorising and constructing understandings and knowledge, is frequently conducted in teacher training contexts, through the interaction of teachers in groups. The premise on these teacher education courses seems to be that group interaction enables teachers to articulate and make explicit their own personal theories and to explore public theories, and for these to then be shaped and developed by the perspectives and experiences of others. Collaborative learning, Bailey (1996) claims, ‘can provide a powerful mechanism for teachers to explore their own conceptions of teaching and learning’.

The value of oral interaction in training contexts is a result of the growing influences of the socio-cultural paradigm (Mercer 1995; Kozulin 1994), which advocates that knowledge and understanding is shared.
Individually and collectively, we use language to transform experience into knowledge and understanding. It provides us with both an individual and a social mode of thinking. (Mercer 1995:67).

Historically these ideas have roots in philosophy such as Habermas’s concept of communicative rationality (Habermas 1990, 1991; White, 1988) and the arguments of other philosophers and communication theorists (for example, Rorty, 1991), as well as cognitive psychologists such as Vygotsky. Vygotsky’s model of individual development, which has had a strong influence on the current socio-cultural perspective, stresses that: ‘all that is internal in the higher mental functions was at one time external’ (Vygotsky 1991: 36). This conception of describing reason as a social practice involves a shift from a monological model of reason, drawn from the outside, after the event, as if reason was a closed and finished system, to a ‘dialogical’ account which is described by Wegerif (1999) as a free and open encounter between different perspectives and ideas. The concept of knowledge as a dialogue between self and social context fits easily with our metaphor of knowledge creation as a journey and the conceptions of the journey as a ‘dialogic’ interaction between the route taken and individual (and group) perceptions of the experience.

Much research has been conducted to analyse the nature of the ‘asymmetrical’ interaction between the teacher (or expert) providing active support for a learner. Bruner’s concept of ‘scaffolding’ (Mercer 1995), Feuerstein’s description of ‘mediation’ (Williams and Burden 1996; Kozulin 1994) and in relation to teacher development Edge’s (1992) principles of co-operative development are examples. There has, however, been considerably less attention to the ‘symmetrical’ interaction between adult learner and learner (peer and peer) and how knowledge is constructed through this process (notable examples are Bailey 1996; Kettle and Sellars 1996; Wilkinson 1991). A number of studies, nevertheless, have been conducted into the interaction of learners in primary schools (for example, see Barnes and Todd 1977; Berrill 1988; Phillips 1988; Fisher 1993). From this research, descriptions emerge of the type of talk that enhances the thinking process and enables theorizing to occur most effectively.

Mercer (1996) used observational research in British primary schools to typify three kinds of talk, which he also described as representing different ‘social modes of thinking’. 
1. The first way of talking is **Disputational talk** which is characterised by disagreement and individualised decision making. There are few attempts to pool resources, or to offer constructive criticism of suggestions. Disputational talk also has some characteristic discourse features, notably short exchanges consisting of assertions and counter-assertions.

2. Next there is **Cumulative talk**, in which speakers build positively but uncritically on what the other has said. Partners use talk to construct a ‘common knowledge’ by accumulation. Cumulative discourse is characterised by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations.

3. **Exploratory talk** occurs when partners engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas. Statements and suggestions are offered for joint consideration. These may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered. Compared with the other two types, in exploratory talk knowledge is made more publicly accountable and reasoning is more visible in the talk. Progress then emerges from the eventual joint agreement reached. (Mercer 1996: 368–369)

Of the three types of talk Mercer claims that exploratory talk is the closest to reasoning as a social practice. In a fascinating inquiry into how undergraduates use specific strategies to explore and make explicit their assumptions and to construct meaning in interaction, Berrill (1991) also confirms the value of exploratory talk. Drawing on other studies, she argues that talk that loops back on itself and is not linear in structure allows the implicit to become explicit and leads to the refinement of ideas. A key aspect of her study therefore (see also Berrill 1988) is the cyclical, not circular, nature of oral argument:

> When topics are returned to, the participants bring different understandings to the ideas: they are not simply re-treading the same path. (Berrill 1991:146)

Another important feature of effective group talk and collaborative learning is, perhaps surprisingly, an emphasis on the individual. Stables (1995) convincingly argues that an overemphasis on collaborative learning can result in insufficient attention being paid to individual reflection and ‘inner dialogue’. He claims that for group work to result in learning, there must be space and time available for silence and individual thought.
This idea of inner and outer learning is supported by Fullan (1993) who believes that outer learning, through connectedness, collectivism and collaboration, can only be generative and developmental if it is supported by individualism and thinking for oneself. In a study of secondary school children working collaboratively, Westgate and Corden (1993) conclude that a period of quiet individual thought and reflection preceding group discussion enhances the process and product of collaborative work. The pyramid structure of brainstorming moving from individual to pair to group interaction is a well proven method on training encounters for effectively generating ideas on a topic.

A useful model proposed by Legutke and Thomas (1991) conceptualized the relationship between the group and the task as:

![Diagram](image)

‘I’ relates to the individual in the process, and what each individual contributes and takes from the task. ‘We’ is the group, the relationship and dynamic between the individuals. Both have an effect on the other. The third element, the ‘theme’, is the topic, or the content of the task. It too is shaped and developed by the other elements, as well as having a significant role in their development.

Social constructivism has provided a powerful theoretical basis for understanding the process involved in the collaborative construction of knowledge construction of meaning and knowledge through group talk.

Small group talk has the exploratory characteristics necessary for personally meaningful learning. Only by thinking aloud, acknowledging uncertainty, formulating tentative ideas, comparing interpretations and negotiating differences – only by these means can learners shape meanings for themselves and others, and thereby arrive at real understanding. (Salmon and Claire, 1984)

Whether it works or not in practice is a consideration of this study. Clearly the effectiveness of the process depends both on the participants as constructing meaning individually but also working as a group developing effective interaction and talk.
For collaborative groups to function effectively all participants need to contribute. Bailey (1996) outlines the importance of ‘voice’ of individual group members. ‘Voice’ is described as a communal product in a social context where every individual has an opportunity to speak and be heard. It is dependant on three main aspects. Firstly, speakers have to gain the floor. This relates to the concept of turn-taking systems – who speaks and who decides who speaks. Secondly, the speakers have to speak acceptably (see Grice 1975 for features of communicative competence). Thirdly, a speaker must be heard by others. Bailey (1996) defines ‘hearing’ as a ‘social rather than cognitive phenomenon…as an intertextual link between a current speaker’s turn of talk and the prior talk of a group member’.

Developing effective collaborative groups requires an understanding of group processes and dynamics. Tuckman and Jewson (1977, cited in Thacker, 1990) categorize five stages in group processes. They describe these as:

- Forming: where groups come together with questions and uncertainties.
- Storming: negotiation of divergent ideas and values.
- Norming: developing of skills to enable effective collaboration.
- Performing: the task is tackled and issues explored.
- Adjourning: reflection and evaluation.

Foley (1992) suggests that a group has its own dynamic, which is different from the dynamics of the individuals who make up the group. A positive group dynamic according to Thacker (1990) requires two important types of roles to ensure collaborative work. The first are task roles that enable the task to be completed by clarifying aims, providing ideas, checking and summarizing. The second type of group roles are related to the socio-emotional aspects of the group, what Thacker (1990) terms as maintenance roles which hold the group together by fostering good relations, mediating, ensuring solidarity and relieving tensions.

### 3.3.4 Methodology

As Mercer and Wegerif (2004) highlight, there has been a great deal of research interest in collaborative learning in recent years. There are numerous quantitative studies, which fall under the methodological tradition of ‘systematic observation’ (see Croll 1986)
where talk data is reduced to coded categories and statistically compared. The set of categories employed varies according to the focus of the study. For example, Teasley (1995) coded functions of talk such as ‘prediction’ and ‘hypothesis’; King (1989) used, among other measures, length of utterance; and, drawing on Piaget’s concept of ‘socio-cognitive conflict’, Joiner (1993) counted the number and type of disagreements in interactions and related these to problem-solving outcomes and measures. However, these quantitative studies, although capable of handling large quantities of corpora data, appear to have little to offer my small scale study both on an epistemological or a methodological level.

Edwards and Mercer (1987) note that the coded analysis is often presented as a ‘fait accompli’, so the original observational data is lost and the de-contextualised coded information is presented as the data; the interpretative analysis that generated the codes is obscured or forgotten. Draper and Anderson (1991) identify four specific kinds of problem that coding methods need to address with language in use:

1. Utterances are often ambiguous in meaning, making coding difficult or arbitrary.
2. Utterances often have multiple simultaneous functions, which are not recognized by coding schemes that assign utterances to mutually exclusive coded categories.
3. Phenomena may be spread over several utterances or an entire discourse so single utterances may not be an appropriate unit of analysis.
4. Meanings change and are renegotiated during the course of a conversation.

Moreover, it is necessary to point out that talk is inevitably and necessarily ambiguous in its meanings because it is a means by which individuals share meanings in a specific context. The underlying assumption that there are features that can be revealed by quantitative measurement appears remarkably naive, particularly when applied to collaborative learning contexts in which, as Crook (1994) points out, the process under study is one of the development of shared knowledge through language use and joint activity, over time.

Barnes (1976; Barnes and Todd 1978, 1995) was amongst the first researchers to devise an analytic method for studying collaborative learning in classrooms that was sensitive to context and to the temporal development of shared meanings. In contrast to coding systems, Barnes has used detailed classroom observation and the interpretation of
transcribed talk of children engaged in normal classroom activities to explore the processes through which knowledge is shared and constructed. His approach is allied to ethnography in that it incorporates intuitive understanding gained through discussions with teachers and children in the contexts described. His method of reporting his research is to demonstrate and illustrate his analysis by including transcribed extracts of talk, on each of which he provides a commentary. Other educational researchers have applied similar methods to the study of children’s talk and joint activity (e.g. Lyle 1993; Maybin 1994; Mercer 1995). Edwards and Westgate (1994) argue that the strength of Barnes’s early work lay in making ‘visible’ aspects of classroom life that are easily taken for granted and so making them available for reflection, his insights were also readily recognized by teachers.

Critics of qualitative discourse analysis, in the tradition of Barnes, are sceptical of the ‘insightful observation’ methods and counter with claims of the lack of evidence and generalization. Hammersley (1992) has argued that qualitative analysis can be effective for generating theories but not so effective for rigorously testing them. However, if our theory is based on the premise that knowledge can be constructed collaboratively and is a dialogue between self and socio-cultural context then arguments of generalization become redundant. Why look for something when you know it isn’t there? Why empty a river checking each bucketful of water is safe to swim in before we swim across, when we can walk across a bridge?

The value of ‘talk’ in teacher education is a central theme of constructivism. Essentially constructivism suggests that individuals create their own new understandings, based upon the interaction of what they know and believe, and the phenomena or ideas with which they come into contact. In addition social constructivist would further argue that social interaction is instrumental, if not essential, in both the conception and appropriation of knowledge. In other words, as teacher trainers/educators we have to start from an interrogation of the trainees’ current values, attitudes and beliefs. In consequence therefore, when applying these ideas to teacher training most constructivists would also agree that the traditional approach to training, the transmission model, promotes neither the interaction between prior and new knowledge nor the conversations that are necessary for internalization and deep understanding (Richardson 1997).
Knowledge is socially constructed, because meaning can only be constructed through the use of language in a social context. Dewey (1916) suggested that ‘… the use of language to convey and acquire ideas is an extension and refinement of the principle that things gain meaning by being used in a shared experience of joint action.’

In this constructivist view, learning cannot be separated from action: perception and action work together in a dialogical manner. And there is no representation of reality that is privileged or ‘correct’. There are, instead, a variety of interpretations that are useful for different purposes in differing contexts. Knowledge is not thought of as a received, static entity that is separate from the individual. Neither is it separable from the activities within which knowledge was constructed, nor from the community of people with whom one communicates ideas. In other words the development of an individual relies on social interactions. This sociocultural conception of constructivism is primarily attributed to Vygotsky (see Davydov 1995; Moll 1990; Wertsch 1991).

An interrogation of trainees existing beliefs, attitudes and values involves talking about them. But, inevitably perhaps, there are different views as to how this can be achieved. Schifter and Simon (1992) suggest that the negotiation of shared meaning with social interaction provides a source of cognitive dissonance that allows individual students to restructure their concepts. Bereiter (1994), on the other hand, advocates the creation of discourse communities in classrooms that mirror the way knowledge is created in disciplinary fields. O’Loughlin (1992) takes a more postmodernist stance by rejecting the reification of the cognitive as separate from action, and the lack of attention to power issues. Edwards and Mercer’s (1987) study situated in elementary classrooms indicates that even within supposedly constructivist and discovery oriented tasks the teacher controlled the learning outcomes.

It is clear however that a constructivist conception of teacher training involves working with teachers to help them understand their own tacit understanding, how these have developed, and the effects of these understandings on their actions; and to introduce new conceptions and premises as potential alternatives to those held by the trainees (Harrington 1995; O’Loughlin 1992; Richardson 1992). This involves discussing tasks that investigate premises and perspectives that are considered relevant to the teachers’ teaching context.
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction
In this chapter I shall briefly review the aims of the study and re-state my research questions. The next section looks at the underlying research tradition of the study in terms of epistemology and methodology. This is followed by details of the methodology chosen for the study and an explanation of the research design, including details of the research participants (stakeholders) and the research methods chosen for data collection and analysis. Finally, issues related to the research, specifically ethical considerations and discussion of the research ‘quality’.

4.2 Re-statement of study aims and research questions
There are three main research questions:
1. What are the claims, concerns and issues of stakeholders in the ICELT programme?
2. How can identification and interrogation of claims, concerns and issues be acted upon in order to improve and develop programme effectiveness?
3. In what ways does participation in the evaluation process impact on stakeholder’s professional development? In other words what do stakeholders learn from the evaluation process?

The research questions emphasise the triple purpose of the evaluation as regards each stakeholder.
The product focus: Learning from the evaluation: the evaluation process identifies the claims, concerns and issues concerning the ICELT course

The process focus: Learning from the evaluation: the evaluation process involves a dialectic that leads to decision-making, action and actual utilisation.

The pedagogic focus: Learning through the evaluation: stakeholders participation in the evaluation allows for heightened awareness and understanding of the programme practices.

4.3 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

The arguments over the merits of one research paradigm over another rage on (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Reichardt and Cook 1979; Patton 1990) despite many other writers on research (for example, Inglis 2003; Pring 2000) suggesting that the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative is unhelpful and even anachronistic. However, such debates aside, what is essential is that researchers are aware of the epistemological implications of opting for particular methodologies and methods. As Wellington et al (2005) advise researchers:

They need to have thought about how the ways in which they conceive of, approach, and go about, doing their research influence the type and nature of the knowledge they claim their research produces. (Wellington et al 2005: 97)

I fully recognise that the methodology and methods that I selected for this research have been influenced by, among other factors, my personal philosophy, educational and professional background. As a teacher I attempt to adopt a person-centred Humanistic approach believing that I am first of all teaching the learner and not the subject matter (the English language in my case). I believe that every learner is different and that each learner will acquire the language that they find personally meaningful regardless of the structure of my lesson and my pedagogic aims. As a teacher trainer I follow a broadly social-constructivist approach recognising that every teacher has their own style and strengths as well as weaknesses and developing as a teacher involves individuals constructing their own practices, understandings and knowledge and fitting them into their own personal professional identity. Teacher development is an individual, personalised journey. However, teacher learning occurs in a socio-cultural context where teachers teach, work and live together as a social unit. Therefore, their developmental process takes place within their interactions with learners and colleagues. As a teacher and teacher trainer I position myself within a Humanist /
constructivist tradition of knowledge; it is against this background that I came to consider the methodology and methods for my research aware of Griffith’s (1998) assertion that epistemology, and particularly the relationship between methodology and methods and knowledge and truth, is a contentious and sensitive area.

4.4 Choice of Methodology

Scientific research has largely been dominated by a positivist research paradigm whereas with research in the social sciences, education in particular, an interpretative approach is not uncommon. This is because, as Radnor (2002) explains, the social world is ‘fundamentally different from the natural world because in the social world people have their own intentions, their feelings and emotions, impacted by each other as well as by the context in which they live’ (Radnor 2002: 17). An interpretative approach to research ‘is concerned with the specifics of meaning and action in social life that takes place in concrete scenes of face-to-face interaction, and that takes place in the wider society surrounding the scene of action’ (Erickson 1986:156). Moreover, social life consists of people who are complex and unpredictable. Their behaviour and beliefs cannot be predicted or controlled and these ‘multiple realities’ need to be interpreted.

The ontological assumption of the interpretative paradigm leads to a view of knowledge of the social world as a human construction rather than a mirror of some objective reality. In this understanding of knowledge, it is clear that different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon (Guba and Lincoln, 1985). For myself, conceptualising ‘knowledge’ as something individually constructed based on subjective meanings applied to a specific situation, is intuitively appealing and not a great leap of faith as I experience such knowledge construction in class daily. Knowledge therefore is ‘subjective’, ‘spiritual’ and ‘transcendental’ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000) and arises out of a perception and illumination that can only come from personal experience.

Central to the interpretative research paradigm is the principle of being able to appreciate the meaning of others – ‘interpreting’. When we talk about understanding others at the level of meaning we are referring to our interpretation of what we see and hear. When we talk and interact with others we are essentially involved in an interpretative process. It is also suggested that it is through this dialogic act that new meanings and new understandings emerge (Radnor 2002). One key aim of this study is
to explore how the dialogic interaction between stakeholders raises awareness and builds new understandings of INSET and the evaluation process.

Researchers within the interpretative paradigm are concerned with individual and context specific experience rather than generalities. In the words of Denzin and Lincoln (2000):

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observers in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative material practices that make the world visible …..at this level, qualitative research involves an interpretative naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 3)

A researcher operating in the ‘natural settings’ described above is also part of the context. Researchers must be ‘close to the data’ and acting as participants. Their values and beliefs are involved in what they choose to research, how they research it and how they interpret and present the findings. The researcher cannot be separated from the information obtained. It was largely this awareness of context that convinced me that the evaluation of the INSET course required a pedagogic motivation as well as an evaluative one. As the course tutor on the ICELT course I would be expected to cover the topic of course evaluation as a component of the syllabus and it was hoped that participants would recognise the authenticity of this method of ‘loop input’ (Woodward 1988).

As I have highlighted in this section, the choice of methodology and methods of data collection have to match the researcher’s epistemological stance as well as the research problem and setting. In this research study these decisions have been influenced by the framework of FGE which Guba and Lincoln (1981) describe thus:

This search for meaning is a search for multiple realities, truths, and perceptions. Those multiple realities are contained in the unique, the singular, the idiosyncratic, the deviant, the exceptional, the unusual, the divergent perceptions of individuals, as they loved or lived the experience. (Guba and Lincoln 1981:157)

The FGE model, when compared to other evaluation frameworks, attracted me for several reasons apart from the ontological assumptions concerning the nature of social reality and the epistemological assumptions concerning the bases of knowledge as
outlined above. Firstly, the evaluation process is reliant on a high degree of stakeholder participation. In my role as a trainer this equates with a task based, inductive model of training where the trainees experience the evaluation activities for themselves. My training session on curriculum evaluation, for example, consists of a number of task based evaluation activities (such as ‘The Wishing Well’, or the ‘Magic man’s Bag’) that teachers ‘try out’ and are then encouraged to reflect on, critique and maybe use in their classes. In my view evaluating the ICELT programme through the lens of stakeholders’ experience and developing a participatory approach to programme evaluation is a logical extension to my training repertoire.

The second reason that FGE appealed is related to its pedagogic potential. Participants are confronted with a variety of viewpoints related to the ICELT course, and are required to reflect on and evaluate their understandings of what they are learning and experiencing. By being active in a process that elicits multiple representations of the ICELT course, participants are made aware of the myriad social and political factors influencing stakeholders. The reflective and interactive processes of FGE are in harmony with the in-service teacher education aims of promoting self-aware critically thinking practitioners. A further reason is that a central tenet of FGE is that it is giving participants voice, challenging the status quo and opening the way for change. Paraphrasing the often emotive rhetoric of Guba and Lincoln, FGE is described as a participatory pluralistic process that provides a framework through which the interests of often disempowered stakeholder groups and individuals can be put on the agenda and re-negotiated. Encouraging a ‘bottom-up’ approach to innovation and change is advocated in much of the literature on educational innovation (see, for example, Fullan 1982, 1993, 2001). Finally, on a purely practical level, the methods appeared to be manageable for a novice researcher and had face validity in so far as the evaluator’s role was compatible with my function as course tutor.

My approach to data collection is qualitative in order to gain an in-depth understanding of stakeholders’ views regarding the ICELT programme and to interact with these in a process of meaning making to develop and improve the INSET provision. Equally by using focus groups and posters as data generating strategies I seek to encourage reflection and dialogue that aims also to have educative outcomes for the participants as they become more aware of the features of a training course and also experience the methodology of a responsive – constructivist evaluation. These outcomes may
reverberate beyond the course as teachers may want to replicate the process in their careers as educators and inspire subsequent generations. Before explaining in detail the process of design and procedure of my study, I will describe the participants.

4.5 The Participants

4.5.1 Stakeholders
Much space is allocated in the research literature to the importance of sampling and, in Guba and Lincoln’s (1989) work, to choosing the stakeholders for the evaluation. My study is a naturalistic enquiry situated in an established socio-cultural context where the issue is not about choosing the stakeholders but defining the scale of inclusion. The nature of stakeholder involvement is an issue for all evaluations. In an evaluation such as this one, that adopts a ‘stakeholder as informant’ approach, decisions need to be taken about which groups will be approached and how their responses will be captured as part of the data collection. Guba and Lincoln define stakeholders using the following terms: agents, those who conduct and use the evaluation; beneficiaries, those who gain from the evaluation; and victims, those who are negatively affected by the evaluation. These definitions, in our context, are not helpful. A workable alternative is proposed by Rea-Dickins (1997) who defines stakeholders as ‘those who make decisions and those who are affected by those decisions’. Using this definition then clearly the course tutors make decisions and the course participants are affected by those decisions within the institutional context. The principal stakeholders (if we apply Rea-Dicken’s definition) of the evaluation are, firstly, the training course participants and there are twelve teachers on the course; secondly, the tutors of the course and there are four main tutors (including myself) and two tutors in training.

