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**LearnTech**

LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES FOR BASIC EDUCATION

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Jim Hoxeng, AID, R&D/Education

**FROM:** Bernadine Skowronski, Program Assistant, LearnTech *BS*

**DATE:** January 10, 1994

**RE:** South Africa Radio Learning Project Interim Evaluation

Mike asked me to send you the enclosed copies of the South Africa Radio Learning Project's Interim Evaluation and cover letter from Stuart Leigh. If you have any questions or comments about these materials, please call Mike directly.

*take det. talk issue @ 11:30*

*(823)*

*advance from 7 forms*

*give me a break!*

*project doesn't/cant*

*make policy*

*p 30*

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A

DT: December 2, 1993  
TO: Mike Laflin  
CC: Gordon Naidoo, Manie Eagar  
FR: Stuart Leigh  
RE: Completed Interim Evaluation

need  
1/12  
read  
1/13

Here is the interim evaluation. You may have read my responses to the evaluators which preceded this final form of the report. In a meeting on Tuesday Nov. 30 with Nene, Potter, and Arnott we discussed their final drafts and agreed on a few additional changes that are included here. The report is acceptable to OLSET and, on balance and in view of the need to get this out, to me. It surely does incorporate a more even and positive view. It has gone out to Cherie Rassas and Dave Evans. Manie is distributing it further now.

Charles came in at 50 pages plus findings at 18 pages. Gordon and I felt the need to include Arnott's work as an appendix here with Hector Nava in mind, since he seems to be very interested in the quantitative side of the evaluation. We wanted him to have assurance that this side was being thoroughly treated. Nene's is also an appendix.

In response to my written suggestion to Charles that the report should carry a succinct description of the project's aims, background, and main structures - which he had not done - Charles asked that we provide such a section. I took that opportunity to present the history and extent of the adaptation process there (just behind the executive summary). This was to try to redress the fact that he did not acknowledge the nature and depth of the adaptation from the Kenya model. Nor does he yet. In our Nov. 30 meeting Charles said that he did not believe there had been a significant improvement or advance over the Kenyan material. I take exception to this. This position of his (not explicit but implied in the paper) is nowhere supported in his paper.

My position on this point is strengthened by our discussion of his evaluation of our teaching materials at the meeting on the 30th. Charles agreed (in Manie's and Gordon's presence) that there was a "flaw" in the report; namely that his discussion of the teaching materials is incomplete. It begins with a discussion of supporting print materials, moves on to teacher-made materials (not an explicit focus of our work), and largely neglects the design of radio lesson itself. The radio materials are dealt with in the context of radio as a delivery medium. There is positive notice of their production values but no specifics on their design. I took pains both in writing and at the meeting to outline the "communicative radio activity" re-design work we had done, but, without his having looked at it in the data collection phase, he seems not to have wished to work it into his argument.

Thorough and highly professional as the paper is, its conclusions might have been informed by additional study of the design of the radio materials. This can be addressed in the next phase. Had it been fully done here, the nature of the findings might have been a bit different ... but not much, I suspect, given Charles' orientation.

In spite of what may be lack of appreciation of certain elements of our work, the net effect of the evaluation is positive. The evaluation has alerted us to the fact that there is a curriculum development process through which any education NGO and materials provider in South Africa will be required to go. The OLSET team is responding to a challenge.

As a result of the evaluation and other inputs, OLSET has now committed to major further changes on level 1. The level 1 team made their plan known to management on Thursday and it was much more radical than I had expected and told you about in our last conversation. So any future analysis or defense of EIA will have to be in the context of an ongoing (probably 3 year instead of 2 year) materials development process for level 1. The value of this year's evaluation - test results and all - (vis a vis our ESL teaching materials and outcomes) is thus reduced - insofar as it might have been used to support adoption of this particular set of programs (or a closely adapted version).

I believe that this deep revision approach can work in OLSET's favor in the long run and possibly break new ground in IRI development - but only if the new work is as user friendly, well written and produced, and as well accepted by the teachers, students, etc. as that which we have done to date. Unfortunately, this cannot be guaranteed given the depth of revision at the levels of content and, much more importantly, at the level of format as is now firmly proposed and begun by Saveria's level 1 team. Nothing ventured nothing gained. Rebecca and I will need to do closer work than we had expected on both levels 1 and 2 to try to assure us all that the programs will really work in the classroom.

Should this process produce acceptance for EIA in South Africa it will have been worth it. Perhaps there is no other way. Certainly for Charles at this stage there is not. I must say, though, that I regret that a year's quality audio production, well accepted and appreciated by teachers and evaluated so that formative design changes might have produced a finished product in 1994, is going to be a casualty of this process.

Further distribution of this document could carry some mention of the fact that we have noted and agreed that there is a missing aspect of the report - analysis of the radio lesson design - but I'm not sure that it would change anything at the practical level of what OLSET now feels it must do.

I have chosen to write a neutral introductory letter to the report.

I look forward to hearing what you think of it.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION  
OF "ENGLISH IN ACTION" IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT

This interim evaluation report is the first in a series of independent external evaluations of OLSET's Radio Learning Project. The report was commissioned by LearnTech/Real World Productions and by OLSET to assess the progress of the project through September 1993. It is seen as a first step in a larger two-step study to be completed in 1994 which will assess the project over a longer developmental period.

The evaluation team, coordinated by Dr. Charles Potter (University of the Witwatersrand), includes Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis (Policy Support Unit of the Education Foundation, and University of the Witwatersrand, but working here collectively as ProSearch), and Sbongile Nene (National Women's Resource and Service Center). Dr. Potter has acted as overall coordinator of the evaluation and has taken the lead in the qualitative assessment of the project, except in the area of "focus groups", which were developed and facilitated by Sbongile Nene. The ProSearch team has been responsible for the pre-test and post-test design and statistical analysis work. (Their reporting here covers only the pre-test results. Post-test results will be available in January.) These collected reports represent their various contributions.

To date the dominant work of the Radio Learning Project has been the development of a series of radio/audio programmes (called "English In Action") to teach English in the earliest grades of primary school. Hence the emphasis in this study on the Radio Learning Project's outputs related to "English In Action". There are, however, other project outputs not fully assessed in this study. In June 1993, OLSET held a conference on primary mathematics instruction by radio which led to a 5 programme Pre-Pilot in October and November. But since most of the work done in developing and testing these programmes and materials took place since the end of the period covered by this evaluation, the evaluation of the radio mathematics Pre-Pilot is not included in this interim report. The evaluation of that aspect of the Radio Learning Project is being done by other mathematics education evaluation specialists. Those papers will be available in mid-December 1993.

As is described in the main report, this interim evaluation has been conceived and designed following a multi-level participatory and developmental model so that it may maximally assist the project in assessing its achievements and in taking timely and appropriate steps to attend to areas that need further attention.

In keeping with the original design of the evaluation, draft versions of the documents compiled and summarized in this report were provided to project management in mid-October. These documents include:

- o The Development and Implementation of "English In Action" in South Africa: An Interim Evaluation Report: by Charles Potter, Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis, and Sbongile Nene.
- o Pre-Test Report of "English In Action" Programme, October 1993: Arnott, Mansfield and Mentis - ProSearch.
- o OLSET Focus Group Project, August-September 1993: Preliminary Report: Sbongile Nene.
- o Findings from the Interim Evaluation of "English In Action" as of September 1993: by Charles Potter, Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis, and Sbongile Nene.

Project management, LearnTech/RWP advisors and OLSET staff were asked to respond to the issues and arguments raised in the draft documents. The project team has welcomed the thoughtful comments of the evaluators and is taking significant steps to address many of the issues raised. Notable among current activities are:

- o renewed curriculum development research for two levels of "English In Action";
- o further design refinements of the radio lesson formats;
- o introduction of a "bridging programme" for the first term of Sub A;
- o further teacher training audio programme production; and
- o training in English language teaching methods and in teacher support for the regional coordinators.

Specific responses to the evaluators were provided in written form.

The evaluation team in turn has now responded to the comments and additional information provided by the project team. This summary interim evaluation document, while still attending only to project activity through mid-September of 1993, reflects this ongoing feedback process.

Stuart Leigh

30 November 1993

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- II. FINDINGS: The Development and Implementation of "English In Action" in South Africa, An Interim Evaluation Report: by Charles Potter, Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis and Sbongile Nene ..... 53

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1. Pre-Test Report of "English In Action" Programme: by Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, and Mandia Mentis
  
2. OLSET Focus Group Project, August-September 1993, Preliminary Report: by Sbongile Nene

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF  
"ENGLISH IN ACTION" IN SOUTH AFRICA

An Interim Evaluation Report

by Charles Potter, Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis  
and Sbongile Nene

September 1993

## 1. Executive Summary

This evaluation has focused on six questions, based on the six major issues which we as evaluators have been asked to consider in terms of the separate subcontracts established with us by Real World Productions (RWP) under Education Development Center (EDC) prime Core Contract no. DPE-5818-C-00-0044-00, between EDC and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

These issues are:

- \* whether the "English in Action" radio curriculum is effective in teaching primary English
- \* the degree to which teachers are empowered, supported in their jobs and assisted in professionalisation
- \* acceptance of the series by the community inclusive of teachers, parents, principals and other stakeholders
- \* the efficacy of radio and cassette as a delivery medium
- \* the effect of the project on the school environment in the widest sense of the term
- \* cost-effectiveness of the programme, and the economies of scale for national implementation

Each of these issues has been considered separately in this interim report, based on evidence collected and analyzed in a series of separate working documents, which we detail as follows:

- a. Preliminary Report on the OLSET Focus Group Project: by Sbongile Nene (Appendix 2).
- b. Preliminary Design Proposal For "English In Action" Pilot Evaluation: by Angela Arnott, Mandia Mentis and John Mansfield.
- c. Pre-Test Report of "English In Action" Programme, October 1993; by Angela Arnott, Mandia Mentis and John Mansfield. (Appendix 1).
- d. Formative and Summative Evaluation Design for a Radio Learning Project: by Charles Potter.
- e. Evaluation Methodology: by Charles Potter.
- f. The Development and Implementation of "English in Action": An Evaluation Report for the OLSET Team: by Charles Potter.
- g. Findings from the Interim Evaluation of "English in Action" as at September 1993: by Charles Potter, Angela Arnott, John Mansfield, Mandia Mentis and Sbongile Nene.