There are other groups of potential stakeholders who certainly could be described as beneficiaries of the evaluation but they are not involved in the on-site administration and delivery of the ICELT programme. All of the following were considered initially as potential stakeholders but were excluded as participant stakeholders in the initial evaluation study primarily due to pragmatic concerns such as ease of access. As the evaluation process evolved the circle of stakeholders has been enlarged to include the following:

- Cambridge ESOL: the awarding body of the ICELT teaching award. Each Cambridge ICELT course is visited by a moderator who is appointed by
Cambridge to moderate the course. The ICELT course was moderated by a Chief Moderator (M.W) on 2nd and 3rd May 2007. She kindly agreed to participate in the evaluation process and her role is explained later.

- Members of the ICELT Symposium: I organised an ICELT Symposium and invited tutors from all ICELT centres in the Balkans and Middle East to Istanbul to discuss issues related to the ICELT programme. The first Symposium was attended by 17 tutors from six different centres and responded to some of the issues raised in this research study. The ICELT Symposium has since become an annual event and last year was held in Ankara, Bilkent University.

- University Personnel: There are other people in the evaluation context such as – the Head of Department and University Administration, teachers in the department who are not on the ICELT programme and the students (language learners). These people could come under Guba and Lincoln’s description as ‘affected’ by the ICELT course but they are not identified as stakeholders in the ICELT course.

4.5.2 Course Participants
The course participants come from a range of teaching backgrounds and experience. Some of them have limited previous ELT training while others have had substantial teacher education and hold Masters degrees in ELT Methodology. Most of them are in their first or second year at the university and one of the unstated aims in establishing the ICELT programme was to use it as an induction to the procedures and practice of teaching at the University. There are eight Turkish nationals and four native English speakers (one British, one Australian and two Americans) and the level of language competence is high throughout the group. Participants voluntarily applied to follow the ICELT course. The course is sponsored by the university and the participant contribution to the fee is £200. Participants are given a reduced teaching load and Wednesday afternoon free from teaching to attend the course input sessions.

Focus Group One (FG1) This group consists of:
- Annabelle (A) – an American female with limited teaching experience and formal training, in her first year at the university. She struggles initially with the ELT terminology but responded well to feedback on her tasks, assignments and
lessons. Annabelle is a pragmatist, she thinks in very practical terms. She saw the course as a series of tasks to be completed and wanted clear guidance as to how she should complete them.

- Su Wong (S) an American female completed CELTA and is in the first four years of her teaching career. She had good analytical skills and reflected in depth on her teaching. She was a creative and innovative thinker.

- Feryal (F) young Turkish female teacher with limited teaching experience. She has a good command of the language and developed in confidence but strangely did not apply herself to the course and develop to her full potential.

**Focus Group Two (FG2)** The group consists of:

- Yonca (Y) a young female Turkish teacher with limited teaching experience and no formal ELT training. She is, however, extremely articulate and previously worked in advertising. Her lack of an ELT background, changes in her working conditions, accompanied by a negative attitude to the course meant she withdrew from the course and was the only participant not to receive an ICELT certificate at the end. This was not due to a lack of ability, she was a competent classroom teacher who was willing to experiment, work hard and reflect. Yonca though, is a critical thinker to the extent that she challenges every proposition. She could not follow a structure.

- Sheila (Sh) an Australian teacher with several years teaching experience in Japan but limited formal teacher training. She worked methodically and her lesson planning and written work showed attention to detail and an ability to reflect. She was not the most dynamic in the classroom but she showed awareness of the students and their problems.

- Seval (Se) young female Turkish teacher with limited teaching experience and limited formal training. A flamboyant and energetic presence in the classroom accompanied by a strong personality and confidence. However Seval lacked the ELT terminology to contribute in groups and also struggles to express herself coherently in the writing tasks.

**Focus Group Three (FG3)** This group consists of:

- Aysegul, a mature Turkish woman and an experienced teacher who enjoys giving presentations at conferences and attending TD sessions. On the course she
demonstrated a willingness to try out new ideas and read widely but in her written work, although she has good control of language, she had problems with organisation and relevance of the content. Overall she enjoys the creativity of exploring new ideas but her weakness is in the details in other words the precision and planning to execute ideas in the classroom and commit them to paper.

- Antoin, a British male with limited teaching experience who had serious problems with time management during the course. Most of the assignments and tasks were rushed and superficial – as indeed was the level of reflection on his teaching practice lessons. Antoin spends his energy procrastinating and worrying but fails to act. He is the cowardly lion of the group – he has all the personal requirements but fails to act. It was not clear whether this was due to apathy or a lack of courage.

- Berna, a young Turkish female who lacks self confidence but is also a ‘perfectionist’ who wants to succeed and do tasks correctly. She was concerned about the standard of her written English during the course and attempted to withdraw on several occasions but was reluctantly persuaded to continue by me. She persisted with the course and responded well to feedback. She was prepared to re-draft and re-submit assignments to achieve a higher grade. As a trained dancer she expresses herself through her body. She is a dynamic classroom performer with tremendous verbal and physical energy as she weaves her dance around the class. Students appreciate the positive energy and are entranced. She is popular and effective but was encouraged to develop a more learner centred teaching approach on the course. She was not naturally reflective and came alive through ‘doing’ and ‘action’. I envisaged her as our dancing straw man, someone who needed to add reflection to her action.

Focus Group Four (FG4) This group consists of:

- Tulin, an experienced teacher who has had some teacher training experience. She claimed the course was easy and handed in assignments late.

- Tamara, an experienced teacher who on several occasions attempted to withdraw from the course. She was persuaded to complete the course and she generally performed well in the course tasks.
• Zuhal, a friend of Tulin. An experienced teacher with aspirations to become a teacher trainer. Although she struggled with some of the assignments, she appeared committed to the course.

4.5.3 Course Tutors
There are four main course tutors including myself. The course tutors also come from a range of teaching backgrounds and experience. Most of them have had limited previous ELT teacher training experience. All the tutors (apart from myself) are new to the ICELT programme and are unfamiliar with the course components and the assessment criteria. As a result, as main course tutor I have to ensure standardisation of marking and inform the tutors of the Cambridge regulations. My fellow tutors have other time-consuming responsibilities and limited time to devote to the course. The tutors responsibilities are outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Curriculum Consultant and ICELT Main Tutor</td>
<td>I headed the team and was basically responsible for co-ordination and administration of the ICELT course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Director of Studies and ICELT tutor</td>
<td>Completed MA TEFL and DELTA. First experience as trainer and also recently promoted to DOS. Very limited time to devote to ICELT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Phillipines</td>
<td>Co-ordinator and ICELT tutor</td>
<td>First experience as ICELT tutor but has some previous teacher training experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Testing Officer and ICELT tutor</td>
<td>First year as ICELT tutor and recently promoted to Testing Officer. Limited time and lacks confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 Course Tutors

In addition there were two ‘tutors in training’.

• Belgin (B) – a young Turkish teacher with four years teaching experience who had completed the Cambridge DELTA in the previous year. She was in her second year at the university.

• Alara (A) a young Turkish teacher who had completed Cambridge DELTA at a university in Ankara. She was in her second year and had also just been given the responsibility of co-ordinator.

The tutors in training were following a training programme in order to become approved tutors on an ICELT course. The training up process involved ‘shadowing’ the main tutors and observing input sessions and observations as well as double marking.
assignments. It also involved conducting some supervised input sessions and feedback on teaching practice. Due to the enthusiasm of the tutors in training and the excessive work load of the course tutors, the tutors in training took on more responsibility on the course than was originally intended and the distinction between ‘tutor’ and ‘tutor in training’ may have been obscured to the participants.

In the next section we examine the research design and procedure.

4.6 Research Design

The research procedure consisted of two parallel focus group discussions, the first between course participants (four focus groups) and the second between course tutors in a separate group. These discussions were recorded and a summary poster created highlighting the groups’ claims, concerns and issues regarding the ICELT course. The course participants’ posters were discussed by the course tutors who then informed the course participants of their responses. The process culminated in a dialectic meeting where all stakeholders had an opportunity to voice their claims, concerns and issues in an open plenary. The process is illustrated in the following diagram:
4.6.1 Participant Focus Groups
Guba and Lincoln (1989) advocate one to one stakeholder interviews to instigate what they describe as the hermeneutic cycle whereas I adapted their methods to incorporate the use of focus groups. Focus groups are similar to group interviews but the reliance is on the interaction between the group as opposed to an interviewer. There are several advantages of using focus groups (Morgan 1997; Lynch 1996). The chief advantage of this research method is that the data emerges from the interaction between participants and is not pre-determined by the researcher’s agenda. In a study focussing on stakeholders’ perceptions it seems appropriate to collect data through an interaction of
participants. The group discussions produce concentrated amounts of data on the topic. As Morgan (1997:17) confirms:

The comparisons that participants make among each other’s experiences and opinions are a valuable source of insights into complex behaviours and motivations. (Morgan 1997: 17)

The group itself represents its own reality and the meaning making and negotiation between participants fits well with the responsive – constructivist approach. In this research study focus groups were considered the most effective way of stimulating ‘talk’ between participants and it was the nature of this dialogue that we aimed to analyse in order to answer our third research question. Namely, in what ways does participation in the evaluation process impact on stakeholder’s professional development? In other words what do stakeholders learn from the evaluation process? A practical advantage of using focus groups is that it is quicker to conduct four focus group interviews with three people in each than twelve separate individual interviews and they could be timetable into ICELT course.

Course participants were organised into focus groups of three participants. I tried to ensure that the native speakers were spread out between the groups (although Focus Group 4 consisted of three Turkish teachers) and there was a mix in the groups in terms of teaching experience. There were four focus group interviews conducted over four weeks:

1. Explanation of the Evaluation Process 21st February
2. Focus group 1: 28th February
3. Focus group 2: 7th March
4. Focus group 3: 21st March
5. Focus group 4: 28th March

4.6.2 Stage One: Claims, Concerns and Issues

The Focus Group met in the Study Centre around a table. I had prepared a tape recorder to record the conversations and the A3 poster for participants to record their claims, concerns and weaknesses in three columns. I explained that I wanted the course participants to discuss claims, concerns and issues related to the ICELT programme. I explained that they should first discuss in order to reach a consensus of views and asked if they had any objections to their discussion being recorded. Then they should collate their ideas on a poster (as displayed in the figure below). I explained that this poster
would be shown to the tutorial team to see how their ideas could be utilised into the programme. I handed out an empty poster for the participants to complete, turned on the tape recorder and left the room saying I would return in about 30 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAIMS</th>
<th>CONCERNS</th>
<th>ISSUES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Smiley Face]</td>
<td>![Sad Face]</td>
<td>![Angry Face]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5 Empty Focus Group Poster

The discussion was recorded for subsequent analysis to see how the participants reached their decisions. One of the aims of the study is to analyse the ‘talk’ of the participants to identify if it is possible to identify ‘learning’ and the nature of that ‘learning’. In order for participants to express views freely and stimulate divergent views, I believed the evaluator needed to be absent from these discussions to physically demonstrate to participants the extent to which they can own and shape their discussion. This avoided any concern that the evaluator, in order to maintain research focus, influenced the group’s interaction. In fact Morgan (1997) claims that many focus groups will ‘rely on a relatively structured interview with high moderator involvement’.

4.6.3 Stage Two: The Responsive Element
Having identified participants’ claims, concerns and issues, I created the conditions necessary for the interactions between stakeholders in a process Guba and Lincoln refer to as a ‘hermeneutic–dialectic cycle’. ‘Hermeneutic’ refers to the interpretative nature of the process and ‘dialectic’ refers to the interactions and dialogue between stakeholders representing a comparison and contrast of divergent views with a view to achieving a higher synthesis. After each focus group the summary poster of claims, concerns and issues was displayed to the tutorial team and tutors discussed how the information could be acted upon. The results of this process were conveyed to participants the following
week when the whole process was repeated with the next focus group. Metaphorically Janesick (2000) compares the process in a responsive evaluation to improvisational dance or music while Guba and Lincoln describe the process as a ‘learning to negotiate’. Participants are confronted with the state of their own understanding and knowledge and that of the other stakeholders, and are required to deal with the points of difference by reconsidering their position in the light of new information or by articulating the rationale behind their beliefs and practices. In this way the reflexive nature of the evaluation process aims to stimulate a meaningful discourse about the programme and an increase in self-awareness. The process is illustrated in the figure below:

![Figure 6 Reflexive evaluation](image)

Course tutors as stakeholders in the course were interviewed in two focus groups: course tutors and tutors in training using the same procedure. The tutors discussed the constructs as a group in order to reach a consensus and displayed their conclusions as a poster. This poster was displayed to the course participants in the dialectic meeting.

**4.6.4 Stage Three: Dialectic Meetings**

After all the focus groups (6) were completed there was a meeting in which the six stakeholder posters were displayed in the plenary room. Participants were encouraged to walk around the room reading the posters and adding post-it notes of comments to claims, concerns and issues on the posters. One representative for each poster stood next to their poster and explained or highlighted claims, concerns and issues when asked to.

The final stage of the meeting involved all participant/stakeholders in a meeting with the Cambridge Chief Moderator. The meeting followed the following organisation. After participants had displayed their posters on the wall and walked around viewing
each other’s posters and interacting by commenting or discussing the points raised, there then followed an open chair debate. Four chairs were placed in a circle. Each chair was occupied by a stakeholder while one chair remained empty and a discussion ensued about reflections on the course.

![Diagram of 'Empty chair' debate]

The empty chair debate was organised so that the three principal stakeholders occupying the centre chairs began the debate raising concerns and issues identified during the evaluation process. The remaining stakeholders listened to the debate. However if any stakeholder wished to participate in the debate they could sit on the empty chair. As soon as the empty chair was occupied one of the initial debaters had to leave the debate to ensure that there was always an empty chair. In this way all the stakeholders had an opportunity to contribute in the debate.

The debate lasted about 30 minutes. The debate focussed primarily on the course requirements and assessment criteria with course participants reiterating their concerns and the Chief Moderator explaining the rationale behind the scheme. Although the empty chair debate allowed each stakeholder an equal voice in terms of access to the floor, it did not represent an even table. Koch (2000) highlights how the issue of power and the nature of the respective stakes in the negotiation mean that the negotiating table becomes imbalanced. The Chief Moderator’s role in our negotiation is a case in point.
There are inherent imbalances of power between the participants and tutors, the accrediting authority and the host institution.

There were divergent views of the programme and conflicting and unresolved items where no shared construction emerged. Many of the unresolved issues related to differing views about the merits of the mandated programme specification as laid down by Cambridge as the accrediting body and these were recorded by the Cambridge Moderator who wrote a report for Cambridge. The dialectic cycle then moved on to another cycle of stakeholders as I invited teacher trainers from other centres in the area to attend the first ICELT Symposium. (A report of the first ICELT Symposium is included in Appendix 1).

The evaluation process, as learning itself, has no finite ending. The spirit of FGE proposes that the hermeneutic-dialectic process in theory can continue way beyond the life of the initial evaluation. One initiative that came out of this study was the establishment of the ICELT Annual Symposium (held initially in Istanbul in 2007 and subsequently in Ankara in 2008) in which trainers from ICELT centres in the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Middle East gathered to discuss the ICELT scheme and recommendations were made to Cambridge ESOL for improvements. If we perceive the hermeneutic-dialectic process as an interaction between stakeholders where multiple realities are presented and multiple layers of interpretation emerge then the FGE cannot end as long as stakeholders have the opportunities and motivation to interact. The whole procedure has moved on to another larger cycle feeding into a wider more global group of stakeholders with new perceptions of the claims, concerns and issues of the ICELT scheme.

4.7 Data analysis

4.7.1 The poster of claims, concerns and issues.

The first stage of the analysis aimed at identifying the main claims, concerns and issues summarised on the stakeholders’ posters. Having argued in the Literature Review that training should not be perceived as a single unitary concept but needs to be addressed on a series of levels that equate with what teachers do, know and believe within a socio-cultural context, I re-categorised the generative data into categories determined by my
Impact on training framework. The comments were first grouped according to theme and then colour coded into the appropriate categories as shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF IMPACT</th>
<th>PRINCIPAL FINDINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applied level</strong></td>
<td><strong>A1.</strong> Finding articles;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(The vehicle)</em></td>
<td><strong>A2.</strong> Writing assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback / grading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A3.</strong> Peer Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Articles presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive level</strong></td>
<td><strong>R1.</strong> Practice: Practical activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(The route)</em></td>
<td><strong>R2.</strong> Theory:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- relevance to classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- integrated to topic / practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Terminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>R3.</strong> Reflection / interaction – sharing ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal level</strong></td>
<td><strong>P1.</strong> Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(The travellers)</em></td>
<td><strong>P2.</strong> Affective factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>P3.</strong> Expectations / needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-cultural level</strong></td>
<td><strong>L1.</strong> The environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(The landscape)</em></td>
<td><strong>L2.</strong> The people – colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>L3.</strong> Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9  The poster of claims, concerns and issues

The participants comments were then interpreted with reference to the relevant literature.

4.7.2  The Responsive Element

A level of resolution was attempted during the second phase of the process in which the claims, concerns and issues of the course participants were presented to the course tutors. It is during this phase of the process that opportunities for education arise. The FGE model operates on the assumption that, when presented with additional information, stakeholders will be open to changing their own constructions, thus allowing for consensus among stakeholder groups. The process is ‘a continuous, dialectic chain of questioning, answering, analysing, and requisitioning, ultimately
leading to the emergence of a common construct of reality’ (Rebien 1996:155). In order to analyse and document this process for this study I identified four key themes that emerged in the focus groups and describe the negotiation process between the stakeholder groups.

The final phase of the process is reserved for resolution of those issues that have not achieved group consensus. This was accomplished in a dialectic meeting between stakeholders and included the Cambridge Chief moderator in an enlargement of the stakeholder group as advocated by FGE. Specifically, this phase involved a facilitated debate among stakeholder groups in an attempt to reach final consensus. Theoretically, according to FGE, overall stakeholder consensus is the goal; however, from a practical standpoint, it is obvious that this goal is not always possible. I tend to agree with Laughlin and Broadbent’s (1996) assertion that ‘to suggest that new information alone will generate change in the construction is naïve’ (Laughlin and Broadbent 1996: 291). Working toward the goal of consensus, however, becomes the key (Swenson 1991).

4.7.3 Dialectic Meetings

The final stage of data analysis aimed to explore the focus group transcripts in order to identify whether, through the dialectic process, learning was taking place. In other words, were participants learning through the process of experiencing the evaluation and was there evidence in their talk of heightened awareness and understanding of the training programme practices?

The data analysis used follows the methods of qualitative discourse analysis first pioneered by Barnes (1976) and exploited by other educational researchers who have applied similar methods to the study of children’s talk and joint activity (e.g. Lyle 1993; Maybin 1994; Mercer 1995).

4.8 Issues of research quality and value

The criteria put forward by qualitative researchers to judge research quality revolve around the terms ‘objectivity’, ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ (Denscombe 1998; Miles and Huberman 1994; Ratcliff 2004; Silverman 1993). Initially the creators of FGE developed what they called ‘parallel criteria’ (Guba and Lincoln 1989). Subsequently, because parallel or trustworthiness criteria derived from methodologies that were ‘scientific’ rather than ‘constructivist’ in orientation, the authors developed what are
called ‘authenticity criteria’. These criteria derived from what Lincoln and Guba determined were the central and critical features of a constructivist evaluation. They posited that methods in an FGE were less important than ‘outcome, product and negotiation criteria’. The authenticity criteria in summary are the following: fairness, ‘the extent to which different constructions and their underlying value structures are solicited and honoured within the evaluation process’ (p 245); ontological authenticity, or ‘the extent to which individual respondents’ own emic constructions are improved, matured, expanded, and elaborated’ (p 248); educative authenticity, or ‘the extent to which respondents’ understanding of and appreciation for the constructions of others outside their stakeholding group are enhanced’ (p 248); catalytic authenticity, or ‘the extent to which action is stimulated and facilitated by the evaluation processes’ (p 249); and tactical authenticity, or ‘the degree to which stakeholders and participants are empowered to act’ (p.250).

It should be clear from these criteria that, to a constructivist, reality, knowledge and social process are not easily separated. ‘Truth’ is a social construction, an explicit or implicit convention of a social interchange which is subject to a constant dynamic multi-site multi-group set of negotiations. Authenticity criteria are meant to constrain and guide the process of evaluation as the evaluation team plans and subsequently audit its negotiation activities. In terms of my own criteria, how will I judge the effectiveness of the evaluation process? Will I view it as successful if it provides a model for individual and group change and creates the conditions for an interactive environment facilitating personal and institutional development?

4.9 Ethical Issues

As this is a naturalistic enquiry, the researcher is interacting with the research participants all of whom are individuals with emotions, feelings and thoughts. As an additional complication, the researcher is also their trainer, guide, assessor and major instrument of data collection, and it follows that I will be faced with ethical and moral dilemmas (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989). As evaluator, my role is one of facilitating interpretative dialogue among stakeholders, the objective being to obtain consensus among stakeholders regarding an emergent construction of the programme’s effects and benefits. As main course tutor on the ICELT training course, my main concern is that the participants increase their awareness of the evaluation process and reflect on their training course. These roles are not necessarily in conflict but when we also add that, as
a tutor, I am also a stakeholder; as evaluator, a catalyst in bringing about reform or change; and as course administrator, I am responsible to Cambridge ESOL for ensuring that the mandate is followed. The social-cultural context that includes the role of the evaluator, the politics and distribution of power and the social ecology of the institution all need to be considered. Indeed, Papineau and Kiely (1996) argue for adaptation of evaluation practice to include considering the social ecology of the evaluation site:

…the concerns and problems that stakeholders want to address, as well as relational and political context of the organisation. (Papineau and Kiely 1996: 80)

One ethical issue concerns anonymity. Although there is an attempt to hide identities through pseudonyms, I acknowledge that confidentiality is not ‘watertight’ (Punch 1998) As the participants are either voluntarily registered on a training course or have volunteered to act as tutors on the course, a certain degree of commitment to the course and its evaluation is assumed. However, it seems to be pragmatic when planning the evaluation to ensure efficient use of time and energy by making use of information collected by trainers as part of their normal workload and integrating some of the evaluation activities into the normal life-cycle of the course programme.

4.10 Limitations in the Study

There are a number of limitations in this study. Some of the limitations are inherent in the philosophy and principles of FGE, which I shall evaluate in detail in Chapter 6. I will, however, mention three limitations, all of which are at the foundations of FGE: ‘truth’ as a consensus, shared accountability and stakeholders’ voice. The first concerns the underlying philosophy that ‘truth is a matter of consensus among informed and sophisticated constructors, not of correspondence with on objective reality’ (Guba and Lincoln 1989:44). This view is consistent with constructivist epistemology but effectively turns the truth of falsity of a belief into a matter of social agreement. This view sits uncomfortably with my experience as a teacher and a trainer where often the group consensus construct of ‘truth’ may demonstrably not be the most enlightened or sophisticated but simply the easiest solution. This view is supported by Roszak (1969) who argues that researchers, in particular, need to share in this scepticism of consensus since it is their function to challenge the easy and self-perpetuating consensus that society creates for itself.
The second limitation concerns the concept of FGE sharing accountability. Guba and Lincoln suggest that FGE aims to be fair, non-discriminating and non-exploitative while enabling the status quo to be challenged and opening the way for change. This appears to be an ideal that cannot be achieved in a given socio-cultural context that has inherent discriminating and exploitative features. As Patton points out, ‘Genuinely collaborative approaches to research and evaluation require power sharing’ (Patton 2002: 183). Evaluation of courses in our institution and by Cambridge ESOL are typically top-down inspection and control approaches where the decision making power is retained by those ‘above’. There is no history (or confidence) in bottom–up initiated change. This evaluation framework is a step in flouting the status quo by empowering stakeholders. However, I suspect the distortion in power and status will disrupt participants’ orientations and could cause social and political confusion.

Finally Guba and Lincoln’s criterion of ‘fairness’ is a difficult criterion to meet. How can you ensure that each voice is heard or, more problematically, how do you cater for the voices that do not want to be heard as was an issue in the studies by Koch (2000) in nursing homes where the residents did not want to participate? The participation of stakeholders is partly motivated by practical arguments concerning the use of findings (recognition and acceptance of findings and commitment for change), but it is also implied in the value-laden issue of democracy: giving voice to those whose interests are at stake (Greene 1997).

It seems to me that the evaluation process the FGE framework implies is actually synonymous with a constructivist teaching methodology where the evaluator’s role is akin to that of trainer. The FGE approach relies on participant involvement where meaning is conveyed through practice and reflection with the evaluator as facilitator using a guided discovery inductive methodology. In this scenario issues such as consensus as truth, stakeholder accountability and voice are all perceived in relative terms within the socio-cultural context of the training event of which the evaluation process is but one component.
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Introduction
Part 1: Product focus: the claims, concerns and issues
Part 2: The results of the responsive evaluation
Part 3: The results for pedagogy

5.1 Introduction

The results of the evaluation are arranged in three sections as follows:

1. Part One analyses the claims, concerns and issues of stakeholders as depicted on the focus group posters as well as illustrating the points made with supporting excerpts from the focus group transcripts.
2. Part Two identifies four key areas where there were divergent views expressed between stakeholder groups and explores and comments on how the evaluation process responded to these opposing views.
3. Part Three analyses the nature of the interaction in the focus group discussions to examine group ‘talk’ in order to find evidence of learning.

Each section responds to one of the three research questions as depicted below:

![Evaluation model](image)

**Figure 8** Evaluation model

PART 1: Product focus: the claims, concerns and issues

In this first part of the results I focus on stakeholders’ perceptions of claims, concerns and issues regarding the ICELT course as summarised on their posters. What do the stakeholders (chiefly the course participants) say about the training course? What do they identify as claims, concerns and issues and more importantly why? How can our interpretation of the data lead to recommendations for improved course provision?
In order to frame the results I have exploited the Journey Metaphor, which I created as a tool to recategorise the generative data in order to encompass the multiple dimensional worlds of what teachers do, think and feel. The Journey Metaphor is not simply a means of providing a symbolic descriptive framework, a ‘journey’ represents a learning opportunity that encompasses the multi dimensional worlds of learning. I could equally have used any complex learning process as an appropriate metaphor such as learning a dance, performing a play or even writing a dissertation. Each of these tasks incorporate learning in the physical world (body); the cognitive world (mind) and the affective and individual world of personal and professional identity (soul) all set within a specific socio-cultural context. The rationale behind the Journey Metaphor therefore is to ensure that these multiple dimensions, grounded in the literature, are considered in my research findings. Our review of the literature implies that research focuses on a specific epistemological orientation; empirical-rationale based research emphasises evidence based learning (physical world); constructivist research emphasises the meaning making potential of interacting ideas (cognitive); while more recent research has focussed on affective factors and individual professional identity (spiritual) while further research highlights the influence of the socio-cultural context.

Figure 9  Journey metaphor

The principal emergent categories of the study are shown below:
Table 10  Levels of impact and findings.

5.2  Applied world: what teachers do

Like the Lion, who could not roar in the film of the Wizard of Oz, similarly course participants on a training course are expected to perform learning tasks that require acquiring or developing skills. The participants in their focus groups expressed concerns about writing assignments and the lack of clarity in the guidelines and assessment criteria while also expressing concerns about finding articles to cite in assignments. On the other hand participants complimented tasks such as peer observations, micro-teaching of classroom activities and participant-led presentations of articles as offering contextualised learning and demonstrable practical application to their teaching contexts.

5.2.1  Finding Articles (A1)

The issue of reading, or more specifically researching the literature is one that highlights the difference in perspective between stakeholder groups. The participants believed they needed more guidance in finding relevant articles. Tutors believed that these research skills needed to be developed and participants needed to take more responsibility for their own research, thereby instilling a degree of autonomy.
these, and other issues, were negotiated across the stakeholder groups is the focus of Results Part Two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s not easy to find relevant articles. Maybe we can be given / informed about some suggested reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The articles presented might serve as references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An articles list. Focussed reading list for each task.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the focus group discussions participants suggest various strategies to solve this that range from ‘An articles list’; to being, ‘informed about some suggested reading’ to a more directed ‘Focussed reading list for each task’. A further suggestion was that the Language Task 1 (in which participants present an article summary as part of the course) could be more closely dovetailed to provide references for other tasks and assignments. I shall examine some of the participants’ specific difficulties with accessing appropriate reading literature in detail by analyzing issues raised in the focus group discussions.

One of the criteria for tasks and assignments on the course is that the candidates demonstrate some reading and research and refer to references in their assignments. In the following extract Su Wong (FG:1) refers to this criteria and asserts that finding relevant references is not easy and suggests more collaboration and sharing of reading materials between participants. However Feryal states a counter view that reading should be much more directed and participants do not have time to ‘find’ articles for themselves:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>That’s the other thing.. getting sources for assignments is a challenge. It’s fun to find stuff and it’s great to be reading articles about teaching methodology but you know it’s not easy to find. I think maybe we need to be sharing articles amongst ourselves or if someone does a session they could find relevant articles about that session and that would help us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Then you can take them from that session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Yeah because you know in our sessions we have a lot of handouts, we take session notes but if we want to refer back to that in our assignment we can’t really – because we haven’t got anything concrete we can cite. That’s like the big challenge – writing assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>I don’t think we have enough time to research assignments in the library. We talked about this – that if anyone finds an article we would share but unfortunately</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Su Wong identifies the ‘challenge’ of getting sources for the assignments. She appears to accept the process of researching the literature for important strands and ideas is a useful (and in her words a ‘fun’) process. Contrast this with Feryal’s suggestion that tutors should provide ‘recommended readings’. The implication is that reading (or at least the process of researching the literature) is too time consuming, of little practical value (apart from the course necessity of citing sources) and teachers have more important things to do such as plan lessons. The difficulty of finding appropriate reading material and the lack of time to research the literature sufficiently is an issue also raised in the second focus group. However in this group the emphasis focuses on how to conduct a literature research.

In the next extract (FG2:33-40) Yonca instigates an inquiry about how to find references. She reiterates that it is not only a question of knowing how to access reading resources but also how to exploit these resources once they have been identified.

| 33 | Y | How do you find your references? That was my problem. |
| 34 | Se | Internet. I went to Amazon.com |
| 35 | Sh | We have some stuff in the library but not much. I’ve got some stuff that I already had but we don’t subscribe to that many journals and articles are easier because they’re shorter. You don’t have to hunt through a whole book and they are more relevant but we actually don’t have that many subscriptions |
| 36 | Y | My problem was when I have a task. How do I find an article that is exactly related to that one? OK. You go to Google and write it – but did I write the right thing? Did I go to the right place? I would be happier if I was more guided in that |
| 37 | Sh | Well at the beginning of the course they gave us a reading list. |
| 38 | Y | We have a list but it is huge. It’s hard to choose. |
| 39 | Sh | yeah we do have a list. |
| 40 | Y | But it is like you have to read 200 books. Yeah, that’s realistic! |

It appears that course tutors may take for granted that course participants have experience of reading about their profession and by extension know how to access appropriate reading material and extract the key information. However based on participants comments it appears this is not the case. A recommendation for future courses therefore could include explicit research skills in terms of accessing and exploiting the relevant literature.
5.2.2 Writing Assignments (A2)

The poster comments reveal that participants are concerned by the specifications, guidance and efficiency of the tutor feedback of the ICELT tasks and assignments. Properly conceived, the tasks and assignments aim to develop professional writing skills (a long term benefit in a profession that needs to express itself coherently), as well as providing evidence of progress. Written assignments serve both as an opportunity for training in writing and in the presentation of ideas and proposals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is good we have a chance to revise assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not clear instructions (so everybody had different interpretations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some of the assignments were not clear enough and confusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker feedback would be much better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it is allowed the criteria could be given before the assignments. It would help a lot while doing the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be a standard between tutors in terms of evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All stakeholders (participants, tutors and the Cambridge Moderator) expressed concerns about the clarity of the assignment guidelines and assessment criteria. It was an issue discussed in all the focus groups. The view expressed by Aysegul (FG3:103-104) that assignments were open to numerous interpretations was typical:

103 As the presentation of the assignment and the things we had to do wasn’t that clear.
104 As What is ‘Beyond the lesson’ I talked to 5 teachers and five teachers had different ideas and I talked to Tony and he gave me the course instructions and I followed them.

Course tutors agreed with participants that the assignment specifications in the Cambridge Syllabus Handbook could be clearer and believed that they needed more orientation of the assignment criteria prior to the course. This issue prompted some of the longest discussions in the focus groups. Annabelle, in the following extract (FG1:31) highlights her perception that the criteria is elusive and her ‘hitting’ on the appropriate response is random.

31 And we can have a checklist sheet – did you cover this, this and this in that paper. What does this word mean I don’t even know. Because sometimes I hit it and sometimes I don’t. And when I don’t, I don’t know why.

(FG1:31).

Similarly Seval in the following extract insists she wants to be shown what to do. Her desire is for detailed explanations of the assignments in class time and models or samples of effective assignments. She makes an analogy to a situation where she was teaching students how to write.
a CV explaining that she would show them one in order to convey the concept and to provide a model of structure and content.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Se I want more class time for these tasks. I want to look at examples. I want it all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Sh I want discussion too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Se More class time devoted to specific task – samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Sh You need to see a paper, see what it got and see why.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Se yeah at least two.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Y it would probably save time for the tutors too because we end up going to ask for..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Se I do ask for everything. I can tell you how to write a CV but until you see it you can’t visualise it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of how these ’concerns‘ about assignment criteria raised by participants were responded to by the course tutors and Cambridge within the FGE evaluation provide the focus for part two of the results chapter.

Evidently the participants found writing assignments and tasks both difficult and time consuming and as most of them were writing in a foreign language and being assessed this contributed to their anxieties. In addition to improving the assignment guidelines and ensuring course tutors are appropriately oriented prior to the course, recommendations for future courses could include developing writing skills ‘per se’. Writing of assignments needs to be collaborative with participants actively encouraged to share their work at the drafting and development stages, and to practise offering feedback and suggestions to each other to provide peer support and encourage autonomy.
5.2.3 Peer Observations / Articles presentations (A3)

Participants responded more positively to aspects of the course that were practical and had a direct relevance to their classroom teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical examples (warmers and ideas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm up activities and article presentations were really useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer observations were nice and informative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specifically, participants appreciated the ‘warmer’ activities, which were ten-minute microteaching demonstrations of a classroom activity:

| 1 | T | The warm ups and the presentations. They were useful. |
| 2 | Z | We had the chance to learn about many different warmers |

Peer observations in which participants observe each other’s lessons and complete a reflective task:

| 46 | S | Oh as a positive thing I would say the peer observations are useful to me. Seeing what other people do. It can be really isolating in the classroom when you are doing your thing. You feel stuck and you think there must be another way – but what could it possibly be. |

and article presentations in which participants read an article and present a brief summary (six minutes) to the group:

| 59 | Y | Apart from that I think the nice part is people talking. Like you present things. It’s better for me to see you present things rather than somebody telling us these are the rules of a good presentation. If I see it I’ll understand it. What to do – about your presentation. |
| 60 | Se | Absolutely. |
| 61 | Y | So that was good – people presenting. |

Participants therefore advocate methods that offer contextualised learning or enable them to see the practical applications of activities. This finding is supported by research that shows practical based methodology can be an effective way of promoting teacher development as it enables teachers to make content meaningful by relating experience to their own knowledge of teaching and learning (Bax 1995; Clarke 1994; Day 1999; Kwakman 2002)
5.2.4 Reflection

Reflecting on my own learning journey I recognised early in this research project the need for action, doing tasks, before theorising. I accessed articles, followed up themes in the literature, organised and conducted the focus groups, transcribed the tape scripts and I completed all these tasks with a sense of purpose and accomplishment but without any real understanding of why I was doing it. Essentially I was blindly and faithfully following the recommended procedure as laid down in the methodology literature. It was several years of reflection later that a personal conception of what the data could mean was slowly (and sometimes painfully) formulated. It was then that I started to re-read articles I had failed to comprehend or consider relevant years earlier in a different light.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14/2/07: Journal Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is teaching? Is it primarily thinking or doing? Do we learn by consciously reflecting on action or do we learn through action? This relationship between thought and action is like the distinction between the real and dream worlds. How can we link our internal and external worlds?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Cognitive level: what teachers think

Unlike the Scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz who lost his brain, as we proceed on our journey we are attempting to use our mental faculties to ‘make sense’ of our experiences. We reflect on the journey so far and plan, visualise and imagine the route ahead. We may also discuss and analyse other travellers’ oral or written accounts of the same, similar or other journeys to help us conceptualise our own journey. In this section we consider what teachers think, in other words we examine the cognitive world and the role of reflection in teacher learning. As the conception of cognition is all encompassing, (after all teachers can ‘think’ about just about anything), this section perhaps is more accurately about how teachers ‘make sense’ of their experiences. In this section I shall examine first the participants’ reflection on their practice, then their comments relating theory to practice and in the final section their comments on the process of sharing and interacting as a group.

5.3.1 Reflection on practice (R1)

The primary resource of teacher trainers is experience, both our participants’ and our own. Trainers work on experience in two ways: previous experience people bring to the
course and shared experience of activities on the course. As I mentioned before, it helps me to picture experience as a route through the landscape some of which has been travelled and is therefore familiar and some of it yet to be explored.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We couldn’t be so sure how to apply what we study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing the activity / seeing how they work helps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing reflections after observations were useful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These complementing comments demonstrate participants need to conceptualise ideas in terms of classroom application. The proposition that teachers need to perceive the practical relevance of content is supported in the literature. Gunstone and Northfield (1992), for example, assert that ‘the development of metacognitive skills and knowledge must be in the context of learning tasks perceived by learners to be appropriate and valuable’. Vonk (1991) too reports training procedures involving problem solving strategies based on systematic reflection. The implications are that training environments should be as similar as possible to the environment in which the knowledge and skills are to be used. A review of adult learning theories reaches similar conclusions to the literature on teacher education and development. Grossman (1992), for example, argues that teachers must be able to situate new knowledge and understanding within the specific contexts of their classrooms (see also Feiman-Nemser, 1983). They must also be able to see connections between their learning and their everyday work. Finally, they must be able to resolve tensions between abstract principles and the complexity of classroom practice (Cohen 1994; Lampert 1984).

5.3.2 Theory: relevance / integrated (R2)

In the previous section comments highlighted the need for training to be grounded in practice with input demonstrably relevant to the classroom. However training courses cannot only theorise from experience and ignore public theory completely. There must be exploration of the wider rationale underlying practice if the training is not to become a ritual of routines (almost a form of brainwashing). The comments in this section tackle the issue of theoretical input and highlight two key areas: in order to make sense of concepts introduced on the course there needs to be a transparent organisation where topics are firstly related to classroom application and secondly to each other in an integrated and coherent manner. Participants, as the poster comments reveal, are ‘baffled’ when these connections are not clear.
Collated comments from the posters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creates awareness / keeps us thinking.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic – an activity related to topic helps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More input in the sessions is needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things are thrown at students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lots of different things going on at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m baffled about what I am doing. Things could be applied to the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course could be more integrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last term was a little more vague, not very clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The confusion depicted on the posters (as implied by comments such as ‘things are thrown at students’, ‘I’m baffled’) are related to participants failing to make links between concepts explored on the course and their own personal theories based on experience in the classroom. In other words it is the familiar gap relating theory to practice. In the following excerpt Sheila (FG2:11-18) states that there should be more explicit links between the course components:

| 11 | Sh | You don’t get the chance usually. I think the topics are useful. I mean the areas, material they’ve chosen. I don’t agree with the other groups that the structure is useful. At the moment it has been good because we have had the lexis as a chunk – the focus has been on lexis and that’s great but I think it would be really good if we had a topic where the assignments and peer observations were reflected to the topic. |
| 12 | Y | More integrated you mean. |
| 13 | Sh | yeah that’s what I’m trying to say because that means you can have readings and theory when you are doing an assignment. |
| 14 | Y | yeah it’s kind of thrown at you. |
| 15 | Sh | It feels random in a way. I know it’s not random but having lots of different things going on is for me really disorienting. |
| 16 | Y | me too. |
| 17 | Sh | I find it stressful but if it were more integrated we could recycle vocabulary, develop our ideas, we could have discussions and see classes related to that and do observations related to that would be useful. |
| 18 | Y | We did it sort of – but not really. |

FG2:11-18

Sheila is advocating a more coherent link between the topics on the course (i.e. lexis) and the tasks participants need to perform such as teaching practice and peer observations.

Another area of integration that is discussed in all the focus groups is the integration of theory and practice. Sheila (FG2:41) explains how she is ‘shocked’ by the theory. She explains her perspective.

| 41 | Sh | One of the reasons I did this course was I thought it was going to be practical related directly to what we are doing in the classroom. I didn’t actually expect to do more theory. So that was a bit of a shock to me because I thought it was going to be... I understand linking |
Day (1999) argues that there is, indeed, a common perception among teachers that there is a theory–practice gap in teacher education programmes where the former is considered to be less useful or relevant to their job than the latter. This viewpoint is supported by research findings where teachers describe INSET programmes as excessively theoretical and not relevant to what goes on in the classroom (Farrell 1999; McDonald, Badger and White 2000). Other writers (for example, Griffiths and Tann 1992; Williams 1998) do not perceive a dichotomy between theory and practice. In contrast they make a distinction between public theory and private theories (Eraut, 1994). Public theories are ‘systems of ideas published in books, discussed in classes and accompanied by critical literature that expands, interprets, and challenges their meaning and validity’. On the other hand, private theories, are ‘ideas in people’s minds which they use to interpret or explain their experience’ (Eraut, 1994: 70).

Personally it helps me to visualise knowledge (or perhaps more precisely learning) as the route through the landscape. There are experts who have travelled the route many times and have documented and mapped certain sections (public theory) but there are also novice travellers who have explored isolated parts of the landscape and still need to make connections between what they know and the expert’s public theory before they can work out their route. As Barth (1991) explains, the knowledge of the expert is organised in a far more complex way than a novice. In this scenario a trainer’s role, therefore, is to help novice travellers to become aware of their existing surroundings, to organise this information to make connections to map out a route, and to reshape this route in the light of understandings gained from more experienced others which are personally significant. In other words the trainer is like a guide who helps the novice traveller traverse the more unfamiliar terrain. However guides, maps, stories, explanations are no substitute for experiencing the journey itself. This appears to be Widdowson’s (1990) conception when he explodes the artificial dichotomy between theory and practice by stating that:

the relationship between theory and practice, ideas and their actualization, can only be realised within the domain of application, that is, through the immediate activity of teaching (Widdowson 1990:30)

Certain recommendations follow. Poster comments highlight that this course failed to meet the need for concepts to be made relevant to the participants and presented in a
coherent and integrated manner. Recommendations for future courses, based on the participants’ comments, derive from recognising that the starting point for the training encounter has to be experience. Abstract ideas and processes mean little to participants without the concrete reference point of personal history or shared experience. Active exploration of previous experience leads quite naturally to – some may say *is* – reflection. Activity in a training session should always incorporate or be followed by reflection. Bolitho (2007) describes reflection as the stepping back from an activity (which is doing in nature) to a process of thinking. There is also a need to actively structure and sequence training activity over periods of time as well as single sessions. Training can become a series of ‘one-off’ events particularly when topics are distributed and allocated to different tutors as is often depicted on a typical training course timetable.