In terms of the central questions which have guided the evaluation, our conclusions are as follows:

1. Is the "English in Action" radio curriculum effective in teaching primary English?

Our evidence would suggest that the project is effective in teaching primary English. This conclusion is based on qualitative evidence from observation in the classroom, as well as interviews with teachers and principals, discussion with teachers, principals and parents in teacher support groups and focus groups, and accounts given by teachers, principals and parents in cases studies.

We aren't yet in a position to provide quantitative evidence as to learning gains, but have conducted pre-testing in a number of schools. Based on our observation of the project in action, it is likely that such evidence will be forthcoming.

Despite positive indications from the classroom, the evidence would suggest that the project is weak as regards both curriculum development expertise, as well as expertise in ESL teaching. We do not believe that the project will gain the acceptance of the educational establishment as regards adoption on a large-scale, unless these weaknesses are addressed.

2. To what degree are teachers empowered, supported in their jobs and assisted in professionalisation?

Our evidence, based on the same qualitative data sources referred to under Question 1 above, would suggest that teachers are empowered through the programme. We find the efforts of the regional coordinators, and the teacher support group structure established by the project particularly significant in this respect. We believe, however, that the effectiveness of these efforts will be diminished unless the project establishes clear policy in respect of teacher development, which is at present tacit, rather than explicit.

3. What is the level of acceptance of the project by the community inclusive of teachers, parents, principals and other stakeholders?

We find that the project is well accepted by its school-based stakeholders, and find the Focus Group structure, and the Teacher Support Group structure established by the project significant in providing avenues for ongoing consultation and sharing of information on the project. Our evidence would suggest that the project is better accepted than a year ago, and we conclude that the efforts of management have been particularly significant in establishing an overall policy for consultation, which would appear to be effective.

We have recommended, however, that networking should form part of the job descriptions of all members of the project team, and that this external contact should be directed at keeping abreast of an educational context which is changing rapidly. It should also be linked to a process of continuing education within the project, focused in particular on creating a climate within which staff members are encouraged to present their work to others, and receive their comment and critical appraisal. We believe that this level of formalisation is essential to the process of curriculum development, and will be effective in improving communication across the project as a whole.

4. How suitable, efficacious and acceptable are the project's teaching materials?

We find that the technical team have done their market research into classroom-based hardware (radio-tape machines, tapes and batteries) well. Despite being short-staffed, those involved in writing and production have met their deadlines, and have produced a set of lessons which are audible, well-produced, and enjoyed by the pupils and teachers.

The use of music within the lessons is particularly effective in maintaining the attention and involvement of the pupils, and we conclude that the production side of the project has gone particularly well.

We have, however, raised a number of issues in our report and working documents, both with respect to the content of the curriculum, as well as the overall methodology. We have also raised a concern as to whether tape or radio is preferable within South Africa, which is a multi-lingual context with eleven official languages. We understand that the project is addressing our concerns with respect to curriculum and methodology, as is committed to keeping the radio/tape option open to the preference and choice of the communities with which the project is working presently, and those with which it will work in the future.

5. What is the effect of the project on the school environment in the widest sense of the term?

In answering this question, we have examined evidence both from the project and the international literature on school-based innovation, with respect to the role of teachers in development, the role of principals as key innovators, and the role of parents in education.

In terms of indications from the literature, we conclude that the the project has established a number of structures with great potential. These include teacher support groups, and focus groups, which have the potential of bringing the different stakeholders involved in education together. There is also great potential for further community-based development based on the programme in the schools, and in particular for providing avenues

for parents to play a greater role in the education of their children.

6. What is the cost effectiveness of the programme, and the economies of scale for national implementation?

This question has not been considered at this stage due to the need for the programme to state clearly its policies on curriculum development and teacher development. These policy issues have implications for how the programme is likely to be staffed, and thus for any costing.

What it will be possible to do at this stage, is to work within a broad framework relating to the research and development phases of the project. Once the project's response to the issues we have raised on curriculum is clearer, it should be able to provide broad cost estimates, based on a number of scenarios. We envisage that the project's response to the criticisms made of their approach will become increasingly clearer and more defined, and that as this takes place, more detailed costing should be possible. It is our intention to commence this aspect of the work in January 1994.

Overall, based on our answers to these questions, and on the issues which have arisen in the course of this interim evaluation, we believe that the programme has great potential. The potential lies at the level of the classroom and the school, where we have seen great enthusiasm for the programme, and potential for significant development.

However, the programme will need to direct considerable attention to the issue of curriculum development, and in particular, the issue of how the approach advocated by the programme meets the current criteria of the official curriculum in the lower primary school, as well as the likely criteria for teaching at this level in the future education system. In addition, the issue of teacher development, which is currently implicit in what the project is attempting at school level, will need to be foregrounded to a greater extent.

We make these recommendations based on our assumption that it is coherent ideas embodied in sound practice which are adopted by others. Both are necessary both to work at greater scale, as well as to the decision of a future education authority to implement the programme at scale.

We have devoted in our working documents considerable attention to the issues of curriculum and teacher development, due to our perception that these aspects has been underemphasised in the project. We are assured by the project team that the issues we have raised are receiving attention.

We also wish to stress the considerable achievements of the project, which have been achieved in circumstances which have been difficult from the point of under-staffing, and under great

time pressure. The project has succeeded in establishing the basic infrastructure and momentum for development. The evidence from this evaluation indicates clearly that the principals, teachers and pupils are enthusiastic about what the programme has to offer, and wish the programme to continue with its work.

## 2. The Aims, Background, and Main Structures of OLSET'S Radio Learning Project (Note 1):

### 2.1 Aims

OLSET'S Radio Learning Project (RLP) intends to improve the quality of basic education in South Africa in a cost-effective manner through the provision of educational radio/audio and integrated print. The project focuses on using radio/audio as an instructional tool in primary schools and as an aid in teacher training and development.

### 2.2 Background

The activities of the RLP development stage were planned to be carried out in three phases from March 1992 through December 1994. Phase I (June to December 1992) has been completed and Phase II (January to December 1993) is presently in progress.

#### A. Phase 1

Prior to Phase 1, through various needs analyses and through national and international consultation, OLSET decided to begin to develop a series of "multi-media" (radio/ audio cassette programmes plus integrated print) to teach English at the entry level in primary schools (SSA level). The first step was a March-June 1992 Pre-Pilot project centered around production and field testing of 15 interactive radio lessons. The pre-pilot involved about 1200 children in 24 classrooms in 2 regions. The Pre-pilot was designed to assess the possibility of delivering high quality English language instruction via radio at the primary school level; begin to develop and demonstrate OLSET'S institutional capacity to produce and deliver useful and effective radio education programmes; and, by incorporating a range of significant local professional opinion in the evaluation, determine the degree and nature of necessary revisions.

The 15 initial Pre-Pilot programmes (called "English In Action") were well received by students, teachers, principals. They expressed an interest in the continuation of the programmes. In critical comment sought out from a range of senior ESL professionals, the programmes were seen to demonstrate both significant promise and the need for further revision of the radio instruction model to bring the Pre-Pilot'S interactive radio education model further into line with locally accepted communicative language teaching theory and practice. (See Pre-

Pilot Final Report by Stuart Leigh, June 1992).

From July 1 to the end of Phase 1 at year end, the project focused on hiring and training of staff and on revision of the Pre-Pilot radio instruction model. Early in this stage OLSET held a consultative conference with its earlier professional ESL critics and others in the field. A new radio format design was arrived at in the meeting. About 1/3 of the half hour radio lesson would be wholly new, consisting of various "Teacher-Led Activities". These were introduced to complement the existing songs, games, physical activities, and focused radio-led teaching segments. The new teacher-led activities called for contextualized language teaching in pairs and in small and large groups. The changes were designed to make the radio assisted teaching more communicative than it was found to be in the previous model. And these changes were an integral part of OLSET's approach to teacher development in that they would suggest daily practice with a wide set of useful and progressive communicative language teaching activities, thereby assisting teachers to become more familiar and comfortable with the modern communicative language teaching methods and practices now being promoted in South Africa.

The new design (the "Re-Pilot") was retrialed in a small number of schools and teachers reported the new design to be more child centered and more in keeping with other progressive teaching practices that they knew about.

## B. Phase 2

With support for the new model OLSET proceeded with plans to complete a year long pilot test of the revised type of "English In Action" programmes in classrooms in four regions of the country. OLSET established four regional offices in Durban, East London, Bloemfontein, and Johannesburg; regional coordinators were hired; and principals in 103 schools of various types and teachers in 302 classes agreed to use "English in Action" (EIA) to teach English as a second language to their entry level classes for the entire 1993 academic year. The central project structures and processes to support this work which were actualized this year (by November 30) include:

### a. Training for project staff:

- o a series of 2 and 3 day workshops for regional coordinators on management, on ESL teacher training, and on evaluation;
- o ongoing on-the-job training for radio producers and scriptwriters with LearnTech technical advisors
- o overseas intensive summer university training in development communication for the Project Manager (4 weeks) and for one of the Transvaal regional coordinators (2 weeks);