### 5.3.3 Reflection through interaction and sharing (R3)

A number of posters mentioned ‘discussions’, ‘sharing’, ‘talk’ and ‘hearing other people’s ideas’. The significance of social interaction in learning is well documented with proponents such as Vygotsky and Bruner contending that learning occurs through social interactions with others. Grossman et al (2001) also contend further that collegiality is a crucial element in learning to teach. To learn, teachers need feedback on what they are actually doing as they teach. They need to understand fully the rationales and consequences of their actions. Like Shulman (1989), Little (1990), and Feiman-Nemser (1983), she argues that learning with other teachers provides an important source of new ideas and feedback from practice.
Collated comments from the posters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing / peer observations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post presentation discussions about the relevance of the articles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing ideas about peer observations would be a good idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need to talk about how to use the information and hear the ideas of the teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Poster comments indicate a need for more time to talk things through, to explore each other’s experiences, values and so on. Bolitho (2008) claims that training which explicitly draws upon participants personal theories and the capacity to theorise is likely to be perceived as more relevant. Sharing experiences increases our awareness of personal values, attitudes and beliefs and their influence on our teaching and training. It also enables us to see that education is value-laden, hence the lack of single answers and the passion with which practitioners pursue it. In the Results Part 3 we analyse the focus group interactions in order to test the proposition that such discussions and interactions can indeed lead to learning and more sophisticated constructions.

5.3.4 Reflection

I am a career language teacher and teacher trainer dipping only occasionally into the less familiar world of academia and the Emerald City of knowledge. I have experienced, particularly in the last seven years of this research project, the alienation of the concepts and discourse, my inability to find a ‘voice’ in this foreign landscape. I read the literature of the academics who are familiar with the terrain and should be able to guide me on my road, but the landscape they describe is often beyond my comprehension.

9/6/08: Journal Reflection

My supervisor says my dissertation lacks academic rigour. It is not theoretically substantive! But – what is ‘theory’? Is theory not simply a metaphor? The symbolic interpretation of practice? An attempt to ‘make sense’ from ’what happens’ or understood while theory is a simplification or representation and easily misunderstood.what is experienced. This means that practice is whole but not fully
5.4 Personal level: what teachers feel and believe

Our journey is not experienced purely on a physical level like a ball rolling down a hill. Neither is it solely experienced in our minds lived out as a dream or fantasy. Rather each individual lives and reacts to the journey in a personal and unique manner (unlike the Tin Man in the Wizard of Oz who had no heart and lacked the capacity to feel). In this section we examine how teachers feel about the training course in terms of involvement, affective factors, and their views of the tutors and their expectations.

5.4.1 Involvement (P 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s good to be involved in the sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s good to feel our ideas and input are important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We wish we had a chance to give feedback face to face to Tom instead of recording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quality of learning is profoundly influenced by the involvement of individuals in the educational encounter. Senior (2008) suggests that teachers respond to the level of response they receive from their learners. When teaching or training experiences are memorable, we feel a part of a shared experience.

The recommendations that follow are that participants should be the preferred starting point in training courses. They possess a system of beliefs, attitudes and values about teaching and learning, and about how people relate to each other in a variety of contexts. They also come with experience. Participants need to invest personally in the course by making it relevant to their own pressing concerns. In order to do this, participants need to reach into their past experience and current ideas and beliefs by sharing experiences in the training context.

Although the ICELT has a set syllabus and pre-determined assessment criteria, ideally it would be beneficial to involve participants in setting as much of the course as possible. A totally imposed syllabus and framework often alienates participants particularly on post-experience courses, when they already have a well-defined position in the profession. Participants often come to courses with set agendas and expectations, and the quality of the group experience can be enhanced by collective work on learning agendas.
5.4.2 Affective factors (P2)

Clearly individuals react to the pressure of a training course in different ways. Some of the psychological pressures are an inevitable element of any educational context.

### Collated comments from the posters

**Stress factor.**

The debilitating effect of stress is self-explanatory. Berna describes how the burden of course work induces feelings of depression while Antoin claims that he feels guilt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>95</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>The course is depressing because the amount of work they are expecting on you is not easy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>An</td>
<td>There’s the guilt factor. You feel guilty if you haven’t done it. I feel a great weight of guilt on my shoulders and that’s kind of.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.3 Expectations / needs (P3)

The poster comments indicate, and analysis of the focus groups’ transcripts reiterates, that for many of the participants there was frustration as the course did not live up to their expectations and, in their opinion, did not meet their needs.

### Collated comments from the posters

- Can content be improved according to the needs of the teachers?
- The expectations of us can be clearer.
- Different expectations (given references and time for academic study).

In this extract Antoin complains how the course is not satisfying his expectations. The sub text suggests that he expected the course to be more practical (he compares it with the previous year’s INSET course) and less demanding cognitively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>… but I just don’t have time to read articles. It’s just too much work. I don’t have time to do background reading. It’s a struggle to keep up with our job. It’s a big problem for me and I feel overwhelmed by the course. I think last year’s INSET course was very practical with just a little touch of theory and I think we were expecting something much more similar to that than what we are getting now which a large proportion of it is quite academic in the sense that some of it is similar to the DELTA course and that’s quite different from what I was expecting. It’s great to do that.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>I thought the same it would be more like INSET.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The literature identifies many influences that help shape the conceptions of a teachers’ professional identity and consequently the way in which they perceive their needs: personal experience as students and teachers (Freeman and Johnson 1998; Johnson 1984; Claudinin and Conolley 1988); values and beliefs about teachers and learning
(Pajares 1994); contextual factors (Freeman 1996; Johnson 1999 in Johnson 2000) as well as differences in teachers’ perceptions of skills pedagogy (Freeman and Johnson 1998). Moreover, needs related to context reflect the necessity for the topics of teacher education events to be linked to the particular classroom settings where teachers work (Hargreaves and Fullan 1992; Lewis 2000).

As Bolitho (2008:50) explains:

participants arrive on courses with a vast range of expectations about the work they are going to do, what they hope to achieve, relationships with other participants, with trainers and so on. (Bolitho 2008: 50)

It is important that these expectations are acknowledged early in the course. Tutors, and further up the hierarchy Cambridge, also have their expectations and mandated agenda about the training programme which needs to be explained. Trainers have a degree of power over course content and direction. A danger is that they direct covertly without making their intentions plain.

A recommendation that follows is that it should be recognised that the way tutors choose to operate may disappoint some expectations. Tutors need to explain their training methodology and not act defensively. The tutor’s beliefs about training should be discussed and even questioned. Openness, although hard to achieve, is central to effective practice in a training context.

5.4.4 Reflection

How do I reflect on my learning journey? Exhilaration, and even joy, at having an epiphany as a conceptualising framework dramatically appears in my mind, sadness, tears and loss at the death of my father, sitting for hours at cold bus stops, visiting and being in hospitals, pain after an operation, fear of failure, determination to succeed, these are some of the experiences that have shaped my research journey. These experiences and how I react to them is who I am.
1/8/08: Journal Reflection

All experience is a physical, mental or spiritual manifestation or a combination of all three. Whereas theory is a metaphor in the sense that it is a conceptualisation transformed into words of an experience. There is an absence in most academic literature of reference to the concept of spirituality (soul), in its stead there is the concept of an emancipatory critical force which implies a moral political agenda of righting wrongs and overthrowing power structures. However in my experience of writing this dissertation it was my inner sense of ‘self’, my feelings and reactions to affective concerns and an ability to draw on internal powers of determination and conviction that were prime in seeing me to completion.

5.5 Socio-cultural level: the context

We do not travel our journey in isolation. There is the ever-changing landscape filled with physical features, vegetation and wild life. There are also our fellow travellers who accompany us on our journey.

5.5.1 The environment (L1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging (Tom and institution).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What we are doing encourages us to do better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing and caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very positive atmosphere people are very supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was respect and understanding</td>
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</table>

Poster comments related to the cultural environment of the training course are positive. This contrasts with much of the literature that suggests that school cultures allow, if not foster, individualism at the expense of teacher growth (Rosenholtz 1989). Collaborative work cultures that actively promote teacher development are in the minority, and are held together by the extraordinary efforts of a few (Guskey 1995). In this extract Aysegul describes how in her previous institution she felt isolated and unsupported in her attempts to develop as a teacher, she claims that the attitude in this institution to teacher development is encouraging and unusual.
As if it is only you it is even more difficult. I have been doing some training courses since I started teaching and it was only me in those institutions doing something… nobody shows interest. I am somehow isolated. But now this another encouragement for me that the school gives that kind of importance.

Absolutely. That is a big positive.

And they encourage us. So I believe we are lucky.

Absolutely.

One way or another teachers want to improve their knowledge. They want to share.

And other teachers are helping us.

It’s the first institution in Turkey doing such things. I know Bilkent has that kind of training but in a way it is compulsory. This wasn’t compulsory it was through our own will.

It is well documented that the socio-cultural context plays a powerful and dynamic and often negative influence on the effectiveness of a professional development programme. (Crandall et al, 1982; Fullan 1991; McLaughlin 1990). Guskey (1995) adds that the price of ignoring the context of teaching is failed idealism, guilt and frustration at not being able to meet the standards, criticism of teachers who fail to make changes, and erratic leaping from one innovation bandwagon to another.

A recommendation that follows concerns the importance of talk. The FGE process aims to offer an opportunity to air conflicting attitudes under the generative categories of claims, concerns and issues. The level of openness will to some extent depend on the self-awareness of the group and their willingness to voice opinions. New ideas take time to process. Talk aids this progress. Any device (such as the FGE) which lowers social barriers and opens up channels of communication is going to be of potential value to a learning community.

8/6/08: Journal Reflection

There is no destination without reference to where I am now. I can only describe my current location and the road I have travelled. My supervisor says I need to start writing and tell my story. How can I tell my story if I don’t know what the story is? There are people who have completed this trail who can help me stay on the path but they cannot travel it for me. Theory is like reading about the terrain ahead. I can imagine it, conceptualise it but only with reference to what I already know. If the terrain is beyond my experience it is incomprehensible, of no practical relevance and only accessible in an unreal fantasy world. Education, like a journey, is non-transmissible. Knowledge starts from within.
5.5.2 The people (L2)

Although not mentioned on the posters, the importance of a group dynamic and a positive group atmosphere was discussed in one of the focus groups in which participants describe their feelings about the group and the atmosphere on the course.

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<td>11</td>
<td>Ta</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>T</td>
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</table>

Comments on the posters relating to ‘people’ expressed three propositions; firstly that having a variety of instructors was positive; second, only Tom as a tutor was singled out and complimented by name on the posters and finally there was a critical comment suggesting that ‘presenters’ were ill prepared and lacking in expertise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s nice to have different instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different people presenting gave us new ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Especially Tom’s sessions were great and useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We love Tom he is great.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some presenters should prepare more and they should improve themselves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On reflection it became clear that one of the main problems on this course was the inexperience of the tutors and the lack of time to effectively orientate the tutors to the requirements of the ICELT course. The reason there was a high proportion of different tutors providing input on the course was less to do with providing variety and diverse perspectives and more to do with sharing the workload. Although not mentioned on the posters, having two young, Turkish, relatively inexperienced tutors in training caused social and political disharmony and this feature is explained and analysed when we examine the focus group transcripts in part three. Tulin (FG4:40-43) criticises tutors for their lack of preparation and professionalism:
The posters are interesting in terms of what is not recorded as well as what is. Communication can be a problem in any training group, particularly one in which there is diversity of background, culture, previous learning experience. The problem is exacerbated when the course is conducted in English and this is not the native language of all the participants and oral and written proficiency can vary. Miscommunication is always possible and can block progress in a groups’ social development and can be a barrier to learning. There were a number of communication problems in this group that will be analysed in part three.

5.5.3 Time (L3)

A key theme running through the focus groups was the constraint of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collated comments from the posters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More class time devoted to tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time to – read: to type: to do peer observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can it be a two year course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some sessions were a waste of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this extract (FG3:23) Aysegul paints herself as someone constantly rushing to keep up with her work load and having no time for a social life or even to eat properly.

A solution offered by Yonca and supported by colleagues was to double the course length (FG3: 76-78)
The attitudes to time of different stakeholders and how the issue was negotiated on the training course is addressed in results part two.

5.6 Conclusion

The FGE process uncovered key claims, concerns and issues of the principle stakeholders and these have been summarised in this section. I re-categorised the generative data into three learning worlds grounded in epistemological shifts identified in the literature as well as utilizing the metaphor of learning as a journey. These worlds represent our physical, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions as illustrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning World</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Spiritual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of learning</td>
<td>What teachers do Experenced reality</td>
<td>What teachers think Idealised self</td>
<td>What teachers feel Awareness of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemology</td>
<td>Empirical / Behaviourist</td>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Humanism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I also highlighted the influence of the socio-cultural context (the landscape) in influencing teacher learning. This influence can perhaps be transcended in the mental and spiritual worlds but is pervasive in the physical world.

It was clear from the data that stakeholders’ perceptions of the course as whole varied considerably. Cambridge ESOL’s perception, as evidenced in both the Chief Moderator’s and Moderator’s report, was complimentary of the course content and delivery and acknowledged the course satisfied the mandate in all areas describing the course as ‘highly successful’. Course tutors in contrast, in their focus group discussion, acknowledged their lack of familiarity with the ICELT scheme, their inexperience as trainers and recognised many areas where the course could be improved in future courses (most of these recommendations are included in this chapter). Finally course participants’ perception of the ICELT course, evident in both the focus groups and in a final summative evaluation questionnaire, was uniformly damning and negative. Criticisms ranged from a lack of organisation and coherence of the syllabus to tutor incompetence to deliver the course.
The aim of the FGE as Guba and Lincoln (1989) state is not to form a set of conclusions, recommendations, or value judgements, but rather an agenda for negotiation of those claims, concerns and issues through hermeneutic dialectic exchanges. How these stakeholder ‘constructs’ were negotiated through the hermeneutic dialectic process is the focus of the next section.

28/1/09: Journal Reflection

Many people have travelled the Yellow Brick road. Their knowledge can be passed on to other travellers. The road, the landscape, even the Wizard exists. This is a product view of knowledge.

These public accounts may or may not be helpful to travellers. Much will depend on individual travellers’ needs and reasons for following the yellow brick road. You can experience the journey on different levels but as the wizard himself explains, ‘The answer lies within’.

PART 2: The results of the responsive evaluation
5.7 Introduction

It is opportune to start this section by re-iterating the principles of the FGE hermeneutic dialectic process. As explained by Guba and Lincoln, the purpose is to form a connection between stakeholders’ constructions that allows their mutual exploration.

The aim of the process is to reach a consensus when that is possible. All parties are thus simultaneously educated (because they achieve new levels of information and sophistication) and empowered. (Guba and Lincoln 1989: 149)

In this section we explore to what extent the hermeneutic dialectic process achieved these aims in our evaluation study.

The ‘responsive’ feature of the evaluation process therefore refers to the procedure where findings are fed back to stakeholder groups to ultimately improve the quality of the INSET programme. The evaluation procedure assumes that through this process of interaction between stakeholders ‘more sophisticated constructs’ will develop. In other words each stakeholder group (in our case course participants, tutors and Cambridge ESOL) have an opportunity to interact with the claims, concerns and issues of the other groups in order to raise awareness of issues across stakeholder groups and provide an opportunity for mutual discussion and consensus and allow for programme improvements to be made.

There are a number of issues raised and then discussed across stakeholder groups. I have selected four such areas for analysis. These areas represent an example from each of the elements of the Journey metaphor – applied, cognitive, personal and socio-cultural as illustrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applied World</th>
<th>Reading Resources / ELT Terminology</th>
<th>Knowing ‘How to’ skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive World</td>
<td>Assignment guidelines and assessment criteria</td>
<td>Knowing about / interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual World</td>
<td>Sharing and interacting through ‘talk’.</td>
<td>Knowing who we are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Perceptions of the context.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 The journey metaphor and areas for analysis

5.8 The Applied World

Firstly there is the concerns from course participants for ‘how to’ knowledge and skills. In other words skills that will enable them to complete the training programme
effectively. The two areas I will explore are: how to use ELT terminology appropriately; and how to find relevant articles and other sources. Generally in the focus groups course participants request more support and guidance from tutors in these areas. These contrast with the stance of tutors whose pedagogic philosophy is more inquiry oriented and encourages a ‘try to work it out for yourself’ approach.

The first example appears to demonstrates the ‘responsive’ nature of the evaluation process working with some degree of success. In the first focus group there was a concern about the quantity of EFL terminology (jargon) being introduced on the course.

Something I would like is the verbiage. When I am writing tasks I don’t know what words they are expecting some form of jargon. I think it would be good in a session to go over some of those words. We can learn them. (FG1:28)

The poster was analysed by the course tutors. The tutors suggested constructing a vocabulary wall, which consisted of poster papers along one side of the training room, where new terminology that arose in input sessions or from readings could be added on a weekly basis. In the second focus group learning terminology was added to the ‘claims’ column of the poster. The process is illustrated over (Fig. 10).
The issue of EFL terminology was not raised in subsequent focus groups. The jargon wall was conceived of by the tutors as a pragmatic solution to the first focus group’s expressed concern about the amount of terminology the course was generating. The jargon wall appeared to demonstrate the responsive evaluation process working efficiently with tutors responding appropriately to stakeholders’ concerns. This kind of immediate practical response to concerns raised in the focus groups could be seen as a pragmatic and effective response to cater for participants’ stated needs. However, from another perspective, the jargon wall represents a superficial measure (papering over cracks) and does not address the real issues (that some participants were unfamiliar with terminology used in input sessions and introduced in much of the literature they were required to read). The idea had been for participants to use the jargon wall autonomously by adding new terminology as and when it emerged on the course. However, without tutor prompting this did not happen and after a few weeks the jargon wall fell into disuse, although the issue of too much terminology was not raised in the focus groups again. This episode demonstrates that simply ‘responding’ to participants’ claims is not sufficient, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the response are more important factors.
Similarly, as stated in the previous section, a major concern expressed in the focus groups was the difficulty of accessing appropriate reading sources and this led to discussion as to the amount of guidance the tutors should be providing. Essentially the participants believed they needed more guidance in finding relevant articles. Tutors, on the other hand, believed that these research skills needed to be developed and participants needed to take more responsibility for their own research and develop a degree of autonomy. Finally Cambridge were concerned primarily that the resources were available rather than stipulating how or if they were being effectively exploited. The following diagram illustrates the issues as explored across the stakeholder groups.

**Figure 11  Reading Articles**

An issue here is whether the students should be guided or whether their autonomy needs to be respected. The issue of ‘how to access reading material’ elicited different
perceptions from stakeholders. These were voiced and discussed across stakeholder groups. However at the end of the hermeneutic dialectic process I do not believe that there had been any genuine negotiation of ideas or sharing of constructions resulting in more educated and empowered stakeholders. On the contrary views appeared to become more entrenched.

5/8/09: Journal Reflection

Learning involves two journeys. The external journey takes us out of ourselves to consider abstractions, metaphor and generalisations. We travel this road to discover rationale objective meaning. The internal journey takes us down into our inner selves to consider who we are, our inner desires, our identity. We travel this road to discover our inner subjective truth. ‘I think therefore I am’ is paradoxical as thinking is what we do to come out of ourselves.

5.9 The Cognitive World

Diverse opinions emerged among stakeholders in terms of training pedagogy. There is a stark difference of emphasis between the participants desire for a more deductive, product approach: show me exactly what to do and I will do it; and the trainer’s preference for a more process oriented, inductive methodology in which the learners first attempt the task autonomously for themselves and then get feedback. These differences of perception emerged in focus group discussion in terms of ‘making sense’ of the assignment criteria. However in terms of the actual need for more clarity and orientation in terms of assignment criteria and assessment procedures course participants and course tutors were in broad agreement.
Equally the tutors and the ‘tutors in training’ in their focus groups expressed concern about their own understanding of the syllabus, the course structure, and the guidelines and marking criteria for the assignments. Tutors expressed a desire to have more ‘norming’ sessions and checklists for grading while the two tutors in training, both non-native speakers, were concerned whether they were qualified to grade native speakers on language related tasks and comment on pronunciation.
This problem prompted two of the longest turns in the focus groups (FG1:31-37). Su Wong states she appreciates the value of feedback on assignments and then questions whether the negative feedback is due to her lack of knowledge or the way the assignment was set up. This extract demonstrates that the underlying learning methodology of Annabelle, in particular, is to view the assignments from a pragmatic (applied) perspective, very much a ‘jumping through hoops’ approach as both participants stress the task elements of drafting, proof-reading and following criteria.

This is a good paper. Why?

32 S In that sense getting the first assignment back is really good because the feedback like on the language used and also what we could cite with sources about.. but at the same time with a lot of the feedback I’ve gotten I don’t know if I don’t follow directions very well but I always find something new about the assignment that I wasn’t aware of. And that kind of makes me feel a little weird. What happens is I end up not knowing if I am the reason why or if its just not set up or if I was expected to find out the info on my own and I just didn’t do that.

33 A I think it is a mixture of both because I felt the same thing. I’m reading what’s expected. I think in my own mind I’m doing what’s expected. It’s turned back – it needs extra things. I didn’t know about these extra things. So I asked Tony what can I do. He said finish the first draft, give it to Belgin, give it to myself – let them proof read it than they’ll give you comments take it back do a second draft and turn it in. That’s what I did because I am lost too. Belgin talking about planning beyond and that was clear maybe each of them could be explained more than just giving an example – here’s a distinction paper, merit paper, pass.

These are things we are looking for, Here’s a check list.

34 S This is a good paper. Why?

35 A we have to explain clearly what is expected.

36 F So assignment criteria...

37 A And what the expectations of us are – visually and written down maybe.

Re-reading this extract I can empathise with Su Wong as her sentiments so much reflect how I often feel writing this dissertation.
As course participants and course tutors were in broad agreement about the need for more clarity and guidance from Cambridge, it was possible to draw up a list of recommendations. These recommendations were presented to the Cambridge Moderator and as a result norming and standardisation of selected assignments became a key item on the agenda for the ICELT Symposium (a meeting of course tutors from ICELT centres in the Balkans and environs described in the methodology chapter).

However, although these issues were raised and discussed in the dialectic meeting, the Cambridge Moderators had a very different perception of the clarity of the assignment guidelines and the application of the assessment criteria as is evidenced from the following evaluation reports:

Excerpt from the Moderator’s Report

Section 3: Assignments and Language Tasks

3.2 Were the written assignments set up and marked in a way that is in line with the requirements and ICELT assessment criteria? YES

3.3 Were the marking criteria made clear to the candidates? YES

3.4 Was the marking useful and appropriate? YES

3.5 Was double marking used to promote standardisation among tutors? YES

3.6 Were the written assignment and language tasks where appropriate graded in line with the ICELT assessment criteria? YES

‘Marking was detailed and appropriate and useful feedback was given to candidates’.

Excerpt from the Chief Moderator’s Report

‘The course seems to have been very well run, with particular strengths evident in the amount and quality of feedback, both on written assignments and teaching.

The Moderator’s agenda is to evaluate whether the centre is applying the mandate, not whether the mandate criteria is appropriate.

Although the dialectic process described does not achieve the stakeholder consensus and re-negotiated meaning that Guba and Lincoln envisaged in their FGE model, it does however involve the juxtaposition of conflicting ideas and represents an opportunity for a stone to be thrown into the ICELT pond by participants and to allow the ripple to move in a bottom-up manner to be discussed in other groups and forums and this may be the most a responsive-constructivist evaluation can realistically hope for. In this
study, although the methodology stimulated stakeholders to reflect on and explore their positions and practices in response to other stakeholders, it did not force reconsideration of previous postures or motivate change. Indeed in depth discussion remained within stakeholder groups (tutors at the ICELT symposium) rather than meaningful discussion across stakeholder groups.

27/7/09: Journal Reflection

Understanding does not develop instantly like a Polaroid film neither does it develop fully, there are always tantalizing parts that are out of camera shot.

My supervisor is encouraging about my dissertation – but I am not sure why. ‘It makes sense’, he says. Most accounts of teachers’ knowledge suggest such a monological view of knowledge. It makes sense or it doesn’t make sense. In my experience as a trainer this is rarely the case. A concept can be placed on a long cline from making no sense, some sense or to a lot of sense depending on a whole range of factors.
5.10 The Spiritual World

Sharing and interacting – what do participants say about the nature of ‘talk’?

A common theme in the focus groups concerned the role of talk on the training course and how ideas should be shared. This was first raised in the focus groups and became a theme of the ICELT Symposium.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group 1</th>
<th>Focus Group 2</th>
<th>Focus Group 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Sharing ideas about peer observations and after presentations would be good.’</td>
<td>‘More discussion between teachers.’</td>
<td>‘Sharing and caring. Team building.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion after presentations and peer observations are encouraged so the tutors agreed to re-instate the course policy.

DECISION TAKEN AT THE ICELT SYMPOSIUM

- The need for facilitation of communication and discussion between moderators;
- The need for more communication for centres, tutors and moderators from CESOL on ICELT developments. The suggestion was for
  - a regular ICELT mailing / newsletter to centres, tutors and moderators on key issues;
  - an ICELT on-line discussion group;
  - the publication / availability of examiners’ reports (as for DELTA / CELTA);
  - more meetings / Symposia like this one for standardisation, sharing and discussion purposes.

Further to the last point, Bilkent University have offered to host a similar ICELT Symposium in a year’s time. Everyone agreed that this was an excellent proposal. An email discussion group is also to be started including all participants at the Symposium.

Figure 14 Communication and interaction

In the past, Fullan (2001) suggests, if you asked someone in a successful enterprise what caused the success, the answer was ‘It’s the people’. But that, he claims, is only partly true: it is actually the relationships between the people that make the difference.
The importance of open communication and increased interaction among teachers appears desirable. The principle is that more development is likely when teaching staff are in collaboration than when working autonomously. Indeed Fullan (2001) goes on to propose that the process of interaction itself creates knowledge and that attending too closely to information alone overlooks the social context that helps people understand what that information might mean and why it matters.

However teachers are by nature autonomous. Teachers are possessive of their classroom space. Teachers are insular in their style and methods. This is evidenced on this training course when trainee teachers admit great difficulty sharing ideas for planning lessons’ sharing articles, discussion and peer reviewing assignments. Collaboration between teachers is rarely successful and, if it is, it tends to be short term. This contention was forwarded by Cohen and Hill (2001) who conducted a study to improve mathematics teaching and found that norms of collaboration among teachers is weak and that collaboration does not necessarily mean new ideas flourish.

Is interaction on its own is not enough to stimulate knowledge and development? This is the focus of the next section when we analyse the interactions in the focus groups to find evidence of learning.

5.11 The Socio-cultural context

Both Focus Group 3 and the course tutors noted on their posters the stress involved in the limited time to do the course work due to pressure of work load. This was an issue that emerged in all the focus group transcripts, course participants perceived the restricted time period of the course as a major constraint in their ability to complete the course satisfactorily. The tutors response was one of sympathy and empathy and resulted in more flexibility over deadlines. However the Cambridge Moderator responded that this was not the most appropriate response and suggested stricter enforcement of deadlines.

One of the issues not addressed by Guba and Lincoln in their evaluation framework is the disproportionate weighting that certain stakeholder groups can have in terms of experience, knowledge and power, which will inevitably result in a disproportionate weighting given to their opinions. In this extract Aysegul, in hysteria, expresses vividly participants’ concerns about work load.
We are always in a hurry. At the weekend if I am invited somewhere and I say no I have to type this and in the evening for example somebody called me and I said no I will have a sandwich and type this. See – no private life. Even if you don’t do it it is somewhere in your mind all the time. I have to do this. For example last week I looked at the timetable and I said ‘Oh it is my warmer and it is my presentation’.

You had both this week.

As Sung Wu said OK I’ll come and observe you and lesson plans. Mary said OK write 5 pages of self evaluation report – and I said when? I have to prepare a quiz for 2b another quiz for 2e and Sung Wu wanted me to prepare a mid-term exam for 2E. And I didn’t know what to do. I have to go to bed late – wake up early. I don’t have.

this is an issue I think. If you don’t have enough time I have to do it.

But you need some time. I want to do it. Also you feel stressed with it. I have just started to enjoy the things I should learn about teaching.

But it is sometimes too much work.

For example presenting an article, presenting a warmer, preparing a lesson. It can happen at the same time.

Typing takes hours for me. If there’s something wrong with the computer I need someone else’s help. OK. We read, we learn, we do things and we share with other people and it’s a great opportunity. It’s coming here. It’s team work but now this intense week. I feel stressed a bit.

it is always like this. The school is getting difficult because of exit exams getting closer and closer.

And also in the evening I mark papers of the students. They write essays and I correct them and they come back and write them again and give them back. What shall I do? Shall I start with those papers or other things?

Time is a big issue.

5.12 Conclusion

In this section we have explored how the FGE process elicited opposing stakeholder views and constructions. I want to conclude the section by considering the effectiveness of the process. Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest a number of criteria for assessing quality. Namely:, ‘the provision of vicarious experience, which enhances the opportunity for individual respondents to apprehend their own “worlds” in more informed and sophisticated ways’ (ontological authenticity); ‘the extent to which individual respondents’ understandingof and appreciation for the constructions of others outside the stakeholding group are enhanced’ (educative authenticity); ‘the extent to which action is stimulated and facilitated by the evaluation process’ (catalytic authenticity). When applying such criteria to our study it becomes apparent that
assessing the ‘goodness’ of FGE can only effectively be measured by each individual participant, as is the case in most learning encounters.
PART 3: The results for pedagogy

5.13 Introduction

The study of educational discourse across the social sciences assumes that ‘talking’ facilitates learning, promoting a theory of learning and cognition that presupposes language as the mediator of learning (see Piaget 1970; Vygotsky 1978). Equally the central tenet of constructivism and by extension constructionist evaluation (e.g. Guba and Lincoln 1989) is that, through the process of talk (discussion), stakeholders will come to a better understanding not only of their own perceptions but also of the fundamental concepts of the evaluation process itself. Although these propositions are widely accepted, especially in the field of education, they have not been extensively tested.

To explain the importance of talk in learning, we have to consider what the participants do and how they interact with each other:

Teaching is vastly facilitated by the medium of language, which ends by being not only the medium of exchange but the instrument the learner can use himself in bringing order into the environment. (Bruner 1966)

A central contention of ‘constructivism’ is, therefore, that each of us can only learn by making sense of what happens to us, through actively constructing a world for ourselves. Most learning does not happen suddenly: we do not one moment fail to understand and the next grasp a concept entirely. Our systems of ideas go through a history of development in our minds, some of them changing continually throughout our lives. The most apt way of working on understanding is often through talk, because the flexibility of speech makes it easy for us to try out new ways of arranging what we know, and easy too, to change ideas if they seem inadequate. Talking to one another is important, collaborating and trying out new ways of thinking.

A constructivist evaluation, as devised by Guba and Lincoln, is based on the premise that the evaluation process is an interaction of stakeholders’ views, a mutual sharing of experiences and through exploratory talk (Mercer 1995) will inevitably lead to new, more fully developed constructions. Learning through the evaluation is a central objective of the process: stakeholders’ participation allows for heightened awareness and understanding of the programme practices.
In this section we analyse the focus group transcripts in order to evaluate the evaluation process itself: a meta-evaluation if you like. Is there evidence in the focus group ‘talk’ of learning?

The four trainee participants’ and one tutors-in-training focus groups’ transcripts were analysed considering the following questions:

- What features of ‘talk’ do the transcripts reveal?
- Is there evidence of collaborative learning or increased awareness of the nature of evaluation emerging from the group interaction?

5.14 Practitioners’ Talk

The task I set the focus groups was essentially a reflective task in which they reflect on the training course and discuss claims (strengths), concerns (weaknesses) and issues (suggestions).

On initial reading of the transcripts I was surprised, even dismayed, that I was unable to identify any clear examples of evidence of learning as defined by Mercer’s concept of exploratory talk. Participants generally made positive or negative assertions about the course that were supported by the group either restating or reformulating the assertion or by adding additional reasons for the assertion or examples. Very few assertions were challenged or explored in any depth. Although it was difficult to identify features of exploratory talk, other features emerged and I have divided these into two areas.

1. Litanic constructions: where a participant makes an assertion and the other participants build on this assertion by reformulating the assertion into their own words, or offering additional reasons for the assertion, or providing more examples related to the assertion or express their feeling about the assertion. In this way the group is confirming a jointly held construction and verbalising their opinions in the group. Participants share their constructions in a well-rehearsed, mechanical manner, recycling established norms of opinion in a kind of litany

2. Evidence of learning: there are moments when participants are clearly demonstrating awareness about their role as teachers, the role of the training course
and their role as evaluators in the focus group. These moments often occur when parallels are made between experiences (such as participants describing a teacher they admired and comparisons made with the training course provision or their own teaching persona). Evidence of reflection and critical thinking more obviously occurs when participants discuss ‘critical incidents’ and try to explore what happened and why.

5.14.1 Litanic construction and anecdotal description

The task provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on the INSET course and share experience. Despite the fact that each focus group had its own dynamic and interpretation of the nature of the group task, overall we can categorise the majority of the talk as cumulative (Mercer 1995). Assertions that are offered are rarely challenged or questioned and initiations are invariably accepted and supported with further reasons, supporting examples or, less frequently, suggestions or strategies to solve problems.

This section describes how the groups collaborated in constructing knowledge. Much of the collaborative learning on the course can be divided up into three broad categories: litanic constructions, delayed litanic constructions and anecdotal description.

Examples of each of these patterns can be found in Focus Group 3. (FG3). This extract (FG3:8-14) illustrates reflective patterns where an assertion is built up by the participants by reframing and adding reasons and examples. It can be seen as a linear re-iteration of ideas collaboratively built up by the group.

Berna asserts the value of experiencing ‘doing’ activities. She provides two examples: the first are ‘warmers’ which are short practical activities that were demonstrated on the
course by participants each week; and the second are ‘presentations’ which required participants to present an article they had read. She justifies her evaluation of these kinds of activities by saying they allow you to experience them from the perspective of a student. She labels them ‘caring and sharing’ which is using a term that these sharing of activities were referred to in the previous year’s INSET course. Aysegul adds to this by pointing out how they are often readily adaptable to her classes and that saves time as otherwise you would have to get ideas from books. There then does appear to be genuine collaborative articulation of ideas with general agreement of the initial assertion and each participant justifying their view by stating reasons ‘more immediacy’, ‘more memorable’, ‘personalised’ to support their view. Despite Antoin’s throw-away comment that they are all visual learners (a broad generalisation that goes unchallenged), there does appear to be evidence of collaborative learning or at least the potential for it in this extract. Aysegul states that ‘doing’ an activity is advantageous to reading about it because ‘you know what it is like’. Trainees are advocating a training course grounded in practice.

The participants in this extract are constructing their ideas collaboratively and in a linear manner (typical of a brainstorming activity). The merit of ‘doing’ practical activities is an integral part of the course which, judging from the focus group data, are uniformly seen as a positive feature of the course. The rationale for the inclusion of mini ‘micro-teaching’ demonstrations of activities has been well articulated by course tutors and the participants are able to recall these reasons in a collaborative litany.

Moving on to delayed titanic constructions, these consist of one participant making an assertion and the other participants initially failing to respond. However this assertion, especially if considered important, may be recycled later in the conversation, possibly on several separate occasions, and responses built up gradually during the conversation.

In the previous extract we observed how both Antoin and Aysegul state that ‘experiencing’ an activity is more beneficial than reading about it. These comments prompt Berna’s final contention that (reading) articles are ‘harmful for our teaching’. This bald assertion, that challenges the value of accessing ‘public theory’ through reading, is left unchallenged by the other participants who then change the topic. Why does this assertion remain unchallenged?
Actually these articles are very harmful for our teaching.

Taken out of context this remark may appear an anomaly and of little significance. However, what is clear in all the focus groups is that reading, an integral part of the course, is causing major problems for the participants. Berna’s comment actually hints at a commonly expressed view that the reading required to complete the course is not relevant to participants needs. Berna brings up the issue of reading later in the conversation but rephrases her assertion and this time stimulates a response.

I want to add about citations. It is not easy to find the related articles.

As You need some time to read more.

B it is not just reading. You have to write everything. You have to refer to it. But it needs some time to absorb these ideas. We have a time issue.

As So the references should be limited.

B No the references should be there for us to check.

A that’s what you do on a degree course. You have the books, you go to the index, you find a particular passage and you spend a great deal of time researching your references but it is a luxury to go to the library. It’s a luxury to sit down and read.

Berna’s initial assertion about reading fails to meet a response but she reframes her assertion later in the conversation (re-formulating it) and ensuring that on this occasion the group respond. We can depict the same process of construction building as in the litanic model:
Berna’s initial assertion failed to obtain group support. However this assertion represents her personal theory based on experience of the course. Berna, as mentioned previously is a ‘doer’, she comes from a background where there is no culture of reading (Turks readily admit this) and she has a preference to get input kinaesthetically. In another focus group Berna’s assertion could have received more support as she was not alone in struggling both with strategies for dealing with the reading requirement on the course and also having serious doubts as to its value and relevance. Unfortunately for Berna, Aysegul has an academic background and reads widely and Antoin, in contrast, read almost nothing on the course and therefore could not empathise with Berna’s difficulties. However her reformulated assertion linking reading with a lack of time struck chords with both of them prompting Aysegul to offer possible strategies and Antoin to ironically conclude that ‘it is a luxury to read’. It is apparent that neither Antoin or Aysegul, for different reasons, have the same views as Berna on the value of reading for developmental purposes but they were not prepared to challenge her initial assertion but were able to support her reformulated one. It appears the group is motivated to support assertions but unwilling to explore differences of opinion.

With respect to anecdotal descriptions and sharing experiences, there are surprisingly few occasions when participants describe what they are doing on the course. In this instance (FG3.37-40) it becomes clear that there is limited informal discussion between course participants as regards course procedure. In the following extract there is a discrepancy or misunderstanding of procedure for conducting peer observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>37</th>
<th>As</th>
<th>You have a meeting with the teacher?</th>
<th>Direct question asking for information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>For 10/15 minutes you have to talk about the aim and all the procedures afterwards you talk.</td>
<td>Explains procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39  As  I didn’t. I observed 3 lessons, I just go in and wrote what is done. Who asked questions, what was the reply.

40  B  I asked so he or she can adapt the lesson. That’s my understanding and it takes time.

Berna explains that she has a meeting with the teacher so that they can adapt their lesson to fit her observation task. This is not required procedure. It would be extremely artificial, not to mention inconvenient, for a teacher to adjust their lesson to accommodate an observer. However the comment remains unchallenged by the other participants. Some of the criticisms in the summative evaluation at the end of the course state there was a lack of clarity about course procedure, ‘Sometimes, we really didn’t know what to do’ and yet here is an opportunity to share experiences and clarify the procedure. There are several examples of declarations in the transcripts where ideas could have been challenged, explored and justified to create a richer learning task. In the next section we examine some of the few instances where ‘negotiating of meaning’ appears to occurring.

5.14.2 Evidence of learning: mirrors and parallels

There are sections in the transcripts when ‘learning’ or new perspectives can be identified. Most noticeably this occurs in one of two ways. Firstly, when participants draw parallels between the task they are doing (the evaluation of the course) and their practice as teachers. This phenomena demonstrates the power of the ‘hall of mirrors’ (Schon 1983) and the concept of ‘loop input’ (Woodward 1992) when a training task encourages participants to explore relationships with their own beliefs and practices. Secondly, there is more depth of reflection when the tutors in training discuss specific critical incidents that occurred on the course that challenges their roles and perceptions of their own competence to solve problems.

Role models

There is an example of this from Focus Group 2 in which a teacher from Yonca’s past experience as a university graduate is proffered as a role model of methodology. There is a short excerpt where Yonca describes a teacher whose methodology she admires. As much of the literature suggests that experiences as a learner influence your beliefs as a teacher this monologue deserves some attention:
I have classes like this at university. I took history lessons and knew nothing about history and everybody took the lessons because they were kind of popular with nationalism and imperialism. Now the teacher did not tell us OK go find yourself about nationalism and imperialism instead he gave us photocopies from different writers when they pointed to this you know – history writers – only the parts about this so we ended up reading 3 or 4 books but one topic at a time so..

Yonca using her history teacher as a model suggests that dense subjects such as ‘nationalism and imperialism’ can be reduced to selected photocopies and a handful of books handed down by the teacher. She depicts a course methodology based on clear topics with knowledge synthesized and presented in a top-down manner as in a traditional transmission based form of education.

*Parallels and hall of mirrors*

There are two examples of participants drawing parallels with their teaching, both of which occur in FG1.

Su Wong (FG1:60) while discussing writing of the course assignments draws a parallel to her teaching situation. She points out that while she insists on her students writing drafts for their written work, she does not like doing this herself. Annabelle agrees that she also wants to be told exactly what to do and she will do it. There appears to be an opportunity here to discuss comparisons between the nature of writing assignments done by students and those done by teachers on the training programme and an exploration of the processes involved. Instead Su Wong remarks that she is surprised how ‘serious’ the assignments are, and how they require work.

| 60 | S | Every time. I am a writing teacher and I make my students write 3 and sometimes 4 drafts but the fact is I don’t want to write a lot of drafts. | ✓ Assertion about process writing Counter parallel with her feelings |
| 61 | A | Tell me what I need exactly so I can hit it. | Assertion |
| 62 | S | Cos it takes a long time to do the first draft. That is something that has surprised me about the course is | ✓ Gives a reason Assertion |
Su Wong as a writing teacher ‘makes’ her students write three and sometimes four drafts yet as a participant on a training course she describes the assignments as ‘serious’, ‘require work’, ‘good’ and ‘taxing’. There appears to be a mis-match between her beliefs as a writing teacher (on a reflective level) and her expectations of writing tasks as a trainee on a practical level.

In the same focus group, Su Wong asserts that talk is a positive feature of the course. Feryal agrees and relates the comments to the task they are performing. Su Wong makes the link between reflective training tasks and how this can be related to the classroom. Annabelle reframes this comment into her own conceptualization that teachers should listen to their students. Su Wong then, in a rare reflective insight, adds that effective talk in the classroom is more than simply listening to students but developing ideas about what really happens in the classroom, beyond the level of the activity. There is a hint of irony in the closing comments as Annabelle and Su Wong imply that if ‘talk’ does not dig into reasons and causes it remains superficial and at the functional level of ‘complaining’.

### Critical Incidents

As in any training course there were a number of critical incidents. On two occasions these concerned Tulin. Although (or perhaps because) she is an experienced teacher, Tulin has a fragile sense of self. In this extract she is reflecting on her feelings when a
tutor criticised her pronunciation. This extract is from Focus group 4 (82:85) in which Tulin is with two other experienced teachers, her friend Zehra and Tamara. Tamara was a reluctant course participant who requested to withdraw from the course on a number of occasions but each time was persuaded to continue.

| 82  | T   | If you are allowed to see the criteria of what we are observed. OK then they are expecting to see this language, my teaching.. evaluate my teaching. And sometimes there are some contradicting comments from different people. So then you feel.. OK.. that’s really sometimes the persons own point of view rather than something that is in the literature – something other people emphasise.. so I don’t really care much actually. I’m just doing what I want to do. | √ Suggestion that the criteria should be explicit |
|     |     |                                                                        | - Assertion                                      |
|     |     |                                                                        | States feeling                                  |
| 83  | Ta  | But still you get affected..                                           | √ Supports/empathises                           |
| 84  | T   | One person said my English was quite good and one person said I had a problem with my pronunciation. Up to now. So I said which is correct? Do I have problems with my language? Maybe. Who knows? Sometimes British English. American English differences. We have some fossilised mistakes of course we are not native speakers.. but that was funny you know. One said your English is clear and the other your intonation is not clear. So – which is not a big deal actually. | Example |
|     |     |                                                                        | Counter example                                 |
|     |     |                                                                        | Reflection                                      |
|     |     |                                                                        | Example                                        |
|     |     |                                                                        | Reformulates example                            |
|     |     |                                                                        | States feeling                                  |
| 85  | Z   | It’s a wrong.                                                          | Agrees with assertion                           |

Tulin first asserts that the evaluative criteria is not being followed and provides the example that she has had contradicting comments from tutors. Then she highlights that the tutors’ opinions need not be taken seriously as it is their own subjective point of view and not something concrete ‘in the literature’. It is interesting that Tulin, in order to distance herself from such criticism, punctuates her assertions with the remarks ‘so I don’t really care much actually’, ‘which is not a big deal actually’ while in reality these remarks have threatened her professional identity and, as another event demonstrates, she cares very much indeed. Non-native speakers can be particularly sensitive to criticisms of their pronunciation and as an aspiring teacher trainer Tulin was particularly vulnerable to this attack.