- o 3 week scriptwriting workshop for OLSET and other NGO scriptwriters, selected radio producers, and for OLSET scriptwriting administrative staff;
- b. Training for schools' staff:
- o a half day orientation workshop for principals of participating schools;
  - o 2 day training workshops for teachers highlighting radio instruction and language teaching methods, assisted by a 5 module 45-minute video programme on OLSET's radio instruction system (including radio programmes, print, face-to-face and audio and video inservicing, and formative evaluation);
  - o teacher support groups - in each region groups of teachers from nearby schools meet to do demonstration EIA lessons receiving OLSET regional coordinator and peer support;
  - o a year-end teacher's workshop with central staff to assess EIA materials and project support and to give input for production of revised level 1 and new level 2 programmes;
  - o daily visits to schools by regional coordinators (at least once per month to each school) for purposes of monthly inservicing and delivery of materials;
- c. Production - the central production tasks included:
- o writing 130 daily radio/audio lesson scripts;
  - o producing 130 daily 4 voice radio/audio lessons, each of a duration of 29:30;
  - o duplicating cassette copies of all programs needed for each class;
- d. Production/distribution - for each teacher and classroom:
- o distribution of up to 120 daily radio/audio lessons; (Due to disturbances, no school progressed beyond 120 lessons this year and many schools did far fewer lessons. For reasons of economy, only cassettes actually needed in classrooms this year were printed and distributed.);
  - o daily teacher's notes in expandable notebook form including: general discussions of language teaching methodology, radio usage, daily lesson plans, and ideas for language teaching activities in periods beyond the audio lessons themselves;
  - o 12 workbook sheets for each child (later to be bound);

- o two full color posters (an urban and a rural scene);
- o a multi-color alphabet frieze;
- o teacher training audio cassette programmes (1 was completed by the end of the interim evaluation period, 2 by Nov. 30);

e. Evaluation:

- o a comprehensive developmental evaluation including summative and formative dimensions and using both quantitative and qualitative techniques (including regional community focus groups, case studies in each region, pre/post tests, interviews, etc.)

f. Research:

- o a conference on primary mathematics instruction by radio which led to a 5 programme Pre-Pilot in the Western Cape during October and November (after the end of the period that is the subject of this interim evaluation report);
- o initial teacher development syllabus development;

3. The Evaluation Brief

This evaluation was conducted over a nine month period, from January 1993 to end September 1993.

The focuses of the evaluation were established in consultation with staff of the project, based on a series of meetings. The decision was taken to implement an evaluation which would have both formative and summative elements.

The evaluation would focus on the following issues:

- \* whether the "English in Action" radio curriculum was effective in teaching primary English
- \* the degree to which teachers were empowered, supported in their jobs and assisted in professionalisation
- \* acceptance of the series by the community inclusive of teachers, parents, principals and other stakeholders
- \* the efficacy of radio and cassette as a delivery medium
- \* the effect of the project on the school environment in the widest sense of the term
- \* cost-effectiveness of the programme, and the economies of scale for national implementation

#### 4. Evaluation Design: Purposes of the Evaluation

Following a series of meetings between the evaluators and the project team, an initial design document was written, which proposed a pre-test post-test comparative design. This document was discussed at a meeting held in January, following which the design was expanded. Two major purposes for the evaluation were proposed:

- a. Provision of information relative to developmental decision-making (a formative purpose); and
- b. Provision of information in relation to the effectiveness of what the project was doing, and progress made in terms of the developmental task (a summative purpose).

The former purpose implied examination of the nature of developmental decisions being taken by those working in the project, as well as the capacity of the project to provide the necessary information to those who needed it.

The latter purpose implied examination of both process and product dimensions of the curriculum. With respect to product, measurement-based evaluation would be most valuable, in terms of establishing learning gains made by pupils. Qualitative data relating to curriculum design and lesson implementation would also be relevant.

With respect to process, however, the focus of the project on involving various stakeholders in its development would require additional, and more broad-based information. Here, qualitative data would be most valuable (eg interviews; observational data; case studies of aspects of the project's work; accounts and testimony of those involved in the process).

#### 5. Evaluation Design: Models of Evaluation

In terms of these purposes, a multi-level, broad-based evaluation design was needed. Relative to the project as innovation, it would need to be broad enough to accommodate information relative to context, as well as planning. It would need to be capable of accommodating information relative to process, as well as product.

Relative to the curriculum as the centre of the enterprise, the evaluation methodology would need to encompass the level of curriculum design, as well as the level of action and reality in the classroom.

Two models or frameworks of evaluation were suggested as suited to the context of the project. With respect to the project as innovation, the CIPP (Context, Input, Process and Product) model

developed by Stufflebeam (1969; 1973; 1983) was proposed. With respect to the curriculum, the VIPA (Vision, Intention, Policy and Action) model was suggested as broad enough to accommodate the different levels of the project's work. This latter model was developed by the senior author of the evaluation (Potter 1991 (a) and (b); Potter and Moodie 1991; 1992; Potter (in press)), based on the work of Joseph Schwab (1962; 1969; 1971; 1973) and Decker Walker (1969; 1971) of Stanford University, and the late Lawrence Stenhouse (1975; 1980; 1983) of the University of East Anglia.

These models would be used in combination, implying an examination of the innovation as multi-level, encompassing project and curriculum. The dimensions of the innovation examined would include context, planning and design as well as implementation, process and product. This would involve evaluation based on qualitative as well as quantitative data, of a project as an innovation involving people in various roles, engaged in an ongoing process of conceptualisation, design, action, and reflection on action (Carr and Kemmis 1986).

## 6. Methodology

Within this design framework, three teams of evaluators were contracted by OLSET to fulfil different aspects of data gathering and evaluation. Angela Arnott, Mandia Mentis and John Mansfield of Pro-Search undertook test development and conducted pre- and post-testing in a structured sample of 71 primary schools. Sbongile Nene, formerly of Edupol, and now of the National Women's Resource and Service Centre, undertook evaluation of the Focus Group initiative developed as part of OLSET's support structures for the "English in Action" Project. This involved regional visits as well as interviews with teachers and principals involved in the project.

Charles Potter of the University of the Witwatersrand interviewed project staff as well as teachers involved in the project, and conducted visits to the different regions. Four schools were visited in each region, observation was conducted of teaching in these schools, observation was also conducted of a demonstration lesson in each region taught as part of the Teacher Support Group structure established by the project to support "English in Action," and observation conducted of the Focus Groups run in each region. In addition, project documentation was reviewed, and supplemented by written self evaluations conducted by each OLSET staff member, based on the model suggested by Fetterman (1993 (a) and (b)), and case studies conducted by the regional coordinators of four schools within each region (Note 2).

The data collected by this means encompassed some two thousand pages, which were ordered into different data sources. Each data source was then treated as a separate cell, for purposes of data triangulation (Note 3).

At this stage, data analysis was conducted separately by each of the evaluation teams. The reports of each evaluation team were

also written and submitted separately, for purposes of investigator triangulation (Note 4). Evaluation reports were then scrutinised by the different evaluation teams, as the basis for a process of peers debriefing (Note 5). Client debriefing also took place (Note 6), further extending the possibilities for triangulation.

This summary report was then compiled, out of the debriefing process.

## 7. Format of the Report

In reporting our findings in this interim report, we focus on those issues which we were asked to examine under our contract, and also on a number of broader issues which have emerged in the course of our contact with the project team. We were asked to examine six issues, as follows:

- \* whether the "English in Action" radio curriculum was effective in teaching primary English
- \* the degree to which teachers are empowered, supported in their jobs and assisted in professionalisation
- \* acceptance of the series by the community inclusive of teachers, parents, principals and other stakeholders
- \* the efficacy of radio and cassette as a delivery medium
- \* the effect of the project on the school environment in the widest sense of the term
- \* cost-effectiveness of the programme, and the economies of scale for national implementation

Each of these issues forms a separate section in this report. We first consider the evidence in relation to the issue, which is posed as a research question. We then consider problems and issues, relevant to the project's development, arising from the data. We then conclude each section with an evaluation, relevant to the issue.

At the end of the report we conclude with a summary, which brings out the major trends from the evaluation. The interested reader is also referred to our working documents, and to the list of findings which emerged from the analyses in our working documents. These are referred to throughout this report, and form the basis for this interim evaluation.

The purpose of this report is to summarise progress made by the project. It also raises issues and concerns. It should be borne in mind that the data on which we report were gathered up to the end of September 1993. We have already reported our findings verbally, and presented them formally in our working papers. These have been discussed with the project team over the past two

months. Many of the issues raised have been, or are in process of being, responded to by the project.

The responses of the project team to the issues we raise are thus also referred to throughout this report. Where an issue has been raised, accepted by the project team, and is being attended to, this is reported, and will be returned to in our final report.

## 8. Issues and Findings

### 8.1 Is the "English in Action" radio curriculum effective in teaching primary English?

#### A. Structures Established by the Project to gather Information concerning Pupil Progress

The structures established by the project to gather information from and about the pupils in the project are tests, classroom visits and observation, the reports of teachers, principals and parents concerning pupil progress, and case studies. On the level of testing, procedures have been established to gather information from the pupils, using a stratified two-stage cluster sample based on region, school type and grouping as experimental and control schools. A test of receptive language has been used for the purpose.

This year, the receptive language test will be used on a pre- and post-test basis. At the pre-test stage, 35 experimental schools and 36 control schools were sampled. 2255 pupils in total were tested of whom 53% were in urban schools, 21,5% in farm schools, 14,3% in informal settlement schools and 6,9% in rural schools.

To counter the effects of self selection, and to minimise spill-over effects, both the experimental and control groups were, where possible, randomly selected from these volunteer schools. Some of the schools had already been allocated to control and experimental groups by the OLSET coordinators. As a result of this some sample bias crept in. Taking into account that the test dates varied across the sample, this information was used as a co-variate to control for differences between groups.

The pretest used was a version of the RLAP test implemented in Imhoof and Christensen's (1986) study of the development of "English in Action" in Kenya. The pre-test was modified in consultation with language specialists, remedial therapists, Sub A classroom teachers and the OLSET curriculum development team, with a view to making it more applicable to the context, and the South African Sub A curriculum.

The pre-test was found to be reliable, though some items in the test were too easy. There were some problems with test administration. The problems, however, were not of such a magnitude as to invalidate the data. Analysis at the pre-test

stage indicated that as a testing instrument the pre-test was sufficiently difficult to allow improvement of performance at the post-test stage. There was also reasonable discrimination across items.