Considerably the most reflective discussions occurred in the tutors in training focus group as the participants reflected on two critical incidents. The first incident occurred
when Belgin was setting up an activity in an input session. She had completed giving her instructions and then attempted to check the participants understanding using a checking technique she had acquired on a recent training course and asked: ‘So, Tulin can you tell us what you are going to do now?’ Tulin, who may have been taken off guard by this direct question, chose to leave the room muttering: ‘Don’t you dare speak to me like that again’.

In their reflection on the incident Alara quickly identifies that Tulin’s reaction is related to issues of status and communication style but Belgin is more concerned about the impact on perceptions of her and how she could continue the session.

| 33 | B | The most important incident that I felt it was… there… was in one of the sessions remember Tuba left the room. | Describes incident |
| 34 | A | Yeah. I remember. | Agrees |
| 35 | B | I mean just checking instructions doesn’t mean checking a teacher and it was so.. | States opinion |
| 36 | A | That might be because she is a teacher trainer and an experienced teacher trainer. | Offers reason |
| 37 | B | But I mean an experienced teacher trainer doesn’t have to do.. act like that. It’s interesting. | Rejects reason |
| 38 | A | I know | Agrees |
| 39 | B | It’s not my fault checking instructions. I felt a little bit disappointed. Not disappointed but frustrated maybe… how can I carry on this session. OK. So I don’t have enough qualities for this. What am I going to do for the rest of the session? It was difficult. But the group dynamic was OK. | Justification States opinion States problem States opinion about group dynamic |

Alara later described a similar incident when she was giving feedback on an assessed teaching practice lesson (also observed by me as part of her training up process) in which the observed teacher, Berna, reacted negatively. Alara is surprised by this reaction and assumes it is related to the content of the feedback: ‘I don’t know if it was insulting feedback’. Or, she considers the possibility that Berna had not taken the observation seriously enough and is therefore challenging Alara’s professional identity and status.
experienced a similar incident. What happened in… I was trying to help in TP. I mean I know it was my fault not starting with questions about the lesson itself and how the teacher felt. Why I did that was because I think I have seen a lot about that teacher. I know the observed lesson plan and I read the assignments. Still it was my fault not having asked the questions about the lesson. I mean getting the teacher to talk about her lesson … nevertheless she could have been more positive. I mean she was defensive of course. She felt I was just criticising the lesson whereas I was just trying to tell her that she could try some other approaches, materials… because all the lessons I have observed have been kind of similar to each other. I don’t know if it was insulting feedback. What do you think?

42 B I don’t think it was insulting feedback. I think there are some other factors there. You know there are some other factors that a few people have taken it personally… maybe it is just because of emotional factors .. that maybe she wasn’t ready for the lesson. She didn’t know that the lesson was going to be an observed ICALT lesson and maybe..

43 A But still it was a co-ordinator’s observation and I think still they should take it seriously.

This issue of authority (power) is problematic in Turkish institutions (and no doubt many others) where an observation of a teacher is synonymous with an inspection and the observer correspondingly perceived as a figure of authority. Turkish trainers in training, coming, as they do, from a society which tends towards subservience to authority, often are tempted to assume the role of unassailable critic and are perhaps more comfortable in that role than the less authoritative status of mentor, coach, facilitator expected from a Cambridge ESOL trainer. Despite her reflections, Alara seems to imply that Berna’s reaction to the feedback is not appropriate because both as a co-ordinator or a tutor in training her position determines that Berna should take her seriously.
Alara identifies the national tendency to react badly to criticism and speculates whether this situation would occur if Berna had not been Turkish. She comments on Belgin’s different experience giving feedback to Annabelle as follows:

| 81 | A | But she is a native speaker. |
| 82 | B | You think that makes a difference? |
| 83 | A | Yes.. to some extent. Not to a large extent. It’s got to do with being Turkish as well. We don’t like being criticised as a nation. |
| 84 | B | Right. |
| 85 | A | I don’t think native speakers would treat it that way. |

The discussion reveals the insecurities and lack of confidence of these Turkish trainers, both with Turkish teachers and themselves. While both trainers are able to reflect and comment on each others’ experience, they are less able to apply those reflections to themselves. Similarly they also seem to be unable to draw parallels between their own situation as trainee trainers and the ‘novice’ teachers on the training course. Belgin describes an incident from her past entirely similar to Alara’s feedback with Berna when she reacted negatively to a novice trainer:
But you know how I feel. I have had this experience in my life when a young teacher trainer … like my peer… tries to.. after an observation tries to give feedback and I reacted very harshly because I felt what does she know?

How did she treat you?

Very friendly… but I didn’t need her to be friendly. I’m not asking for her friendship.

Did she tell you the points to consider politely?

Yeah. Politely .. but she didn’t give me a professional opinion at all I thought. I thought she wasn’t prepared very well. I thought she wasn’t an expert on her subject so she didn’t have the right to talk about my lesson. That’s why.

This complaint about the competence of the trainer to give feedback mirrors a similar exchange in FG4 where the teachers criticise the trainers for their lack of knowledge and expertise.

The tutors in training are more concerned with their own performance and what other people think of them than anything to do with learning outcomes. The Turkish trainers self doubts as to their competence seems to be exacerbated by the inevitable comparison with native speaker trainers as illustrated in the following exchange:

Some of the native speakers might wonder if the Turkish teacher trainers are good enough.

When you think about what they think it might be problematic sometimes.

As far as I know this fear was completely unjustified and in reality it was the Turkish teachers who were particularly hostile in their comments to the Turkish trainers in training.

5.15 Discussion

Analysis of the focus group discussion demonstrates that learning does not necessarily occur when a group of people are given a reflective and evaluative task to discuss. In general the focus groups provide a superficial analysis of the ICELT course tending to
focus on mutual complaining and apportioning of blame. Few assertions are challenged and ‘constructions’ are not negotiated in any depth. There is no evidence of exploratory talk as defined by Mercer (1995).

The definitions of talk as identified by Mercer (1996) proved to be unhelpful in categorising the features of talk in the focus groups. However, if we accept Mercer’s premise that features of talk reflect ‘social modes of thought’, we are able to identify distinct dimensions of participants’ mode of thought. In this dissertation I have compared the multiple worlds of learning to a journey. In terms of ‘talk’ I argue it is possible to identify three similar dimensions of thought processes.

1 Techno-rationalist talk as evidenced by the litanic dialogues and anecdotal talk expressing pre-conceived beliefs and knowledge, describing procedures or brainstorming and cumulating constructs. The function of this talk is to consolidate group and individual identity and a sense of self in a socio-cultural context.

2 Critical-reflective talk involves exploring (with others or alone) constructs from different perspectives or to rationalise or solve problems. It is evidenced in the focus groups when participants identify role models, draw parallels between different roles and contexts and explore the dynamics of critical incidents. This talk involves a deeper level of reflection and occurs when our sense of self, identity, beliefs or contextual understanding are challenged.

There is one further mode of thought, absent from the focus groups, but one that features prominently in my own reflections of my learning experience as well as in the literature (for example Stables 1995; Fullan 1993) and that is the concept of an internal dialogue. I have labelled this talk spiritual.

I realize that for some academics the idea of an inner dialogue and a spiritual dimension to learning to teach is a romantic notion. In a culture of objectification and technique, reaching down to psychological and spiritual dimensions of teaching is not popular, but in my reflections of my own learning experience the most gains in learning occurred through internal dialogue with the voice of identity (integrity) which guides me to who I am as a teacher and trainer and what gives life to my spirit. Spiritual talk tackles the
labyrinth of feelings, and insecurities about identity and worth as well as our source for inspiration and originality. This level of thought can be critical, emancipatory and transcend the limitations of context. The modes of thought identified are illustrated below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Techno-rational thought</th>
<th>Reflective thought</th>
<th>Internal spiritual thought</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Litanic dialogues and anecdotes</td>
<td>Problem solving and reflecting on critical incidents / parallels</td>
<td>Critical awareness of self and socio-cultural context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks answers to ‘how do I do this?’</td>
<td>Seeks answers to ‘what do I know about this?’</td>
<td>Seeks answer to ‘who am I?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lion</td>
<td>The scarecrow</td>
<td>The Tin Man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13  Modes of thought

Much of the talk in the focus groups remained at the techno-rational level with the group supporting each other’s assertions. The talk, in other words, described experiences and followed a litanic brainstorming. This suggests that the group is perhaps more concerned with establishing a group cohesion and mutual support than challenging ideas. The motivation is therefore to seek answers to ‘Who are we as a group?’ than to explore ‘What do we know about the evaluation of our course?’
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the importance of the findings of the evaluation study in relation to existing knowledge about the destination of the training journey, the experience of the evaluation process and the implications for teacher learning in general. In particular I argue that this study reconceptualises how we evaluate teacher education in terms of what teachers do, think and feel and explores the ways we interpret the practice, knowledge and construction of professional identity on an INSET course. I will first summarise the answers to my research questions and comment on the main contributions of this study, before outlining the limitations of the study and concluding with a comment about the implications of this study for future research.

At this stage I reiterate the research questions this study explored:

1. What are the claims, concerns and issues of stakeholders in the ICELT programme?
2. How can identification and interrogation of claims, concerns and issues be acted upon in order to improve and develop programme effectiveness?
3. In what ways does participation in the evaluation process impact on the stakeholders’ professional development? In other words what do stakeholders learn from the evaluation process?
In the following sections I briefly outline what the study has revealed in relation to my three research questions.

6.2 **What did we learn about claims, concerns and issues?**

We have framed our study around the metaphor of a journey. In doing so we depict learning as consisting of four worlds: these are experiential, cognitive, affective and contextual as depicted in the diagram below:

![Diagram of the four learning worlds](image)

**Figure 15  The four learning worlds**

The four learning worlds represent features of a developmental journey; the physical action experienced by travelling, the thoughts and reflections and perceptions of the journey, the feelings and emotive responses to the journey and the landscape itself. These worlds were identified as epistemological shifts of focus in a historical survey of literature on research into teacher education and have been also informed by my own reflections on my learning experiences.

6.2.1 **The applied world**

The developmental journey in a training course involves completing various tasks. Like the Lion in the Wizard of Oz, who could not physically perform as a Lion, some course participants admitted that these course tasks required mastery of certain skills. Our research for example, highlights participants concerns about finding relevant reading materials and being able to interpret and follow assignment guidelines. Similarly in the
classroom I contend that teaching is initially largely founded on pedagogic skills and that these skills are acquired through experience and can be honed by a trainer or mentor. The question then becomes one of how does this acquisition of pedagogic skills occur?

One possible response is to view the development of teaching through teacher education/training programmes as a purely transmission process of recipes of action. This conception of training could only make sense if the teaching context stayed stable over time. This is unlikely because as teaching is a social practice it is intrinsically constituted through communication and the coordination of action: it depends on the often unpredictable ways in which people act and respond to the actions of others. One could argue of course that one way to reduce the unpredictability of teaching is to restrict the number of possible actions and activities in classrooms. Indeed this logic was applied to certain more rigid approaches (i.e. Audio-Lingualism) in order to make foreign language learning (and by extension teacher training) formulaic and ‘teacher-proof’. A parallel analogy can be found with McDonald’s fast food chain. The limited number of items on the menu and the global uniformity of both the preparation of the food and the layout of the restaurants restrict both the number of different activities available to staff, and the number of different alternatives available to customers. This makes it easy to order a ‘Big Mac’ all over the world irrespective of local language and cuisine. We can envisage a similar ‘Big Mac’ manual to teacher training.

I reject this vision as the only explanation of the developmental journey. Parts of the journey can be clearly staged and signposted, a well-trodden route along which participants experience and are trained in the required pedagogic skills. However one main contribution of this research indicates that learning takes place in more than one world. There is an intersubjectivity between the world of action, the world of mind and knowledge, and the world of self and identity. The relationship between teacher education/training and actual teaching needs to be less one of application of the lessons from one world but more one of coordination between worlds. We need a holistic approach to teacher training not a recipe of skills.

One finding from our research demonstrates the importance of experiencing concepts before theorizing about them. Participants appreciated the course components that had a direct and specific relevance to teaching. They specified teaching practice and tutor
feedback, peer observations and the demonstration of ‘warmer’ teaching activities in training sessions as beneficial. The authentic physical experience, on this ICELT, was valued over the symbolic abstracted experience as presented in books or reported accounts. Participants want to physically experience the journey. Pedagogy is more than the relationship between actions and consequences. This is self evident in teaching when the same lesson is taught to different groups and invariably has a variety of outcomes. However as many classroom actions are of a habitual nature, the patterns of action teachers have acquired over time do suffice in most instances. Problems tend to arise in those situations when tried and trusted techniques fail. It is then when teachers call on the world of reflective skills and critical thinking as we explore in the next section.

6.2.2 The cognitive world
So in addition to the physical journey, there is the cognitive element of the journey. Like the Scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz who has lost his brain, participants also stated their trepidations relating theory to practice. Our research highlights how abstract ideas and processes described in the literature mean little to participants without the concrete reference point of personal experience. By extension, our research also demonstrates a tension between participants’ demands for more guidance and direction and tutors instincts to encourage autonomy and self-inquiry. The study suggests that trainers (like teachers) have to move along a cline ranging from deductive ‘telling’ to more inductive ‘guiding’ approaches to training depending on a range of factors such as participants depth of teaching experience and factors related to personality and self esteem. The desired outcome of any training course is greater shared tacit knowledge. The literature, for example Harris and Lambert (2003) suggest that tacit knowledge will be the outcome of a professional learning community where teachers participate in activities and decision-making, have a shared sense of responsibility, and engage in collaborative work. As Nanoka and Takeuchi explain:

the sharing of tacit knowledge among multiple individuals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and motivations becomes the critical step for organizational knowledge creation to take place. (Nanoka and Takeuchi 1985:85)

My research casts doubts on this aspiration. While I am confident that differences in teachers’ values, ideas, methods when not interacted upon and are locked away behind closed doors will not lead to knowledge: our research suggests that it is not true that differences that are interacted upon and meanings negotiated in a collaborative manner
lead to shared tacit knowledge. Our research suggests that this constructivist inspired belief that learning is achieved through the process of interaction and dialogue alone is naïve. There are numerous other mitigating factors concerning individuals’ professional identity and the pervasive influence of context as we explore in the next sections.

6.2.3 The spiritual world
Thirdly there are the personal, affective elements. Like the Tin Man in the Wizard of Oz who lost his heart, participants stated the value of effective human relations and interaction and the need for support and encouragement from peers and employers as key factors in maintaining confidence, self-esteem and motivation to continue on the journey. Participants desire interaction and opportunities to collaborate and share ideas and experiences. They also acknowledged the positive influence of an encouraging learning culture within the institution and the support the institution provided as a critical factor. This finding is supported in the literature by, for example, O’Loughlin (1992) who states that central to the construction of knowledge is the creation of a safe, nurturing community in which students are comfortable in taking the risk of sharing themselves and engaging in public examination of deeply held beliefs and practices. It would appear from the comments of the participants in the research that in order for effective interaction and collaboration to exist there needs to be a culture of trust and mutual respect. This finding is echoed by Rosenholtz who found that in learning – rich schools: teachers and principals collaborated on goal setting activities and actively fostered collegial involvement:

> collective commitment to student learning in collaborative settings directs the definition of leadership toward those colleagues who instruct as well as inspire awakening all sorts of teaching possibilities in others. (Rosenholtz 1989: 6)

In contrast this research shows that these opportunities for interaction may be less significant in terms of learning and meaning construction and more important for establishing and exploring professional identity and a personal ‘sense of self’. Analysis of the actual interaction between participants when invited to reflect on their experiences in focus groups revealed little evidence of learning or meaning construction. In marrying the diversity of teachers’ professional self-perception and identity, trainers need to be flexible. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) highlight the need to respect individual development and question superficial and contrived forms of collegiality or sharing ideas for the sake of sharing. Our research implies that the
emphasis of training should be on personality rather than procedure. Adapting the sentiments of Kouzes and Posner when referring to leaders, I believe:

What separates effective from ineffective trainers is how much they ‘really care about the people they train. (Kouzes and Posner 1998: 149)

What is needed, in other words, is a model of teacher education that acknowledges the non-causal nature of training interaction and accepts the personal as well as technological processes. The role of teacher development is to enhance each teacher’s technical, reflective, and critical skills in order to embolden their professional identity. Better teachers means greater confidence. Teacher certainty and teacher commitment feed on each other (Fullan 1992) increasing teachers’ motivation to do better and this in turn has a positive effect on student attitude.

6.2.4 The landscape

Finally there is the impact of the context. A chef can prepare and mix the ingredients, place them in the cooker and nine times out of ten would be confident in the outcome; a trainer groups teachers in a training situation and can never confidently predict the outcome. Indeed may be it is this ability to be ready for any outcome that is an important trainer trait as Claxton (1997) implies: ‘To wait in this kind of way requires a kind of inner security; the confidence that one may lose clarity and control without losing one’s self’. The mix of ingredients at our University is very diverse with a multicultural teaching force of different ethnic, religious and language backgrounds and also a range of professional backgrounds and teaching experience. However, our research demonstrates that, simply putting these teachers in a training context and providing them an opportunity to collaboratively reflect and interact with each others’ ideas does not necessarily lead to learning. I surmise that one reason for this may be the tension between how teachers perceive themselves within the collective identity of training group and their own sense of individual professional identity. Middlehurst (1993) states that the history of western civilizations over the past three centuries demonstrates a continual striving towards the ideals of personal liberty and equality of opportunity for all citizens, trends that have fostered the growth of individualism and magnified the tensions between the individual, the collectivity and authority. Other societies, such as Turkey, have more collectivist cultures (Hofstede 1980). Smith and Peterson (1988) believe that individualism promotes values of professional autonomy and academic freedom while a collective culture promotes values of consensus and community.
In my mind one feature that this research study demonstrates is the need for a clearer understanding as to how the diverse participant traits are bridged to achieve learning and knowledge. In the extremities we have, at one end of the scale, the concept of a ‘top-down’ trainer inspired deductive transmission approach and at the other a mutually negotiated and agreed participant led training curriculum and approach. While both approaches may be valuable in a corporate setting neither seems so readily applicable in an educational context where a wide diversity of professional values, morals and skills needs to be celebrated rather than compromised.

6.2.5 Conclusion
In conclusion our research suggests that there are four worlds that trainers need to explore in order for teacher development to thrive. Trainers on an INSET course need to ensure:

- (Applied) participants experience practical activities in a classroom setting prior to reflecting and theorizing.
- (Cognitive) collaborative interaction in which ideas, beliefs and attitudes are shared allowing differences to emerge and tacit knowledge to be created.
- (Spiritual) encouragement of professional autonomy in which each teacher’s individual professional identity is allowed to grow.
- (Context) a culture of trust in which relationships are formed that empower teachers

This section has highlighted the important contributions this study makes to our understanding of the complex process of teacher learning and the ways that teacher training impacts on a teacher’s developmental journey. In the following section I discuss ‘how’ we evaluated the training course and the contributions this study makes to research evaluating the impact of training interventions.

6.3 How did the study contribute to evaluating programme effectiveness?
My study originally proposed FGE as an innovative methodology that incorporated responsive – constructivist principles as an appropriate method of evaluating an INSET course. FGE appeared to both overcome criticisms of more traditional evaluation
models and incorporate opportunities for learning and development of participants. I am now in a position to conclude on the meta-evaluation of FGE.

When I started this journey I enthusiastically believed that a responsive – constructivist evaluation model provided a unique visionary link between an interpretative methodology and a democratic ideology. I believe it was an approach to evaluation that was not just a technical procedure, but also a praxis in which social, ethical and cultural aspects play a role while mirroring my principles as to how teachers learn and develop. I no longer hold to these convictions.

FGE methodology ambitiously claims to provide a process to improve and develop the effectiveness of the ICELT. It proposes responsive and formative outcomes in which stakeholders discuss claims, concerns and issues in a hermeneutical dialectic circle with the aim of increasing understanding and achieving consensus. It further claims that stakeholders are empowered and given voice within the process so that through interaction and talk a heightened awareness is reached and as a result learning takes place. As a result of this learning and raised awareness course provision can be enhanced and the initial innovation of establishing the ICELT course more firmly cemented in the institution’s culture. To sum up FGE claims that it is responsive, constructive, pedagogic and innovative. Our research demonstrates that although FGE purports to these ideals, it is flawed in each area.

6.3.1 Responsiveness
FGE advocates an evaluation process that is ‘responsive’ to stakeholders’ views. It assumes that the route of the developmental journey is not pre-set but openly negotiated as the journey unfolds. Stakeholders are free to strike off and explore uncharted territory if there is genuine consensus of agreement among stakeholders as to the merits of this course of action. FGE assumes a level playing field in which each participant has an equal voice. However, the evaluation took place in a socio-cultural setting where, certainly in terms of the ICELT course, the decision making process is not open and transparent. The stakeholders consist of autocrats and bureaucrats as well as democrats and role and status in the wider context influence the evaluation culture. Who evaluates the process in terms of power and influence? There is clearly a power structure from the Cambridge Moderator down through course tutors to course participants that does not provide all stakeholders with an equal opportunity in the process. Key stakeholders, for example the Cambridge Moderator, are pressurized into behaving strategically.
Institutional tradition and power-relations will have constraining effects on the dialectic process. This view begs the question as to the power of the influences exerted onto all the stakeholders by virtue of their ethnic background, race, class, gender, language usage, religious, cultural, and political identities, as well as such characteristics as their sexual orientation and physical appearance (Ellsworth, 1989). In other words we must also inquire as to whether stakeholders are talking on their own terms or only representing the voice of dominant discourses of the institution and wider society. This means that the evaluation can only be responsive to stakeholders’ views in an undemocratic manner contaminated by the diluting effects of the socio-cultural context.