While at this stage (September 1993), post-test data are not available, the results of the pre-test indicate that:

- \* differences in performance between the control groups and the experimental group were controlled for
- \* there were significant differences in scores on gender, suggesting that girls performed better on the test than boys
- \* there were significant differences in scores on school type -- pupils from informal settlement schools tended to perform better on the test than pupils from other school types (Note 7)
- \* there were significant differences in scores on regional type -- pupils from the OFS had greater difficulty with the test than pupils from other regions.

The evidence to date would thus suggest that it is likely that the comparison of pre and post-test data will yield useful information concerning the performance of pupils in classes being taught using the "English in Action" programme, relative to children in the mainstream whose teachers are not involved in the programme.

In addition to these quantitative procedures, OLSET has established a structure of regular class visiting by the regional coordinator to each school and each classroom participating in the programme. During the class visits, the regional coordinator observes the lesson, and then fills out an evaluation form. This focuses on the interaction between teacher and pupils in the lessons, as well as the form and structure of the lesson itself.

Copies of these forms, as well as a weekly report summarising the data from class visits, are sent to Head Office. The purpose is to inform those in the administration of the programme, as well as those involved in writing and production of lessons, how implementation is proceeding.

Groups of teachers are also involved in observing each others' teaching. This takes the form of a demonstration lesson, involving the pupils, to which teachers from other schools in the immediate vicinity are invited. This structure of inter-school visiting has been set up on a pilot level in all the regions.

## B. Problems and Issues

Questions were raised in our interim reports as to whether classroom-based information was being adequately utilised by the

project, and also whether the focus of classroom-based evaluation was correct. We raised concerns as to whether sufficient emphasis was being placed on language teaching issues, both regionally and centrally. We made recommendations that the project should place a greater emphasis on training its staff in ESL teaching, that more staff with ESL background should be employed when staffing up the project regionally, and that those OLSET staff involved in curriculum development should become part of the existing ESL networks, with a view to becoming more aware of the issues in the field, and how these relate to the work of the project.

We understand that the project team have responded to our comments, and have increased the emphasis on implementing a system of in-service training for OLSET staff, focusing on ESL issues. The project team have also accepted our recommendations concerning the need for each member of the project team to become part of the existing ESL and INSET networks, and to allow space within the programme for information from these networks to be shared and incorporated into project and curriculum planning.

We also understand that evaluation forms and internal evaluation procedures have been revised, with greater emphasis on providing information appropriate to Head Office and the writers, on the one hand, and response from Head Office to the regional coordinators, on the other. Our recommendation concerning greater emphasis on ESL issues regionally is also receiving attention.

We will thus report further on these issues, and the central issue of progress in the classroom, in our final report.

### C. Evaluation

At this point in time, the evidence would suggest that the project has established procedures for the collection of information concerning the progress of pupils in the classroom which is both quantitative and qualitative. A wider variety of data is currently available.

Information available to the curriculum development team includes information from psychometric tests, classroom observation, interviews, demonstration lessons, teacher support groups, the testimony of principals and parents, and case studies of participating schools.

Our evidence would suggest that the pupils participate enthusiastically in the radio lessons, and that the writers and technical team have created lessons which are highly interactive, and capable of engaging and maintaining the attention of the pupils. From the comments made by teachers across a variety of schools, as well as observation of the participation of pupils in the classroom, it would appear likely that learning gains from comparison of pretest/post-test scores will be demonstrated.

There are thus grounds for optimism concerning the development of the programme at present. The optimism relates to the evidence

that, despite severe time and staffing constraints, the project has managed to meet its objectives in terms of producing radio lessons on time, and distributing these to the schools. The optimism further relates to the enthusiastic reception of the material in the schools, and the clear enjoyment of the lessons by the pupils.

At the same time, however, there are cautions. These relate to the limitations of pre-test/post-test data as regards providing information as to whether the current form of the "English in Action" curriculum is appropriate, and likely to meet the criteria of the educational authorities as regards large-scale adoption.

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These concerns have been discussed with the project team, who acknowledge that too little emphasis has been placed on curriculum development up to this point, and have taken steps to include curriculum specialists as well as more writers within the team with background in lower primary school teaching and second language teaching. The reader is referred to our separately tabled findings (especially findings 50 to 53), and to the relevant sections in our working papers which relate to these issues. We will report on these further in our final evaluation report.

## 8.2 To what Degree are Teachers Empowered, Supported in their Jobs and Assisted in Professionalisation?

### A. Structures for the Involvement of Teachers in the Project

OLSET has established a process of in-school visiting by the regional coordinators. In addition, a process of inter-school visiting by teachers, centred around a teacher support group structure, has been developed. This format enables teachers to see other teachers at work in the classroom, and also enables teachers to visit other schools in their area.

This structure is of significance in an educational context in which inter-school visiting has traditionally been minimal, and in which teachers do not normally visit each others' classrooms, due to the logistical difficulties and formalities involved.

From observation of demonstration lessons in the schools, as well as teacher support groups in the schools, the inter-school visiting system appears to work well, and to complement the project's work. In certain of the schools, parents have been included in the demonstration lessons, and have then been involved in the teacher support group meeting. In certain of the schools, the principals have also been included in the meeting, while in others, participation has purely involved teachers.

In each of these various forms, the teacher support groups established by the project provides a school-based structure, at which the programme can be discussed, with particular emphasis

on teaching in the context of the lesson observed. The evidence would suggest that the discussion and transactions between those involved in the teacher support groups are fruitful, both in their possibilities for developing a broad base of teacher and parent support for the programme, as well as for their possibilities as regards school-based in-service training and lesson evaluation.

The literature on educational innovation (eg Fullan 1979; 1991; Hawes 1979) would suggest the value of teacher support structures which are as close as possible to the actual experience of the teacher in the classroom. Most effective are those types of in-servicing which are ongoing, supported by teacher groups or associations, and which take into account the differential impact of positive and negative factors within the schools within which teachers work. These forms of school-based in-service training stand in contrast to one-shot workshops, which are wide-spread practice, but relatively ineffective.

In terms of these indications from the literature, the type of in-school sharing of experience currently being promoted by the project as part of the teacher support group structure would appear to be promising, particularly as the project has taken steps to link this process with the focus group structure established regionally, in which representatives of the project's various community-based stakeholders (parents; teachers; principals; community-based organisations and leadership) as well as representatives of the educational bureaucracy (subject advisers and in particular the inspectorate) are included.

At present, with respect to the involvement and empowerment of teachers, the evidence would suggest that the project staff, and in particular the regional coordinators, have been successful in gaining the participation and interest of teachers and principals in the initiative. Those who have played a role in creating the infra-structure and support necessary to developing the structure of in-school visiting as well as inter-school visiting in teacher support groups, and the regional focus group structure are to be commended for their efforts.

#### B. Indications concerning the Involvement of Teachers in the Classroom

The evidence from the classrooms visited, the teacher support groups and the focus groups would suggest that the majority of teachers are implementing the programme regularly. The commitment of the teachers to doing so would appear to be high.

The majority of the classes visited were proceeding through the programme fairly quickly. Certain of the teachers were repeating tapes to ensure that the children understood the work. Many teachers commented on the increasing complexity of the programme, and commented favourably on the pupils' ability to cope with the increasing level.

A number of teachers provided tangible evidence supporting their belief that progress was being made through participation in the programme. The sequence of instruction from level to level, the increasing complexity of language used, the evidence that the pupils enjoy the lessons, the continuing participation of the pupils in the lessons, as well as the evidence that pupils were coping with greater complexity of instruction, were sources of evidence cited by the teachers in this respect.

A number of teachers believed that the pupils were attending school more regularly than previously. The evidence in this area was, however, mixed. Contact with certain of the principals in the schools visited suggested that the schools had very high attendance rates prior to the implementation of the programme. The claim about increased attendance would thus need to be substantiated. This could form one of the focuses of the case studies currently being conducted by the regional coordinators in sixteen of the project schools.

There were also some sceptics, who did not believe progress was being made. There were also some teachers who had not implemented the programme consistently. In one of the focus groups, a principal raised a number of doubts about the quality of the programme, based on the fact that she had had to take over the teaching of a class whose teacher had not implemented the programme consistently. The evidence which emerged from the discussion was that the levels of the children across the curriculum were low. The principal clearly associated involvement in the "English in Action" programme with the poor performance and levels of the children in the class she was now teaching (refer Sbongile Nene's evaluation report on this transaction).

The evidence from the classroom and schools visited would, however, suggest that many of the teachers perceive that the programme is assisting in addressing needs relating to the pupils' need to learn English, as well as their own need to teach English. Comments made by the teachers indicate that they have found English a difficult subject to teach, on two levels. The first of these relates to the official curriculum, and the lack of usable guidelines on how to teach English at Sub A level. The second relates to their own English language ability.

On the level of the official curriculum, English has not traditionally been taught at Sub A level. This has left the teachers in the position of having to teach the subject in an area where, in the majority of schools, existing syllabus outlines are not in existence, and where guidelines and support from the education department are perceived to be insufficient.

The comments made by the teachers indicate that they find the structure of the "English in Action" programme, and its teachers' manual, helpful in terms of the current dearth of material available to them. In certain areas, where a particular approach to teaching English is advocated by the education department, the teachers believe that the "English in Action" programme covers more ground than would be covered if the alternative curricular

framework was used.

This surfaced in the discussions of two groups of teachers. Similar evidence was cited by both groups of teachers, to the effect that the existing approach advocated by the department is to cover a single topic a week (within which presumably a number of language themes are covered). However, it was apparent from the discussion in both groups that the practical guidelines provided by the department as to how to implement the official curriculum in practice were minimal.

Whether the curricular structure advocated by the department (the official curriculum), or the curricular structure advocated by the "English in Action" team is more logical and coherent is still an open question (refer comments on curriculum development made in our working documents as well as throughout this report). The debate concerning the form the official curriculum should take is a vital one, and our belief is that the decision as to whether or not to adopt the "English in Action" programme on a large scale will depend to a great extent on how the project positions itself relative to the issues in the official curriculum debate.

The evidence from the classroom, however, relates only indirectly to the form of the official curriculum. Such evidence rather concerns what Hawes (1979) has called the level of reality. It is at the level of everyday classroom reality that the teachers have found that the "English in Action" programme is meeting needs, through providing a structured approach to the teaching of English, supported by materials which are relatively "user-friendly", and a teacher's guide which is intelligible.

There is also evidence that the "English in Action" is meeting teacher needs at another level. In the teacher groups attended, a recurring theme was the teachers' perception that the "English in Action" tapes provided them with an opportunity to introduce English into the classroom in a form in which the pupils would hear English spoken well. This provided opportunities both for modelling the spoken language of the pupils, as well as for modelling the spoken language of the teacher herself.

A related theme in the discussions related to the feelings of inadequacy expressed by a number of teachers concerning their own English Language proficiency. The evidence in this respect suggested that the teachers believed that the structured audio-lingual materials provided by the project offered a better model for teaching the language than they could provide themselves.

This evidence indicates an area in which teacher development is clearly necessary. It suggests, in particular, that many teachers feel under-confident as regards the teaching of English in the classroom. How this situation of under-confidence is worked with by the project team, is a crucial issue in teacher support and development, which will be referred to in the following subsection.

Overall, based on the evidence provided by the teachers interviewed, the teacher support groups attended, the focus groups attended and observation of classroom teaching as well as demonstration lessons, the conclusion is that the project is meeting the perceived needs of the teacher for guidelines as to how to teach English, and also providing a set of materials which provide the possibility for modelling and using spoken English to a greater extent than other approaches currently available to the teachers.

### C. Problems and Issues

Hawes (1979) has commented that implementation issues and process are notoriously difficult to evaluate. They are even more difficult if there is no framework of aims for classroom process, or for teacher support groups, and no existing conceptual framework relating to the issue of teacher development.

This is the reality in the project at present. Despite evidence of tangible progress in setting up a number of structures which could be used for the purposes of teacher development, there is at present no overall policy framework in this area.

Part of the problem can be traced to staffing the project with respect to teacher development. There have been various attempts to find a teacher development specialist. However, to date the project has not been successful in attracting a person to fill this role.

However, an organisation the size of OLSET should not be totally dependent on the skills of an individual, as yet to be found. One of the central issues underpinning OLSET's work is the curriculum, and the relationship of OLSET's curriculum to the official curriculum of the future education system. This requires a strategy and a policy of curriculum development. As yet there is little dialogue on this issue, the dialogue being suspended until such a specialist can be found.

Another central issue is how this curriculum translates into practice, and how it is implemented and developed at the level of the classroom in such a way that the commitment of the teachers can be gained, and maintained. This requires a strategy and a policy of teacher development. In this central area there is some dialogue. However, the dialogue has also been limited until a specialist can be found.

In our meetings with the project team, we have raised these issues on a number of occasions. We are assured that these comments have been taken seriously, and that the issues are being addressed. The issues of inadequate attention to curriculum development, and insufficient attention to teacher development are thus raised at this point, and will be returned to in our final evaluation report. Our interviews with the project staff reveal an awareness that this type of dialogue is necessary, yet at the same time indicate that there is currently no avenue or

place at which the curricular or teacher development concerns of the project team can be raised, discussed or dealt with, and at which the evidence from the schools can be responded to.

The lack of detailed policy frameworks and guidelines at the level of implementation is referred to at various points in this report. One solution might be to commission someone to write such frameworks for the project. However, this solution would be unlikely to meet the need that policy frameworks reflect the thinking of those involved in the project, and concern issues on which the project team have undertaken systematic thought and reflection. This is the case both with respect to curriculum development and teacher development.

We thus conclude that there is an urgent need, having established the framework of in-school visiting, and teacher support groups, for the project team to sit down together and discuss exactly what the potential of these structures is, and what they are trying to achieve. This would be the first step towards developing a set of guidelines relating to how these aims are to be achieved in practice. These could then be placed into the context of a broader policy document, with some potential that the overall policy would be feasible, and supported by those who have to work with it in practice.

In the absence of such a framework, it is very difficult for an evaluator to state how teacher development in the project is progressing, relative to the project's aims. What it is possible to state in this evaluation is that there is a strong sense that the structures established by the regional coordinators for day-to-day interaction, the teacher support group structures, and the focus groups have potential.

It is also possible, from the literature on teacher development, to say that the type of process being used to develop these structures is aiming in the right direction. Given the needed emphasis in African primary schooling on participatory planning, a process has been created which is capable of being channelled to produce outcomes of benefit to the project.

However, operational structures go so far and no further. What is needed is a way of operating those structures, based on careful analysis of what the project is trying to achieve in the areas of curriculum development and implementation, and teacher development. As Hawes has commented, this needs to be based on a view of the place of "English in Action" in the official curriculum, on the one hand, the reality of what teachers are in a position to achieve, on the other, and a framework for increasing the skills and contribution of the teachers, both in the classroom, as well as to the project's planning.

The importance of the process set in motion so far, however, should not be underestimated. The evidence would suggest that a group of highly enthusiastic and committed teachers are involved in the project, and this in itself has potential as regards creating a basis for innovation and improvement of practice.

#### D. Evaluation

The project has established structures of in-school visiting, as well as inter-school visiting through teacher support groups, and audio and video programmes for teacher development, for which evidence emerges concerning the enthusiasm, commitment and involvement of the teachers in the programme. The teachers clearly find benefits in a programme which lightens their load of preparation, and provides a model for English language teaching which is within their competence to administer, and implement.

The evidence from observation in the schools, from interviews with the teachers. from the teacher support groups, from the focus groups and from the case studies would suggest that the teachers perceive the pupils in their classes to be making progress in learning of English, and that this is taken as evidence of tangible progress made, stemming from their own involvement in the programme.

There is evidence that the teachers in the participating schools are involved in and committed to the project, and that this involvement is linked to perception that "English in Action" is meeting needs for practical guidelines as to how to teach English, as well as providing materials which are useful to the teachers.

The evidence from interviews with teachers as well as the teacher support groups would suggest that many teachers currently feel underconfident with respect to their own English language ability, making the task of teaching English a daunting one. The evidence would further suggest that many teachers perceive the audio-lingual tapes provided by "English in Action" as introducing a high quality of spoken English into the classroom; and this provides a model which can be used both to develop the spoken English of their pupils, while at the same time improving the quality of their own spoken English.

The evidence from observation in the schools, interviews with the regional coordinators, and interviews with the teachers indicates that majority of the teachers are implementing the programme on a regular basis. Most teachers are following the sequence of the programme from level to level, and implementing the follow-up activities recommended in the teacher's manual. Some teachers are also repeating tapes, with the aim of improving the English language ability of their pupils through increased contact with the programme.

From interviews with the teachers, as well as the teacher support groups attended, it is apparent that many teachers who are implementing the programme regularly perceive that tangible progress is being achieved with respect to the English language ability of the pupils in their classes.

The evidence would thus suggest that the teachers are involved in the programme, and find tangible benefits at the level of the

reality of the classroom. The programme would thus appear to be meeting the criteria of the teachers, with respect to needs for providing structured and user-friendly materials which are useful in the classroom context.

However, this finding should be tempered with a number of cautions. The first caution relates to the reality that the decision to adopt the programme will be taken at an official level, and on grounds relating to the whether the "English in Action" curriculum meets criteria relating to the official curriculum. The second caution relates to evidence that in many projects, initial enthusiasm of participating teachers is high, but is gradually lost.

Central issues for the project team would appear to be how to grapple with the issue of curriculum development, and how "English in Action" links to what is taught and what should be taught at junior primary level. There is also the urgent need to evolve a framework for teacher development which addresses the issue of how to gain, and maintain, enthusiasm and commitment. This would relate to the structures set up by the project to support teachers in the field, and, in particular, how deep as well as surface needs for teacher development can be met.

On the levels of teacher development and empowerment, it can be stated at this point that the programme is contributing to confidence as regards teaching a subject which many teachers have found difficult in terms of planning, and teaching. There is further evidence that the project has provided clearly sequenced materials, and tangible support to the teachers, in an area where such materials and support at the practical level has been largely unforthcoming.

The evidence would suggest, however, that though the teachers can contribute evaluative evidence with respect to implementation issues such as timing, and carry-over into other areas of the curriculum, that the majority of the teachers are currently unable to provide information relevant to the appropriateness of the programme's content, or how its methodology can be improved. The capacity of the programme to involve the teachers in a process of participatory planning is thus essentially limited by these constraints.

These constraints are likely to be ongoing, and indicate a number of areas of teacher development in which the project needs to undertake work, for which clear policy will be necessary. Though the project has undertaken certain work in the direction of both teacher support and development, this has been done in the absence of a coherent policy framework. The magnitude of needs in this area suggests that strategic planning and prioritising of efforts will be necessary as well as clear frameworks for action.

Part of the dearth of policy in this area can be attributed to difficulties on the level of staffing, and in particular the inability of the project to fill the key post of teacher

development specialist. However, part can also be attributed to the lack of emphasis across the project as a whole on issues relating to education as distinct from technology. This is evidenced by a lack of attention to issues relating to both curriculum and teacher development. It is also evidenced by the reality that the project team as a whole has not undertaken sufficient systematic and sustained discussion on these issues.

Thus, though it is possible to state in this evaluation that the process underpinning in-school visiting, inter-school visiting, teacher support groups and focus groups would appear to be aiming in the right direction, it is not possible to evaluate progress made in these areas. To do so would require a framework of aims, as well as a policy on teacher development. Neither of these aspects is explicit at present.

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The reader is referred to our working documents, and particularly to the sections relevant to Findings 54 to 73, for fuller discussion of these issues.

### 8.3 What is the Level of Acceptance of the Project by the Community inclusive of Teachers, Parents, Principals and other Stakeholders?

#### A. The Role of Consultation in the Development of the Programme

Interviews conducted with OLSET's senior management indicate that they recognise the need for an ongoing process of consultation with both national regional stakeholders, with the aim of creating structures capable of supporting the innovation, in its move to greater scale development. This process is considered essential to creating a broad base of involvement and advocacy, as essential to adoption, continuation, and sustainability.