6.3.2 Constructivism

I now also recognize that, as well as being impossible practically, the democratizing of stakeholders in the evaluation process is not necessarily a valid procedural aim. Experience and status provides the Cambridge Moderator with a higher authority, and the trainers’ expertise of the terrain cannot be ignored. Why would the more experienced guides not influence a group when decisions are taken about appropriate routes?

Poststructuralists argue that knowledge is inherently partial and positional because it is grounded in an individual’s interpretation (e.g. Bourdieu 1977; Derrida 1976; Lyotard 1984). Any act of knowing is therefore an act of interpretation. A central tenet of constructivism is that knowledge and meaning can then be constructed through interaction through which more sophisticated constructions are formed. FGE epistemologically is based on the premise that through interaction of claims, concerns and issues a consensus of views is reached that is more enlightened. My research demonstrates that this hermeneutic – dialectic process of meaning construction does not necessarily achieve greater sophistication of knowledge. My trainer’s intuition shows me that a consensus view of a group of trainees is rarely correct. Imagine a band of inexperienced trainees as they traverse the desert navigating and choosing their route through a social dialogue built on mutual trust and respect, we can also imagine them beginning to go round in circles or getting totally lost. What happens then? Do they not turn to the guide (or in our case the trainer) and say, ‘OK. So how are you going to get us out of here?’ Interventions, such as an INSET course, deal with human beliefs and prejudices, social relations, and power and value issues that are far more complex than advocates of a democratic ideal care to admit. Constructivist literature is effusive with ideas and systems but shallow in terms of ‘grounded theory’ as to the complexities of
stakeholder dialectic evaluations. What happens when a heterogeneous group of
teachers enter the jungle of an INSET programme? Certainly when the Cambridge
Moderator expressed the view that deadlines should be stricter and no sample answers
of assignments provided there were no dissenting voices. Presumably it was accepted
that the Moderator was speaking from a position of greater experience and wisdom as
well as having the power to impose compliance.

6.3.3 Pedagogy
When we set out on a journey we can aim to explore and discover with an open mind.
The goal is enlightenment with no fixed goal or destination. The emerging design of a
responsive dialectic evaluation uses such a flexible methodology and to me this seems
in keeping with our understanding of how teachers develop and how the impact of
training will be diverse and varied between participants. Learning goals in this sense
cannot be preordained.

In terms of the research methodology and a responsive dialectic process, while Guba
and Lincoln (1989) promote a process among stakeholders to gain consensus, my
contention would be that such a democratic ideology fails to take into account the socio-
cultural power structure of educational establishments. Greene (2001) defines features
of dialogue as openness, respect, inclusion and engagement, which are not necessarily
implicit features of an educational establishment. I contend a more realistic aim for the
dialectic procedure is to aim at awareness raising, reciprocal understanding and
acceptance of stakeholders’ views. This stance is in line with views on teacher
professional development in general. In terms of our learning journey we can perceive
the landscape as it exists and appreciate its features but to mould it into our ideal
conception takes considerable effort, resources and a social commitment, collaboration
and negotiation between a large number of stakeholder groups.

6.3.4 Innovation
The innovation in terms of the original conception of establishing an ICeLT programme
and using an FGE framework to ensure formative development and quality was a
resounding failure. The programme received negative summative feedback from
participants and the innovation was abandoned and no INSET has been provided in any
formal manner since this ICeLT course. All bar one of the course tutors, including
myself, have since resigned from the university, as have three of the twelve course
participants.
To sum up this section I have argued that FGE is seriously flawed as a methodology for evaluating teacher education and I believe that this is more to do with the conceptualizing of the evaluation aims as providing ‘a better way’ and by promoting the means to a greater awareness is through consensus. I advocate that teacher education evaluation needs to be reconceptualised to ask not only ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions but also ‘why’ questions. In other words choosing a more effective route only becomes an issue if you are satisfied with where you are heading and why. In the case of Dorothy (and in human development generally) it is often the opposite; we intuitively feel we have to follow the Yellow Brick Road but where we are going and why we are going there are more difficult to articulate. Indeed if we knew the answers to these questions the journey loses the elements of exploration and discovery. Development involves not only external considerations regarding the method of travelling and negotiating the route but also internal inquiry into why we are here and who we are.

6.4 What do stakeholders learn from the evaluation process?

The ideal of a responsive-dialectic evaluation provides a synergy with emerging styles of teacher education. My training philosophy is to attempt to provide active and meaningful teacher participation with a view to a more reflective constructivist dialogue between teachers. To claim that teacher learning is an active process of construction on the part of teachers is hardly remarkable. As a teacher having experienced my own teacher development I have an intuitive sense of the truth of this claim. Indeed the common-sense nature of the claim has no doubt contributed to the popularity of constructivism as a topic of discussion in teacher education and training.

However our research throws out a note of caution to hard-line constructivists. Teachers perceive the purpose of dialogue in different ways. There is a naïve assumption among some constructivists that learning is achieved through the process of dialogue alone. They believe that it is enough for groups of people to be put in a room and talk and an inevitable result will be transference of constructions to form new more complex constructions. In our research almost the opposite result occurred as the interaction served more to reinforce acknowledged group norms. Dialogue can also be perceived as a vehicle to influence, as a method to bargain, to advance self-interest as well as collecting information and knowledge production. Participants ‘talk’ remained at the ‘litanic’ level of cumulating concepts through group interaction similar to going...
through responses in a church service or similar ritual. Similarly the content of the talk remained at a physical ‘how to’ level of thinking concerning how to cite articles in assignments. In order to effect deeper, more reflective thought and explore content related to cognitive mapping or the more spiritual level of personal professional identity, participants would have to shift to consider ‘what’ or ‘why’ questions. In this sense the question (process) interacts with the solution (product). The route dictates the destination of the journey and vice versa.

We have depicted teacher development as a learning journey. Based on themes emerging from the literature on teacher education I proposed that this journey consists of four worlds or elements: applied, cognitive, spiritual and socio-cultural context. I further suggested that these worlds are mirrored in Dorothy’s development in the Wizard of Oz along with her travelling companions the Lion, the Scarecrow and the Tin Man. Like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz we experience the physical travelling along the yellow brick road. This is our experienced reality and like the Lion we are aware of the need for acquiring effective skills through practice and also by sharing our experiences with peers. This peer talk, in our research, takes the form of collaborative reformulation of shared values and beliefs and can be seen as a verbal litany of concepts that heighten the group collaborative professional identity. This talk therefore is less to do with learning than establishing professional relationships.

We also consciously rationalize and make sense of our journey. Like the Scarecrow who appreciates the value of a brain, this study demonstrates that we reflect by drawing parallels between our experienced and shared realities and our constructions of our sense of professional identity. Finally, like the Tin Man who is searching for a heart, our research reveals that personal emotions and feelings bridge and influence how the learning worlds are perceived as teachers strive to make sense of who they are. I see the worlds that constitute a teachers’ developmental journey not as distinct concepts but as features of a journey whose destination is the making of a teacher.

Two of the strands of our research; the product focus (what are stakeholders’ perceptions?) and the pedagogic focus (how do we learn?) identified features of the learning journey in terms of what teachers do, think and feel (product) but also in terms of teacher learning and modes of thought (process) – techno-rationalist, reflective practitioner and critical emancipatory thinker. The descriptive framework therefore
describes the integration of dimensions for both the processes of learning and the learning product and I believe is a powerful descriptive tool for teacher educators as it reminds us that teachers work on multiple dimensions of learning throughout their professional lives. The framework is illustrated below:

Figure 16  A framework for teacher education

I started this study with a clear separation between product and process. However the two constructs, the journey and the travelling are closely interlinked. The nature of the relationship is of great significance as it is at the heart of learning: learning on a physical level, a conscious level but also learning who we are.

We can conclude this section by stating there are at least three learning journeys. The physical journey seeks to answer ‘how’ questions and involves physical action. The reflective journey seeks to answer ‘what’ questions and takes us out of ourselves to consider abstractions, metaphor and generalisation. We travel this road to find meaning in a rationale objective manner. The reflective journey is external and involves conscious evaluation to solve problems and obtain convergence based on an ordered and structured world view. It is heavily influenced by the socio-cultural context. The
spiritual journey seeks to answer ‘why’ questions and takes us down into our inner selves to consider who we are, our spirituality, inner desires, self-identity. We travel this road to discover our subjective inner truth. This internal journey involves idea generation to ask questions and to generate divergence based on a chaotic and random world view.

6.5 Discussion and implications
I believe that this research study and my reflections upon it challenge some basic epistemological assumptions as to the nature of teacher education and in particular the evaluation of teacher education. These are: firstly that the goal of evaluation is to achieve greater effectiveness of learning; secondly, the most effective way to discover effective learning is by obtaining ‘evidence’ in a research study; and finally, there is a causal relationship between the process and product of teacher education.

6.5.1 The goal of greater effectiveness of learning
Central to what and how questions is the idea of effective intervention. The assumed wisdom is that the only way to see if something works is to try it. As teachers and trainers we suspect this apparently scientific logic does not work. It may work sometimes but it definitely won’t work all the time. Our research demonstrates that teacher learning is multi-dimensional and exists in physical, cognitive and spiritual dimensions. We live in an academic research culture where evidence (what and how questions) is valued over opinion (why questions).

6.5.2 Evidence from research
There is a sense in which what is happening in the training course is what the participants, the trainee teachers, perceive is happening within the larger context of the course and their intentions and goals. This perspective, which may be different from what the course tutors or external moderator concludes is happening, has not been taken into account in any systematic way in research related to teacher education. This study demonstrates how each stakeholder group evaluated the course in very different ways. If for example a teacher trainer comes out of an INSET programme feeling dissatisfied and believing she has achieved limited success (as I certainly felt after reading the summative evaluation comments from participants on this course), this is an impetus for change, independent of any externally moderated course assessment structure. Equally if a trainee feels a course was beneficial this is also important, independent of whether this success matched the externally imposed assessment criteria. In this sense, viewing
learning as a journey, whichever route we take whether it is easy or difficult to traverse or whether the experience is perceived as negative or positive, there will be learning outcomes. The route leads somewhere regardless of our differing perceptions of the destination.

### 6.5.3 Process and product in teacher education

There is an assumption that training is a process and there is a clear separation between means and ends. Applying this line of thinking to teacher education however is problematic for two reasons. The first is that even if we are not able to identify the most effective way of achieving training ends. There is no fixed destination to teacher learning. Equally it is not the case that in teacher education we can simply use any means as long as they are ‘effective’.

The second problem with this approach to evaluation is the role of causality: apart from the obvious fact that the condition of being a teacher is quite different from being a patient – being a teacher is not an illness just as training is not a cure. Education is not a physical interaction (like medicine) but a process of symbolic or symbolically mediated interaction. If training is to have any effect on teaching, it is because of the fact that teachers interpret and try to make sense of what they are being taught on a range of levels. However the conviction remains that teacher education is a causal technology. Far from being a push – pull process, education is an open and recursive exploration and indeed, ironically, it is the very impossibility of limiting education to a definable route with a well marked destination that makes education possible.

A conventional, applied view of training implies change. It is not so relevant where we are going so long as we move, cover ground. The destination theoretically is prescribed although the actual routes and destinations will vary between participants. However a multiple dimensional view of the training world is round. No matter how far we travel there is always the potential to return to the place we started from. Any changes will have occurred in ourselves not the context. Indeed the history of education reveals we constantly return to the place we started. We speak of an ever-changing world but in fact the world is constant and real change is within ourselves.

### 6.6 Limitations of the study

There are a number of limitations of this study that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, there is the specific nature of the socio-cultural context. The participants of the study
were clearly not representative of teachers elsewhere. While there may be similarities in the constraints and experiences of the teachers in this and other contexts, it is inevitable that each individual teacher and each individual context will display their own unique features, which are likely to both to reflect but also differ in specific ways from features of this study. Similarly the specific nature of the training context in which the participants were operating contains characteristics, such as a monolingual classroom context in an EFL environment and a prescribed curriculum, which, while not unknown around the world, are by no means universal. The specific nature of the training context, namely an in-house, in-service ICELT course, is likely to display features which are different from in-service teacher education contexts worldwide. Moreover the mix of inexperienced and more experienced, native and non-native speakers and the unique make up of both the trainees and trainers as we have demonstrated in this study has a profound influence on the findings.

Secondly, the specific nature of the study and the research methods used have their internal limitations. This study is non-generic as it focuses on an evaluation of a specific in-service course and is of primary relevance for evaluators and those involved in-service education. Nevertheless many aspects of the findings are likely to be relevant for teaching, and teacher education in general. I have discussed the limitations of the research methods in the previous section.

Thirdly, a major influence on this study is my multiple roles as evaluator, researcher and course tutor on the ICELT programme. I outlined the features of this role in terms of insider knowledge in Chapter 2 and 4. However, participants, whether consciously or unconsciously, may have felt the need to impress on me either knowledge extracted from the ICELT or to say what they felt they should say or what they thought I wanted them to say. Although I took steps to actively enhance my reflexivity and exploit my subjectivity, my multiple roles raised the distinct possibility of me drawing conclusions that matched my expectations and my investment in my own professional identity.

Finally, this study makes no claims about the effectiveness of the continuing INSET provision at the university, nor claims about the effectiveness of teachers’ practices, nor indeed the effect of these practices on student learning. As a postscript I can record that the innovation failed as there has been no INSET provision at this university since this course and most of the participants in this study have left the university.
6.7 Conclusion

I began this thesis with the premise that teacher development (and indeed learning in general) was a journey. The journey has a beginning and an end and is bound in time and space. The journey process involves learning and the product is knowledge. The journey is experienced in a number of worlds: the physical experience of the journey in which we experience travelling through the landscape and absorb knowledge often subconsciously. Then there is the reflective, cognitive world in which we consciously reflect and ‘make sense’ of the landscape and our experiences. We transform our physical experiences by selecting, categorizing, highlighting and recreating it into the form of words that can provide an oral or written account of our experiences. Finally there is the spiritual world, maybe the interface between the mind and the body in which we become aware of our sense of self: our hopes, fears, and our sense of our own identity and self worth.

I now accept that this metaphor of learning as a journey is a simplification, a distortion, an illusion. Our journey and the landscape we encounter cannot be concretized into a defineable product or process; knowledge and learning are inseparable and not bound in time and space. Knowledge can appear in our landscape with blinding clarity one moment and then, as other thoughts invade our consciousness, dissipate into wispy clouds until possibly reappearing in another form later.

The journey of life is not bound by time and space. We have the conscious ability to re-imagine, re-invent and re-create our past experiences and landscapes and to fashion them as we desire, highlighting episodes that reverberate with our inner sense of self. Equally we can create our future journeys and landscapes through imagination and visualization. We dream, fantasise and create our future journeys incorporating our hopes and fears and desires that emerge through our sense of who we are. We create our learning journeys and fashion the landscape in our own reflection. In this way travelling (learning) and the journey (knowledge) are inextricably linked to our sense of self. The experience of the journey and the learning are part of who we are. The process is indivisible from the product. Education is defined by Biesta (2007) as ‘we become somebody through the way we engage with what we learn’ (94). It is possible that whatever my research questions were (whatever route I chose), my conclusions would always be the same because they reflect who I am (my soul).
The challenge for teacher education, then, is firstly to make teachers aware of the landscape and journeys they create for themselves and more importantly to help them understand how they have created their landscape and especially why. The answers to these questions lies in an exploration not of what teachers do or think but in an exploration of who the teacher is, in other words their sense of identity.
APPENDIX 1
Report on ICELT Symposium
ENKA School, Istanbul, Turkey. 4 May 2007

1 Background

The Symposium was organised by Tom Godfrey in response to his and other centre's queries and questions about ICELT.

This was the first ICELT Symposium to be held in Turkey.

2 Centres and Participants

There are five ICELT centres in Turkey and representatives from all five centres were present at the symposium:

ENKA
Ros Senturk
Simon Johnson

ISIK
Tom Godfrey
Ted Burkett
Alev Tozun (Tutor in Training)
Begum Kut (Tutor in Training)

Bilkent University, Ankara
Nergis Akbay
Hilal Atli

Izmir Ekonomi University
Steve Darn
Rob Ledbury
Funda Cetin
Bahar Gun

EMU, Cyprus (north)
Ed Cassassa
Nevin Adalar
Feryal Varanoglulari

Others present:
Kristina Smith (moderator)
Melanie Williams (JCA)

3 The Aims of the Symposium

The Symposium had three main aims

• to provide an opportunity to share current practices between centres in the region;
• to standardise assessment and grading;
• to reflect on and evaluate the ICELT programme in relation to local INSET contexts.

4 Outline Programme

10.00 – 10.15. Introductions and welcome
10.15 – 11.15. Key issues and features of each centre
11.30 – 12.30. Standardisation of grading
12.30 – 13.30. Lunch
13.30 – 15.30. Reflections, evaluation and questions
16.00 – 16.30. Open discussion and summing up
18.30 Dinner

5 Detailed report

5.1 Introductions and welcome
There was a general welcome from Tom Godfrey. This was followed by brief introductions from everyone around the table.
I gave a brief overview of ICELT covering:
• development from COTE / CEELT
• development, drafting and piloting phase
• modular structure
• features: open to native and non-native speaker teachers; adaptable to different contexts; interweaves theory and practice; role of reflection and self-evaluation; revision of Cambridge Awards on a regular basis

5.2 Key issues and features of each centre

ENKA
There are three main tutors and currently three tutors in training. ENKA are currently running their third ICELT course. The first course ran for an academic year. As a result of feedback, the second course ran over two years and the intake from 2005 has just finished (one participant). The two-year model allows for ENKA to have an intake each year which means year 2 candidates work alongside year 1 candidates. There seem to have been pros and cons for this model and ENKA are considering whether to continue with it in future. They might revert to a one-year course from 2008.
All course participants are from Pre-Primary, Primary or Secondary schools.
Some of the ICELT sessions at ENKA are open to other teachers as part of the INSET programme.
Issues have arisen in particular for the candidates working in Pre-Primary with reference to assignments and teaching: children of this age are not reading / writing; the teaching within the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is content based; children in a class range are a mix of levels (e.g. native and non-native speakers); there is no explicit focus on 'language'. This has led to difficulties for the centre and participants with reference in particular to the requirements and assessment criteria for Component 2, Component 1 Task 3 (learner’s written language) and Component 3 Assignment 3 (as to what constitutes supplementary materials in this context).
The centre have received a critical letter from the Chief Moderators with regard to candidate work with the comment that assignments addressed content (e.g. CLIL-type focus) and the development of learners’ cognitive and critical / inquiry skills rather than language and language skills. This, however, is the context within ENKA.
ISIK
There are four tutors and currently two tutors in training.
The course runs over an academic year. This is the first year of the programme at ISIK (the course finishes in August). All the 12 course participants are working at ISIK and are a mix of native and non-native speakers with varying qualifications and levels of experience. ICELT sessions are sometimes combined with INSET sessions.

Bilkent
There are four tutors and three tutors in training.
This centre used to run COTE and CEELT and have been running ICELT since it started. They have a very highly developed teacher development ethos at the centre and ICELT is compulsory for all staff. 3 years after completing ICELT teachers are offered DELTA / MAs.
Candidates on ICELT courses are therefore mostly new graduates who start the course after six months teaching at Bilkent. These teachers are supervised for their first six months and given feedback and readings to prepare them for ICELT. The course itself lasts for 8 months and there are usually 25 - 30 candidates on the course. ICELT is part of the probationary period for new teachers and those that don't pass are not given contracts. However, the tutors aim to provide support and guidance so that candidates do not fail.
Some of the ICELT tasks are delivered on-line.
There is an on-line discussion board and each week candidates reflect on sessions and teaching and tutors respond. The centre also use pronunciation software and set tasks for candidates each week.
Assignments: there is 1.1 contact in preparation for assignments. The candidate comes with a first draft and receives about an hour of guidance and feedback from a tutor.
Teaching: there is an hour pre-conference with a tutor to discuss the plan, aims and beliefs about teaching.
Marking: because of the high-level of expectation at the University, tutors find it difficult to keep candidates to the word limits for the assignments. The academic ethos and context means candidates want to write significantly more.

Izmir
There are six people in the Teacher Development Unit and five of these are ICELT tutors. The other is going to train up. This is a private institution which was set up in 2001. There are now 5000 students, 1200 in the prep classes (pre-sessional) and 135 staff.
The importance of ICELT for the institution and in particular for native speaker teachers is that it is an internationally recognised qualification and that it sets a benchmark and a standard.
There are nine candidates this year and six of them are native speakers. Four tutors are actively involved in the course. This makes for a high ratio of tutors to candidates.
Successful candidates do not get an increment / additional pay from the institution. The centre hope to offer the course next year and are looking to extend it to external candidates as this year's intake was small.
The centre have questions on grading, standardisation and on resubmissions (discussed below).

EMU
This is the second year the centre have run the course. There are three tutors and currently seven trainers in training. ICELT is offered to teachers in their second year at the University. There are 26 on the course this year, a mix of native and non-native speaker teachers. It is attractive to candidates as it is an internationally recognised
qualification. Tutors co-observe with the trainers in training and the trainers in training third mark assignments.

Tutors have extra time in the timetable to focus on issues as they arise: this year they have included micro-teaching which focuses on areas of weakness from teaching. One of the features of the EMU course is that 30% of the sessions are delivered as on-line, interactive sessions. There is an ICelt website with resources, the syllabus and support materials as well as an on-line discussion board. Candidates give feedback to tutors on the on-line materials: at the moment feedback on there materials are positive and they are not perceived as different from (i.e. weaker than) the face to face sessions.

5.3 Standardisation of grading
Tom Godfrey had circulated two pieces of written work before the session for discussion and standardisation. The procedure for standardisation was as follows:

- Reading of each piece of written work
- Individual decision on grade and feedback to candidate
- Discussion of grade and feedback in groups
- Group agreement on grade and feedback

Task Four. Focus on the teacher's language (see Appendix One)
It was agreed that this piece of work was below standard and needed to be resubmitted. Key points of feedback to candidate would be:

- Samples should be more varied (accurate / inaccurate, appropriate / inappropriate). Samples are mostly teacher questions;
- The assignment strays too far into methodology making much of the comment on the samples irrelevant;
- Organisation of the sections of the task;
- The candidate does not analyse / comment in sufficient depth on the teacher's actual language as required for the assignment.