This vision has been implemented in practice in the composition of the various advisory and steering committees, as well as in the focus groups, in which a process has been established which attempts to involve community representatives in the governance of the project.

At school level, there is also an emerging policy with respect to ongoing consultation between staff of the project and principals, teachers and parents. Together, the focus group, teacher support group and demonstration lesson structure are indicative of an ongoing attempt to establish the attitudes of principals, teachers and parents towards the innovation, and to establish a process of consultation relevant to the development of the curriculum.

Given the crucial role of the principals and teachers in innovation, and of community and political groupings in the move to establish a new form of educational dispensation, the policy of the project in this area would appear to be a sound one. As implemented in practice, this has involved convening meetings of

these stakeholders, involving them in ongoing discussion about the project, tapping their opinions and feedback on the implementation of the project at school level, and sharing information about the project's development.

Concerning the nature of the process, procedures to establish and develop the various interactions between project staff and project stakeholders have been undertaken. Procedures have also been undertaken to record formally the information yielded by the process of consultation.

#### B. Structures for Ongoing Interaction with Community Organisations, and with Other NGO's Involved in Development

Being a new project, one of major tasks OLSET has faced has been to establish its credibility, both with community organisations, as well as with other NGO's involved in education. Its initial attempts to do so produced mixed results. It was regarded with suspicion both by community groups as well as other NGO's, and was accused of not consulting sufficiently to establish needs and legitimacy before commencing work.

OLSET's management has responded by attempting to join the existing NGO networks, and also by establishing committees which included community representation, as well as representation from representatives of political parties likely to be influential in determining the structure of a new educational system after the forthcoming elections.

The consultative committee set up to consider the evaluation of the project was one such committee. This included representatives of the ANC's education desk, the Urban Foundation's Education Policy Unit, the University of the Witwatersrand and the project. This considered the type of evaluation originally proposed by OLSET, and made a number of suggestions as to how the evaluation design could be made more appropriate.

OLSET responded to these suggestions by commissioning a broader design, and by establishing a formative evaluation process. It established focus groups and teacher support groups, as structures intrinsic to the formative evaluation process.

#### C. Networking, and Cooperative Initiatives with Other NGO's

At this stage, a great deal of the initial suspicion appears to have dissipated. Part of this is attributable to management's efforts to undertake consultation with a wide variety of community groups. Its affirmative action hiring policies have probably also contributed to a more positive perception of the project.

Credibility has also been earned through the project's work in the field. Here, OLSET has taken pains to be task-directed, and has also established through its focus group project (refer

Sbongile Nene's separate report) a number of community-based consultation structures.

In addition, there has been ongoing consultation between senior management and members of various political groupings, as well as with educationist and community leaders. While attitudes towards a project are cumulative and difficult to gauge with any degree of accuracy, there would appear to be a far greater openness to the project's work than a year ago, when various questions were being asked in the NGO networks about OLSET's intentions, and way of working.

As far as we are able to gauge from talking to the directors of other educational projects about "English in Action", there is a level of scepticism as to whether interactive radio can get to grips with the needs of the teachers and the pupils. There is, however, at the same time increasing openness to the project, and what it is trying to do.

#### D. Evidence from the Focus Group Project

The focus group project was established by OLSET in all four regions this year, to provide a forum for community-based stakeholders to meet and discuss "English in Action". The meetings involved a period of information sharing, a period of issue raising and discussion, and then a period in which questionnaires were completed by participants.

In her separate evaluation report, Sbongile Nene concluded that:

"Consistently in all of the five sessions teachers came out strongly in support and appreciation of the programme."

No evidence emerged of conflict with the school timetable and other programmes. There was concern over the issue of pauses in the programme (refer discussion later in this report on this issue). The teachers also felt that the programme was fulfilling a number of requirements with respect to teaching, and was assistive with respect to class management. There were also reports of better school attendance.

In her summary, Sbongile Nene reported that:

"There is overwhelming support for OLSET on the ground -- professionals, the bureaucracy and parents (some of whom are professionals) are all agreed on the value of the project's programme of English in Action Radio Learning.

"The Programme has come at a time when the status of Bantu Education and apartheid racist educational system, with a strong stress on ethnic differentiation and racial discrimination, had succeeded in destroying the culture of learning and teaching; had incapacitated skills acquisition by blacks, but above all had sewn inter-racial tensions through disempowering of the disadvantaged blacks.

"Internally, within the system, professionals had become divided among themselves as to what strategy to follow to address apartheid education; strife between unionist professionals and the bureaucracy and utter powerlessness of parents. New values - - negotiations, transparency and accountability on the part of all interest groups -- are struggling to be born.

"PROCESS as much as OUTCOME are the two pivotal (tools and goals) issues all transformative forces are addressing today.

"OLSET is making great effort at addressing both, above all through the central role of co-ordinators, the project is succeeding to bring key groups around the core element of the programme -- delivering of a service to make learning English and teaching a foreign language, pleasurable.

"OLSET's programmes' ability to build vocabulary across the curriculum is noted in all encounters with teachers."

#### E. Problems and Issues

Major issues with respect to community consultation are the process through which consultation takes place, as well as how information yielded by the consultation process is incorporated into the project's planning, and the planning of the curriculum.

The project's policy on these issues, as well as its broader policy on implementation is, however, not clear. There is a great deal of policy which operates at the level of the assumed, rather than the explicit. It has been stated at various points in this report that this is an area requiring focus and attention.

A central issue is that, over the transitional period in South Africa, ongoing networking has become an essential part of the work of persons involved in education. It can thus be regarded as an essential part of the jobs of those working in educational development. Membership of the existing educational forums and networks, though time-consuming and at times frustrating, is thus an important requirement, enabling those involved in development to stay in touch with emerging issues in an educational context which is changing rapidly, on the one hand, and to test out the reaction to their ideas and practices, on the other.

While the idea of such contact may appear daunting to persons who are still in the process of evolving their ideas, it is essential that the project team as a whole work more closely with others working in the field. OLSET middle level staff (e.g. coordinators, scriptwriters, producers) have been noticeably absent from the existing forums and networks of practitioners working in ESL teaching, curriculum development and INSET. This is a major limitation, since it is in these networks that issues relating to development are discussed and debated, experience is shared, and professional contacts made.

Given the lack of experience and expertise of many members of the

OLSET team in these areas, this lack of involvement with other practitioners is disturbing, and active steps should be taken to remedy this.

It is therefore recommended that the job descriptions of all members of the OLSET team should be amended to include active networking and contact with other practitioners and projects working in the field. It is further recommended that OLSET establish its own internal structures for continuing education involving all staff, which enable those who have gained insights through such external networking to feed information back into the project formally.

*realistic?*

This structure could be linked to a mechanism by which each member of the project team presents his or her work to the team as a whole, thus creating the climate of information sharing and critical enquiry necessary to curriculum development. This structure would also address the problem highlighted in our working documents, that interviews with the project team indicated that a number of members of staff had little idea about what other members of the project team did in the organisation, or what their work involved; and that management were perceived as increasingly isolated from the day-to-day operation of the project team.

#### F. Evaluation

In the process of setting up the project, OLSET's management were faced with an initial credibility problem, which manifested in considerable hostility towards the project on the part of other NGO's as well as community-based organisations. There was also scepticism concerning the project's intentions, and whether it would be able to do educational work of value.

Management has taken these initial concerns seriously, and has initiated contact and consultation with other NGO's and community-based organisations on a number of levels. Attention has been directed, in particular, to consultations with the project's stakeholders, through the establishment of structures such as advisory committees and focus groups, and have also taken steps to ensure that there is community representation at board level.

Attitudes towards the project on the part of other NGO's appear to be better than a year ago, and there is currently less suspicion of and antagonism towards the project among other actors in the educational arena. Members of the project team have contributed at national and regional conferences on education. Management has also invited other educationist to comment on what they are doing, and has also invited comment on what they intend to do in other areas (eg mathematics).

The evidence would thus suggest that senior management have taken their responsibilities with respect to the development of a broad-based structure of consultation and information transfer

among its stakeholders seriously. It has developed a newsletter on the project. This evaluation report will no doubt also form part of this process of information transfer.

The importance of initiatives undertaken in respect of communication and information transfer, as well as involvement of community representation at board level, cannot be overestimated as the country moves towards a new political and educational dispensation. It is thus recommended that attempts be made to consider the various structures of board, advisory committees, focus groups and teacher support groups as essentially linked. Cross-representation between these structures should thus be encouraged, and actively developed.

It is further recommended that all members of the project team undertake the networking necessary to stay in touch with a rapidly developing field, and to gain understanding of what others are doing in the field. This form of initiative would be most valuable if linked to a structure within the project which enables such information to be shared formally, and considered in relation to the work being performed by each staff member.

#### 8.4 How Suitable, Efficacious and Acceptable are the Project's Teaching Materials?

##### A. The Conceptualisation and Production of Supporting Materials, Complementary Lessons and Teaching Aids

There is clear evidence from the classroom that the supporting materials (workbooks, alphabet friezes and posters) are used by the teachers, and that they provide a welcome addition to the teaching aids which the teachers have available to them. However, observation of the programme in action in the classroom indicates that the ~~posters are too small~~ to be clearly visible to those pupils at the back of an average class. Thus the images, though colourful, are of limited usefulness during the radio lessons.

Comments made by the teachers interviewed suggest that the rewards provided by the programme have lain in the provision of materials to support the teaching of a difficult subject, as well as a high quality medium of instruction (the radio-tape machine), as part of the package. The evidence would further suggest that there have been tangible benefits in removing the burden of planning a difficult subject, as well as providing a model of instruction in a difficult subject.

With respect to teacher preparation and teaching, observation of the programme indicates that the teacher's manual is used as an aid to preparation, and that the workbooks are used to support the teaching provided. The standard of both manual and workbooks would appear to be adequate for the task.

## B. Teacher-Made Materials

Evidence from the schools indicates that the teachers, as a group, can be characterised as hard working, committed individuals, who take their teaching seriously. In the majority of cases, observation in the classroom revealed good use made of limited facilities, and attempts to create colourful displays and teaching aids made to support their teaching of other areas of the curriculum.

With respect to "English in Action", the project's posters featured prominently in most classrooms. However, at the same time, there was also a lack of teacher-made materials to support the teaching of "English in Action". This contrasted negatively with the ways in which many teachers were taking initiative to support their teaching in other areas of the curriculum, and suggests an area in which teacher development is necessary.

In the majority of classrooms visited, there was evidence that the teachers made additional teaching aids, to support their teaching in other areas of the curriculum. However, there was little evidence that the teachers made aids to support their teaching of the interactive radio lessons, or of follow-up activities. In one classroom visited, the teacher had made tacky-backed pictures of the animals in the radio lesson. In another, the teacher used concrete apparatus from her mathematics corner. However, this type of support of the lessons by the teacher did not appear to be general practice.

Given the emphasis in the project team on developing the teaching ability and creativity of the teachers, and given the emphasis placed in the "English in Action" programme in Kenya on the importance of complementary lessons and follow-up activities (Imhoof and Christensen 1986, 23-29), attention to the aspect of how the radio lessons are supported by the teachers is needed.

This is especially important owing to the evidence in certain of the schools visited of a complete absence of teaching aids (other than the project posters) in the classroom. Does the project team ignore this, or does it engage with the problem of improving teaching in the classroom? Is the project's aim that "English in Action" should influence the development of sound teaching practice in the classrooms in which it is introduced, or is it introduced with an essentially limited and passive focus?

These issues are raised at this point, owing to the project team's stated intention of engaging in the in-service training of the teachers involved in the project. It is also the intention that a specialist in In-Service Training/Teacher Development be employed. This issue is pertinent as the issue of how technology is used by the teacher in the classroom is central to the innovation. The notion of partnership between radio and the teacher implies that technology is supported (and supported actively) by the teacher. How this takes place is central to the issue of classroom-based INSET, and what the project has to offer the teachers, the schools and the education system.

This, in turn, is likely to be crucial to the continuing advocacy of the teachers, the schools and the educational authorities for what the project has to offer, in comparison with what other NGO's currently operating in the field are able to offer.

### C. Problems and Issues

At present, curriculum policy concerning how the technology should be supported by the teacher, and how this links with classroom-based In-Service Training is not explicit. There is also no clear policy in the project with respect to how the OLSET lessons and complementary activities should relate to the pedagogy on which the rest of the junior primary school curriculum is designed.

The specific policy issues to be addressed are how far the project's responsibilities extend, to what degree the radio lessons should be supported by teaching aids and complementary lessons produced by the central team, and to what degree teachers should take responsibility for creating their own materials. Decisions in this respect will need to be made, which have implications not only for the project's model of innovation, but its sustainability.

The issue of complementary lessons and of teaching aids is particularly important, given the evidence from the Kenyan experience that complementary lessons and supporting activities were important in contextualising what had been introduced in the radio lesson. This was done with the explicit aim of compensating for the weaknesses of radio instruction.

Imhoof and Christensen, the designers of the Radio Language approach used in Kenya, state this very clearly (1986, 68-70). Their comments are instructive, and are reproduced below:

To the extent that the teacher can go beyond these minimum requirements (preparing the blackboard, distributing the worksheets and selecting children to assist in the lesson, his or her pupils must benefit. The (complementary) lessons must augment the teacher's abilities, and take advantage of whatever contributions he or she can make to the educational process....

In other words, the radio is a foundation, not an equalizer.... The most effective use of the English in Action lessons, therefore, requires cooperation between the teacher and the radio. This partnership is implemented in two ways. First in the process of preparing the Scheme of Work for each year, a careful analysis is made of every objective to determine the most efficient way to teach it. Some objectives are assigned primarily to the teacher's area of responsibility, with the radio offering support. Lesson plans are prepared by RLAP staff for such areas, so that these competencies can be covered systematically too."

The project has been successful in gaining the involvement of the teachers. The teachers are using the materials, and the basis has been laid for a process of teacher development. However, what the project's intentions are in this area needs to be made explicit, in terms of a clearly stated policy on teacher development.

This needs to clarify what materials the central team will provide, the areas in which teachers are to be encouraged to take initiative in extending the programme (eg in developing their own materials to support the programme), how it is envisaged that this process of extension and taking initiative will be supported and extended by the central and regional teams, and how this process relates to the central issue of the development of teachers' classroom and professional skills.

This, and other areas of the project's policy on curriculum, are currently unclear, indicating areas in which the project team will need to take action. We understand from the project team that the concerns we have raised in this area are acknowledged, and are being dealt with.

These issues are, however, raised at this point, owing to the evidence that it is coherent ideas and practices which are adopted within by others, and that this coherence is necessary to underpin the project's intentions of going to scale, and large-scale adoption. These issues will be returned to in our final report.

#### D. Evaluation

The evidence from the classroom would suggest that the teachers are using the teacher's manual and supporting workbooks consistently to support their teaching. The quality and usefulness of the visual aids supporting the interactive radio lessons in the classroom has, however, varied. Though there is evidence that the teachers have been enthusiastic about receiving visual aids to support the taped lessons, at the same time the posters have been too small to allow maximum use in supporting the lessons.

The issue of how far the project's curriculum includes visual aids and complementary lessons, and how these relate to the mainstream curriculum, needs to be clarified. The issue of how the teacher should be encouraged to support the programme, and take initiative with respect to extending the programme, creating displays, and developing her own extension activities and materials, is also unclear. There is currently no explicit policy in this area, reflecting a broader lack of policy with respect to curriculum development and INSET in the project as a whole.

## 8.5 How Efficacious is Radio and Cassette as a Delivery Medium?

### A. The Production and Recording of the Radio Lessons

There is clear evidence from the classroom that the production and recording of the radio lessons has been well-executed, and that there has been good coordination between the writers and those involved in production. The result is a set of scripts which are clear in sound quality, and in which special effects, music and voices are well mixed and audible.

The response of both teachers and pupils to the taped lessons has been very positive. There is no doubt, from the testimony of those involved with the programme in the schools, that the taped lessons have introduced a dimension into the classroom which has previously been lacking.

The attitude of the parents to the taped lessons has also been positive, and there have been a number of requests from parents for the project to supply taped lessons for reinforcement purposes at home. There are also classes higher up the school which have expressed interest in the material, which can be characterised as well produced, and interesting.

### B. The Choice, Dependability and Support of the Classroom Hardware (The Radio-Tape Machines)

The evidence from those schools visited indicates clearly that the radio-tape recorders selected for use in the classroom are robust and provide a high quality of sound. The vast majority of the machines supplied to the schools have functioned without mishap, or technical problems.

The evidence would further suggest that the teachers find the radio/tape controls easy to use. There is also evidence that radio/tape machines are reliable, and capable of functioning even in dusty environments. They have been well selected, and look aesthetically pleasing. Both teachers and principals are plainly very proud of the equipment, and the status it implies.

The project has taken the decision to supply each participating teacher with his or her own tape recorder. This ensures that there are back-up machines available in the school should problems be encountered. The project has also given one set of tapes to each participating teacher, and has not attempted to save money by asking teachers to share the tapes. This has not only created a sense of ownership of the programme, but has also provided the possibility of mutual support in the event of breakdowns.

### C. Problems and Issues

In the classes observed as part of this evaluation, the majority of the teachers switched the tapes off, in order to explain concepts. From interviews with the teachers it also emerged that the majority of the teachers prefer the idea of tape to the idea of radio, and that this is linked to the fact that they feel free with the tape to switch off to reinforce concepts, and make the lessons their own.

The issue of pauses in the lesson has been of ongoing concern to the scriptwriters, on which they have sought evaluative feedback from those involved in the project at school level. This is significant in light of the observation that the majority of teachers switch the tapes off, and is linked to the reality that the numbers of pupils in the classroom vary widely, from forty five to over a hundred.

The issue of class size has been an ongoing issue in the history of African schooling in the country, and is likely to remain so long after the forthcoming elections. The evidence would suggest that a new government will be severely constrained by the amount of funds available for the building of schools, and that the current level of expenditure on education (in excess of 10% of GDP) is already high by developing countries' standards.

This, combined with forecasts that population growth rate in the country is likely to peak around the year 2000, and only start to decline significantly from the year 2020, implies that the reality of large classes is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. This reality may well be combined with ongoing disruption on a political level.

What both scenarios imply is that it may be very difficult to standardise radio broadcasts to fit the schools of the future; and conversely, that there may be a problem of acceptability of an educational programme which assumes that all teachers will be able to give lessons within the same time frame to classes of different size, as well as children from different backgrounds.

Observation of the schools in action indicated that those teachers who used vernacular to explain concepts and give instructions, took longer than those whose classes were familiar with English. Observation of the programme in operation also indicated that those teachers in farm schools, and those in rural environments, used vernacular more than those in the urban areas.

The issue of constructivism is also relevant to the decision as to whether tape or radio should be used. A number of the members of the project team state that the radio lessons provide departure points for the teacher's own creativity, and the ability to explore the meaning of concepts with the pupils. If this is indeed the case, it would be logical to allow the teacher the freedom to switch the lesson off, and take control of her teaching as necessary.

These observations are also cogent, owing to evidence for the schools visited that the teachers express preference for tape over the radio. In Carltonville, for example, a sample of eight teachers indicated that they all switched the tape off regularly, and that it was necessary to take control of the lesson if the concepts were to be adequately reinforced.

This was apparently in line with their training as well as professionalism as teachers, and raises the wider issues of how the project responds to evidence from the classroom in designing the innovation, and how the project responds to the preferences as well as the previous training of the teachers it serves.

#### D. Evaluation

The production/recording of the radio lessons has been well carried out. There has been close liaison between the writing and production team. Material of high quality has been produced, which has been well received by teachers and pupils in the schools.

The radio-tape machines chosen have been robust and reliable. They provide sound of high quality, and have given very few problems. The technical staff have plainly done their research in this area well. The decision to supply each participating teacher with her or his own machine has been wise, and has avoided problems of mechanical breakdowns due to sharing equipment.