Comments from Symposium Participants
They find the language tasks difficult to mark as they do not find it is sufficiently clear:

a) which elements of the assessment criteria are the most crucial: those on pages 23 - 26 or those on page 39 and 40;
b) if the assessment criteria are weighted

Participants agreed that the Task Four standardised in the session was a fail as it did not fulfil the task set, but felt that if the language assessment criteria were stringently applied then it might actually be a pass.

Assignment Two. Planning beyond the lesson (See Appendix Two)
It was agreed that this piece of work was below standard and needed to be resubmitted. Key points of feedback to candidate would be:

- No lesson self-evaluation was attached. This would normally be the starting point for the assignment (identifying what further work needed to be done from the lesson);
- Confusion of level: the candidate's description of the students' level conflicts with the language focus and the activities are not suitable for the level given;
- The candidate does not outline the plan for the subsequent lessons. The focus is merely on an activity for each lesson. The rationale for these activities is not clear and they are not logically sequenced;
- There is little justification (2d) of the planning based on evaluation of teaching.
Comments from Symposium Participants
The general comment was that the assessment criteria are easier to interpret for the assignments than for the tasks. There was a comment that Assignment Two is perhaps two assignments (Short Term Planning and Designing / Adapting Activities). There was discussion of the word count for the assignments and I commented that it would be possible for e.g. the outline plan for Assignment Two to be presented in grid format. However, this is not currently given as an option in the Notes to Centres.

There was discussion of Assignment Three (Evaluating and Supplementing Materials) for a very young learner context. It is often the case that course books are not used and that the lessons are made up solely of supplementary materials. In this case, it was not clear how a candidate / centre should proceed.

5.4 Reflections, evaluation and questions
In this session, tutors from the five different centres prepared posters listing three areas: positive points of ICELT for them as a centre; the downsides of ICELT for the centre; questions and issues.
Tom Godfrey has copies of all five posters.

Main points which arose and were discussed were:
• That some centres were unaware that there was a Centre Briefing Pack with standardised written and teaching assignments;
• The usefulness of (a) standardised lesson(s) with a young learner group. Tom commented that lessons had been filmed at ENKA for CESOL and I agreed to follow this up and see if the materials could be produced for standardisation;
• The depth to which all the syllabus specifications for Unit 7 (page 15) are / can be covered within a full ICELT course;
• The number of times candidates can resubmit / redraft assignments / tasks;
• The current ICELT requirement for candidates to teach 'skills' and 'language' lessons in contexts where this focus is not relevant (very young learners / CLIL);
• The varying amounts of time tutors have to devote to the course;
• How to deal with failing candidates and the possibility of candidates withdrawing from the award;
• The need for guidance to the moderator and the centre on what to do when a candidate fails the lesson which is co-observed with the moderator;
• The need for clearer, reduced criteria for the marking of Tasks (Component One): the identification of what key factors to look for / consider when marking;
• The need for information in the Syllabus on how the marking criteria are weighted - or a comment that they're not if they aren't;
• The possibility of end-weighting being taken into account when arriving at component grades. Since this is a teacher development course, it should be possible to take into account significant improvement in candidates' work at the end of the course;
• The need for / facilitation of communication and discussion between moderators;
• The question that perhaps Assignment Two is two assignments;
• The possibility of candidates presenting certain parts of assignments e.g. the outline plan for Assignment Two on a grid and the inclusion of this information in the Syllabus;
• The possibility of having an option for some assignments / tasks e.g. Task Three, for pre-literate young learners;
• That further guidance is needed on the word count for written work and how / if / when candidates are to be penalised;
• The number of trainers in training permitted for each course and whether the moderator / CESOL are involved in their approval;
• The need for more communication for centres, tutors and moderators from CESOL on ICELT developments. The suggestion was for
  o a regular ICELT mailing / newsletter to centres, tutors and moderators on key issues;
  o an ICELT on-line discussion group;
  o the publication / availability of examiners' reports (as for DELTA / CELTA);
  o more meetings / Symposia like this one for standardisation, sharing and discussion purposes.

Further to the last point, Bilkent University have offered to host a similar ICELT Symposium in a year's time. Everyone agreed that this was an excellent proposal. An email discussion group is also to be started including all participants at the Symposium.

5.5 Open discussion and summing up.
Tom Godfrey and I summed up the Symposium, reviewing the main points from the day. I added the following:
• The submission of a letter accompanying Portfolios sent to CESOL outlining any special circumstances regarding the course / candidates (e.g. context, very young learners, CLIL) is important for clarifying the context and avoiding any misunderstandings;
• There is the possibility of adapting Tasks and Assignments for particular contexts provided that (a) revised task(s) / assignment(s) with rationale is / are submitted to CESOL well before the course starts and that approval for the adaptation(s) is / are received before the course starts. In such cases, the revised task / assignment rubric(s) should be submitted with the Portfolios at the end of the course;
• In cases where candidates are at a bare B2 level, centres should consider candidates successfully complete ICELT Module One before moving on to Module Two.
• Centres can produce their own marksheets for tasks and assignments, provided that they detail the marking criteria and provide space for tutor comment etc.
• Tutors need to be on their guard for plagiarism (all centres admit they are very vigilant about this) since the same tasks and assignments are set for each course.
I commented that one option for the future which was being considered was the variation in assignments and tasks from year to year.

I concluded by thanking the tutors and centres for the work they do in supporting ICELT and promoting the excellence of the award. I also thanked Tom Godfrey for organising the event, ENKA for providing the facilities, CESOL for enabling me to be present for the day and all the tutors for taking time to come to the Symposium.

A photo of all those present is attached in Appendix Three.

Melanie Williams
JCA ICELT
8 May 2007
Appendix to ICELT Symposium Report
Task Four

Language samples

SAMPLE 1

Teacher: Suppose that we are in a courtroom. Where are we? We are in a court. What’s a court??....There’s a jury, there is a judge… And what else??

Students : There is a criminal….

Teacher: Yes there is a criminal. So we are in a courtroom and you are jury members…..

SAMPLE 2

Teacher: What is the difference between industrialized and developing countries?

Student A: Developing countries .....is..... third …level countries…

Teacher: Yes, developing countries are third- world countries. They are in the process of developing. How about industrialized countries??

Student B: They are rich…

SAMPLE 3

Teacher: Which group is brave enough to talk us.. to tell us about incapacitation??

SAMPLE 4

Teacher: Can you skim the text to find out what the main idea is??

Teacher: Are you all with me?? So what are we doing now?? Erhan, can you tell your friends what we are doing?

Erhan: We are skimming the text to find the main idea.

Teacher: Very good, thank you. Shall we start now? You have 2 minutes for this.
**SAMPLE 5**

**Teacher:** Looking at the sentence, can you guess what ‘deterrent’ means?

**Student A:** You don’t want to do something. But your friend wants you to do it so he is a deterrent.

**Teacher:** Are you sure about this meaning? Everybody, let’s have a look at the sentence again.

**Student B:** It is the opposite!!

**Teacher:** So what is it?

**Student C:** afraid?

**Teacher:** So you mean to make you afraid??

**Student D:** Yes, to make you afraid, to prevent you..

**Teacher:** Yes, very good. So what part of speech is deterrent?

**SAMPLE 6**

**Teacher:** So, what does ‘incapacitated’ mean?

**Students:** ………

**Teacher:** Do you know ‘capacity’?

**Student A:** Yes, it is ability to do something.

**Teacher:** Ok, very good. So what does Incapacity? Incapacitated mean?

**Student B:** No capacity?

**Teacher:** Great. So what does it mean when you have no capacity? In what situation would you have no capacity?? When will you become incapacitated? Think about our topic ‘crime’.

**Student C:** When you are in prison.

**Teacher:** Well done!! So prisoners are incapacitated. What does this mean?

**Student D:** They are locked. They can not do anything. They do no have rights.

**Teacher:** Well done. So incapacitated means having no rights, your rights are taken away…..
Sample 1:

At this point, my aim was to introduce the warmer activity. The students were supposed to act as jury members in a court. I tried to introduce the context for them before I explained the activity. The problem with this language sample was that I used only ‘rhetorical’ questions (Brown, 1994). I asked the questions and answered them again myself. I asked the meaning of the word ‘court’ but without waiting for student answers, I started to answer it myself ‘there is jury, a judge....’ Actually, I should have elicited all these words from the students. Considering the level of the students, I expected the students to know the meaning of the word ‘court’ so I should have asked some ‘recall’ questions (Brown, 1994) such as ‘What is a court?’ ‘Who can we see in a court?’ and I should have elicited some more words in the semantic field such as judge, jury. I tried to elicit some words actually by asking ‘What else?’ But I only got one short answer from one student and carried on talking in haste which was not very appropriate.

Sample 2

At this point, my aim was to make students clarify the meanings of two words ‘industrialized’ and ‘developing’. Considering their level, I expected them to know the meanings. So I asked my question in the form of a short ‘recall’ question. The student tried to explain the answer but she made a grammatical and a lexical error. She said ‘Developing countries is’ which was a grammatical error and she said ‘third-level’ which was a lexical error. I corrected her errors quite ‘implicitly’ by ‘reformulating’ (Brown, 1994) her sentence. I said developing countries are third-world countries. I like the way I corrected the errors. However, I don’t like the fact that I skipped to the other question ‘How about industrialized countries?’ I felt that I interrupted that student. Probably, she was going to say more about developing countries. But I cut her
speech, corrected her error and went on with the other question which was not appropriate. After reformulating her sentence, I should have waited for her to go on.

Sample 3
At this point, I uttered a sentence and immediately self-monitoring myself and noticing my mistake, I corrected myself. As teachers, sometimes we are so much involved with the content of what we say and show so much effort to convey a message that we might be drifted away and forget form and accuracy. Because I am not a native speaker it is so likely that I make grammar mistakes when I am talking. Considering the fact that even natives can make inaccurate sentences when they are speaking, this is quite natural. Teachers usually make grammatical mistakes due to slips of the tongue. Sometimes of course, they may make mistakes due to lack of knowledge which is a serious problem and which has to be solved urgently. As a teacher who believes in self-development, I usually try to monitor myself. When I notice a slip of the tongue, I immediately correct myself. I do this immediate correction because I believe that as teachers, we should act as models for the students (Day, 1999). I do not want them to be faced with a grammatically wrong sentence. Students are good recorders. Whatever we say is embedded in their minds so as teachers we should always watch out for what we say. If students see us monitoring ourselves and correcting ourselves, they might easily start doing the same. If they see us making mistakes and correcting, this will also motivate them. They will see mistakes as something natural and something not to be afraid of as even teachers of high authority make mistakes!

Sample 4
At this point, I was giving instructions. I was telling the students what the next activity was. However, as I looked around, I saw that some students were not showing interest and were not listening to me. So I asked one of the uninterested students to repeat what I had just said. I find this strategy quite appropriate and think it really worked well. I
drew everyone’s attention and all the uninterested students pulled themselves together concentrating on the activity. I was able to draw attention and at the same time I was able to make my instructions clear by having a student repeat them.

**Sample 5**

At this point, the students were trying to guess the meaning of a word from a sentence. One student made an attempt and guessed the meaning. But what she said was wrong. I immediately asked her if she was sure. I did not explicitly tell her that she was wrong but implied this by inviting her to reconsider her answer together with the whole class. I think what I did was quite appropriate. She was not offended because I drew the attention away from her and she was encouraged to find the answer together with the whole class. To find the correct answer, the whole class went through a smooth flow of thinking all together. Her mistake was corrected by her peers so naturally. All answers built on each other and finally we reached a conclusion. I also tried to guide the students with my questions and slight reformulation (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Through all this discourse, I find the way I handled the student’s error and the way I led the students to the right answer quite appropriate. However, it should be noted that the peer correction method (Brown, 1994) I applied here are not without its dangers. Most of the students are self-conscious and fragile. They might easily be offended. Therefore, the teacher must think twice before using this method. He/she should know the student and the class very well before trying this method in order not to offend or discourage the student who has made a mistake.

**Sample 6**

At this point, students were trying to guess the meaning of a word from a sentence. Seeing that they were having difficulty to do so, I tried to guide them. I started with the word ‘capacity’, elicited the meaning and then I tried to emphasize the prefix ‘in’ to elicit the meaning of ‘incapacitate’. Asking questions that stimulate thinking, ‘when and
in what situation’ , I tried to give them a hint, a prompt. Reminding them of our topic crime, I tried to lead them to the right answer.. All in all, what I did was quite appropriate. Instead of giving them the right answer right away, I got them into thinking and made them discover the answer themselves. This strategy is quite in line with recent ELT methodology which encourages teachers to build student autonomy in class giving them the initiative when they are learning (Hedge, 2000). Teachers are only facilitators which help learning easier for students( Harmer, 2003). At this point I think I acted the role of a facilitator quite well.

**Preliminary Information about the class and the lesson:**

I took the language samples from my Track 2 reading class. There are 14 students in the class. In general, students are very hardworking and enthusiastic. Most of them follow the lessons very carefully. They are quite willing to participate. There is always positive dynamics in the class. Students love pair work, group work and cooperation. That’s why, I try to give them collaborative tasks as much as I can. As for their English level, they are intermediate. They are quite competent in terms of language skills especially reading and speaking.. They have a wide range of passive and active vocabulary which they efficiently use.

This is my second module with this class. So far, we have been working on a variety of reading skills with the help of different reading texts. We are following a topical syllabus. Each week we have a different topic and 4 reading texts based on this topic. In the lesson that I took samples from, we were supposed to do our last reading on the topic ‘Crime’. The language samples were taken from the pre-reading warmer and vocabulary stages.
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Note: the lesson plan to accompany this assignment was provided at the ICELT Symposium. The self-evaluation was not available.

For this assignment, I taught a lesson focusing on compound sentences using FOR, YET and NOR. The lesson was a guided-discovery which introduced the students to the meanings of the three coordinating conjunctions and highlighted the question word-order used after NOR. I designed the lesson as a guided discovery because the students are already familiar with compound sentence structure, but they had not been introduced to these three coordinating conjunctions. Since the meanings of the words are similar to words that the students already know, i.e. for=because, yet=but, I felt that the students would have no problem understanding the meaning of the new conjunctions. Similarly, the structure of compound sentences is already quite familiar to these students, as they were first introduced to compound sentences in the first quarter.

The guided discovery activity was followed by controlled practice in which the students combined pairs of simple sentences using either FOR, YET or NOR. This was intended to allow the students to apply the new information they had inferred about the coordinating conjunctions. From the work that the students did in class, I was able to tell that they were having very little difficulty with the new words’ meaning, and even their use of NOR was successful. To ensure that the new words are used in the students’ future writing, however, some practice will be necessary. We learn and remember by trial and error, or, in the words of Ellis (1985) “Part of the learning process, then, involves consolidating hypotheses by accumulating confirmatory evidence.” (175) To that end, I propose to use a series of exercises that will help integrate the correct use of coordinating conjunctions in both compound and simple sentences.

Part One – Three Proposed Activities
1. The first activity that I would do with the students is a controlled practice in which they have some free reign to use their creativity. They have already demonstrated their ability to combine sentences, but this activity will give them practice in writing the end of a sentence. In this activity, they are given sentence headers with coordinating conjunctions, and they have to add a simple sentence to complete the compound sentence. This activity focuses the students’ attention on the meaning of the coordinating conjunctions. They must read and understand the sentence. Then, using the coordinating conjunction as their guide, they need to think of a logical finish to the sentence. In this way, the students will demonstrate their understanding of the meaning and use of coordinating conjunctions.

From this, I would move on to an exercise that would focus the students’ attention more on the meaning of the sentences they are combining, since this is closer to the needs they will have when actually writing.

2. In order to fix the association in the students’ minds between language points covered in class and the writing they do on their own, it is often useful to guide them in applying the language points to their writing during class time, in some way. The second activity that I plan to do with the students is a warmer that I have used in the past. In this activity, the students write two simple sentences – one positive and one negative. They then circulate in the classroom, looking at their classmates’ sentences to see if they can find a “partner” for one of their sentences. If they find a sentence that goes with one of theirs, they write the new compound sentence on the board. In the feedback session, the whole class evaluates the sentences for their use of coordinating conjunctions and looks for any problems in meaning and in punctuation. This activity forces the students to
analyze the meaning of sentences together. There are no obvious answers, so the students have to focus on the meaning of the sentences and make judgments about whether they would logically fit together in some way. This is a key stumbling block in combining sentences — the students need to see beyond the need to use a variety of sentences and focus on whether doing so adds to or detracts from what they are trying to say.

To follow this, I would do an exercise that will remind the students that the coordinating conjunctions can also be used in simple sentences.

3. When the students write on their own, they are faced with many decisions as they try to combine sentences. In order to prepare the students for this, I propose an activity that is somewhat challenging, in which the students will be faced with these decisions. The third activity that I would use with the students is a sentence combining activity. In this activity, the students receive sets of two or three simple sentences that they are asked to combine. There are several different processes that the students need to go through to correctly rewrite the sentences. One key point in this exercise is that the students will need to remove any unnecessary repetition as they combine the sentences. They will need to choose appropriate conjunctions to use to combine the sentences and decide whether they should write a simple or compound sentence. These are all decisions that parallel the ones that they will be faced with in their own writing.

Part Two – A Closer look at Activity 3

It is an all too familiar sight that faces most writing teachers that students, when presented with a new structure, use it in a way that is overly formulaic or just plain wrong. However, with guidance and feedback there is hope for student writers. Ann
Raimes (1987) writes, quoting Peter Elbow, “Writing is, Peter Elbow (1985:26) says, “the ideal medium for getting it wrong.” It is also the ideal medium for eventually getting it right.” Sentence combining activities may seem an unlikely candidate for developing students’ decision making in their writing, but although they can at times be formulaic, the format of the exercise that I plan to use, of sets of sentences to be combined that will eventually form a paragraph, “does provide teachers and students with the opportunity to explore the number of syntactic options available and to relate them to meaning, style and register.” (Raimes, 1987)

Organization of Activity

First, I will write the following sentences on the board:

I like bananas.
I like apples.
I like pears.

I will ask the students to combine the sentences, with the objective of reaching the sentence: I like bananas, apples, and pears. In this way, we will focus on two things – the avoidance of repetition and the possibility to use AND in simple sentences. I will highlight the elimination of repetition by first asking the students which words are repeated in each sentence and underlining these words in a different color.

It is also quite common for my students to omit AND when they write lists, so this is another thing that I will highlight. After that, I will write the sentences:

The kitchen is big.
The bathroom is small.

And ask my students to combine them to make the sentence, “The kitchen is big, but the bathroom is small.” I will use this sentence to highlight the correct punctuation of compound sentences.
I will ask the students to do this in pairs, because of the problem solving aspect of the activity. I will out the students in pairs and give each pair one copy of the activity. I will remind the students to underline repeated words, and I will ask the students who will begin writing, because I will ask them to switch writers in the middle of the activity. I will emphasize that they are to use coordinating conjunctions in the sentences, not relative clauses.

Anticipated Problems

One problem that my class in particular has is that although I often ask them to do activities in pairs, they very often work alone. This is the reason for my wanting to give the pairs only one copy of the handout. In this way, they will be more or less forced to work together.

Another problem that the students may encounter is that the sentences are often easier to combine using relative clauses than coordinating conjunctions. Because the class is quite small, I think I will be able to manage this through close monitoring of the pairs. I believe that I can elicit the correct coordinating conjunction from the students when they are stuck. They will probably be able to figure out the rest of the sentence once they have chosen a conjunction.

Eliminating repetition is one of the most difficult aspects of this activity. By instructing the students to underline repeated words in each sentence, I hope to make it clearer to them that they will need to find a way of eliminating the repeated words or replacing them to preserve the sentence’s meaning.
In choosing these activities, I have tried to focus on different aspects of coordinating conjunction use. My aim in these activities is to help students use the coordinating conjunctions in as natural a way as possible, not to make them feel that they must write a compound sentence every time they use one. In choosing these activities, I have thought back to the words of Sean Austin: “with the assistance and guidance of experienced teachers, students need to learn to take responsibility for their own learning and the teachers must step back and encourage them to develop the skills to do so.”

1572 words

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Appendix Three to ICELT Symposium Report. Group Photo
TEACHING PRACTICE CYCLE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POSITIVE POINTS</th>
<th>POINTS TO CONSIDER</th>
<th>SUGGESTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Equal emphasis given on planning / actual teaching / language</td>
<td>• Interpretation – holistic vs. bitty</td>
<td>• Planning stage – ability of analyzing language</td>
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<td>• Opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>• Always rehearsing, never performing</td>
<td>• Avoid ICELT TP (observe ordinary lessons)</td>
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<td>• Positive washback on teaching</td>
<td>• Ts may “perform” for a grade.</td>
<td>• Giving extra chances for failing TPs.</td>
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<td>• Cyclical process</td>
<td>• Ts may spend unnecessary time for planning and creating materials (not teach “normally”)</td>
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<td>• Action points never end</td>
<td>• Balance between product and development</td>
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<td>• Ts learn to reflect + evaluate own planning and teaching</td>
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<td>• Ts learn to recognize their strengths</td>
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<td>• Difference between T-centered and L-centered teaching is highlighted in the criteria</td>
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ASSIGNMENTS

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<tr>
<td>• LTs: topics are very practical / relevant</td>
<td>• Drafting process / Resubmission – What is the difference?</td>
<td>MAs – more helpful criteria (guidelines / clarity / examples) What about peer observation tasks?</td>
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<td>• MAs: topics are very practical / relevant</td>
<td>• Resubmission in order to get a merit?</td>
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<td>• Tasks and assignments are adaptable to context</td>
<td>• Assessment criteria overlaps – difference between a pass &amp; a merit / borderline pass and a strong pass?</td>
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<td>• Balance between methodology and language</td>
<td>• LTs: content vs. language –</td>
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<td>• Link between assignments and TPs (eg: planning)</td>
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<td>• Classroom based, practical assignments which help Ts develop their teaching.</td>
<td>• LT3 challenging</td>
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<td>• Is it assessment driven or is it for self-development?</td>
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