The teachers and principals have welcomed the addition of the attractive and versatile radio-tape machines into the schools and classrooms. The equipment is valued by the users, confers high status, and has been well looked-after.

The market research in selection of the radio/tape machines and cassette tapes has clearly been well done. The machines are relatively cheap, and offer high value for the monies spent. The supply and distribution of batteries has been regular and efficient, and has provided an ongoing point of contact and service between regional coordinators and the schools. The batteries supplied have been adequate to do the job. However, owing to the costs involved, the project should consider whether rechargeable batteries are a cheaper option, in the long-term.

The tapes supplied have been dependable, and robust. The technical staff have clearly done their market research well. Supply of tapes has been regular, and distribution handled efficiently both by OLSET's central administration, as well as by the regional coordinators.

At school level, there have been few difficulties, either in supply of tapes to the teachers or in breakdown or breakage of tapes in the classroom. Those school-based problems which have occurred have been infrequent, and capable of being overcome by the teachers themselves. This has been facilitated by the

project's policy of supplying each teacher with her <sup>of</sup> his own set of tapes. This has been a sound policy, enhancing the ownership of the programme by the teachers, and providing the potential of back-up at school level.

The issue of pauses on the tapes has, however, come up as a recurring theme. Certain teachers feel that the pauses are too short, and others too long. The evidence from the schools would suggest that numbers of pupils in the classroom vary greatly (in certain classes the numbers are in excess of 70 pupils, compared to the norm, which is an average of 45-50 pupils per class). With larger numbers, as well as in those classes where vernacular is used to explain concepts, the evidence would suggest that pauses need to be longer than with smaller numbers.

In particular, the evidence from the classroom as well as the teacher support groups would suggest that many teachers find it necessary to switch the tapes off during the lessons. This practice is widespread, and appears to be the norm in certain areas (rather than the exception to the rule). From observation, as well as interviews with teachers, one of the reasons for this is the length of time taken to explain concepts, or to reinforce instructions in vernacular.

On the issue of standardisation of timing, the structure of the particular vernacular spoken by the teachers and children is a factor influencing length of pauses in the scripts. Sbongile Nene states in her evaluation report that "It appears the concept and structure of mother tongue is a critical issue here. Nguni languages - Xhosa and Zulu tend to be longwinded - are a good example; teachers' English language command; teachers' professional skills and the class size problem - all add to this problem."

The above observation would be supported by evidence from interviews with the teachers as well as consultation with outside specialists in the African Languages Department at Wits, which would suggest that the time taken to introduce a concept is likely to vary widely at Sub A level, according to the structure of the particular vernacular used in the classroom. South Africa is a multi-lingual country, with eleven official languages. Besides English and Afrikaans, there are ten (some authorities estimate twelve) different vernaculars used as medium of instruction in Sub A classes across the land as a whole, making the notion of a standardised length of pause in the scripts difficult to tie down in practice.

The evidence would thus suggest that it is likely to be difficult to standardise instruction across a country characterised by cultural diversity, where ten different vernaculars are used. This, in turn, would suggest that OLSET should be aiming to provide teachers across the country with an instructional system which enables them flexibility, both in terms of their need to use vernacular, their need to take additional or less time to introduce or reinforce particular concepts in the lesson, and the need to make their own particular contribution to the lessons.

The evidence on a variety of levels, as well as the preferences of the teachers would seem to favour taped lessons rather than radio instruction at the Sub A level, despite the clear logistical and cost factors involved. The reader is referred to Findings 15 to 31, and the related sections of the our evaluation reports, for more detail. We understand from our contact with the project team that there are differences of opinion on the issue, and that the project will undertake to promote the use of cassettes for those communities that want them.

This would seem to us to be a fair and flexible way of dealing with the issue of community preferences, as well as the reality that not all schools and classes are likely to proceed through the programme at the same pace. It should also provide greater opportunities for teacher creativity, and provide potential for development within a constructivist framework.

## 8.6 What is the Effect of the Project on the School Environment in the Widest Sense of the Term?

### 8.6.1 The Teachers in the Project

#### A. Staff Development

Fullan (1991), in his review of the literature on school-based innovation, concluded that school district-led staff development was one of the potentially strongest ways of creating the infrastructure necessary to support and sustain innovation. This implied treating the school staff as the unit of development, rather than the individual teacher. He stated:

"Even in the cases when the course is stimulating and contains many valuable ideas, it is difficult to use them. If the individual attempts to put the ideas into practice, there is no convenient source of help or sharing when problems are encountered. It is hard to be a lone innovator."

(Fullan 1991, 316).

Fullan's comments are echoed by Hawes (1979). In his review of African in-service education, Hawes concluded:

"Despite the assistance given by the course, the mobile teacher trainer or the teachers' centre, the most available and often the most effective means of help for most teachers are their more experienced colleagues."

(Hawes 1979, 130-131).

The literature (eg Loucks-Horley et al 1987; Joyce and associates 1989) would also suggest that innovation at school level needs to be conceptualised as a staff development issue; and further, that staff development at school level has the most likelihood

of being relevant and sustainable if it is close to the school, the classroom, and the experience of and problems confronted by the teacher within the context of the school.

In terms of the literature, the teacher support group structure created by OLSET would appear to have promise for the programme on a number of levels. These include providing a basis for in-school and inter-school visiting, involvement of principals and parents in the programme, as well as school and classroom-based in-service training.

The importance of in-school support and in-service training for teachers in the African context cannot be over-estimated. As Hawes (1979) comments:

"I suspect that one of the most effective instruments of curriculum implementation may prove to be the teachers' group or association, possibly with orientation around a single subject. The very successful Caribbean Mathematics Project has indicated the value of working groups sharing a common interest and involved critically in the implementation and modification of new materials.... Unfortunately (in Africa) such groups have been slow to emerge at primary level"

(Hawes 1979, 129-131).

Hawes comments further:

"This implies the need ..... to recognise the importance of subject resource teachers for schools or groups of school, to provide in-service opportunities for these ..... so that more experienced men and women do have a chance to help their colleagues ..... I see the growth of quality as nurtured from outside .... but rooted, nevertheless, in the school itself."

(ibid, 131).

At present, with respect to the involvement of teachers, the evidence would suggest that the project staff, and in particular the regional coordinators, have been successful in gaining the participation and interest of teachers and principals in the initiative. Those who have played a role in creating the infrastructure and support necessary to developing the structure of in-school visiting as well as inter-school visiting in teacher support groups, and the focus group structure are to be commended for their efforts.

#### B. Problems and Issues

While the basic infrastructure relating to teacher development would appear to be in place in a number of areas in which the project is currently operating, a word of caution is also necessary, based on the experience of other projects in innovation.

As Shipman reflected in his case study of the Keele Integrated Study Project (1968-1971):

"Three conclusions can be drawn:

"First, the pressures on teachers involved in innovation to revert back in traditional content and method are strong. These are only partly due to the nature of the innovation. They are also the product of the way in which the teaching role is traditionally defined. The innovating role seemed insecure. The assessment of standards of work was difficult. The new content was strange. Enquiry methods often seemed too time-consuming....

"The second conclusion was that involvement in innovation was both wearing and stretching. The crucial stage was not the introduction of the project but its establishment once these strains began to tell. This strain was increased by the exposure of the innovating teachers to outside observation. Innovations have to be evaluated. The teachers have to report back, be observed and accept visitors. As more time and energy is expended there is more exposure to critical evaluation. The pull of the traditional is combined with the strain of the new.

"The third conclusion follows from this strain and exposure. Successful establishment seemed to depend on the teachers investing enough in the innovation to overcome that already built into the traditional role. This was itself dependent on the resources already made available by the school."

(Shipman 1974, 205-206).

Shipman's comments are pertinent in suggesting that enthusiasm for innovations is generally high at the outset. For this reason projects need to move rapidly to capitalise on the initial enthusiasm which often accompanies innovation, to establish those structures which will enable to long-term support and evaluation of the initiative.

In the case of OLSET, the priorities would be to establish supporting structures in the form of in-school visiting, teacher support groups and focus groups in all areas in which the project is currently operating, as the basis for the materials distribution, teacher support and in-service training on which the innovation will be based.

It is recommended that all elements involved in the innovation be put in place sooner rather than later, due to the evidence from other projects that delays in implementation may be accompanied by increasing difficulty in establishing additional structures, due to the increasing inertia and resistance to the increased work demands involved in innovation, which Shipman's case study describes.

### C. Evaluation

The project has established a number of structures to support the ongoing involvement of the teachers in the project. The regional coordinators undertake regular in-school visits, and have established a pattern of in-classroom visiting, which is linked to an evaluation procedure. In addition, a structure of inter-school visiting has been established, which involves both teachers and in certain cases principals in visiting other local schools involved in the project.

The structure of inter-school visiting functions as an integral part of the teacher support groups. These have been set up by the project in all four regions at school level. In certain cases the parents attend the demonstration lessons, and participate in discussions about the programme with the teachers.

The evidence would suggest that these teacher support group structures have been successful at a local level in providing avenues for communication between the teachers and the project, the teachers and other teachers, and to a lesser extent the teachers and the parents. There is also evidence that where principals have been involved in the teacher support groups, their involvement has been beneficial.

At a regional level, there is evidence that the focus group structure has provided teachers, principals and parents with the opportunity to participate in structured discussion about the project, as well as more general issues relating to the practice of teaching. It has also provided the project team, and the regional coordinators, with a venue at which those involved in implementation at various levels in the project can meet with the project's regional stakeholders, and discuss issues relating to the development of the programme.

The evidence would suggest that the focus group structure, the teacher support group structure, and the in-school visiting structure established by the project team, and in particular by the regional coordinators, are of great potential as regards the long-term support required in projects to counter-balance the tendency to inertia and conservatism experienced by many other innovative projects internationally. The establishment of these structures thus represents a major contribution of the regional coordinators, and a substantial achievement of the project team on the process level, both nationally and regionally.

The way in which both focus groups and teacher support groups are currently organised and run is of potential interest to others working in the field of teacher development, as well as of practical value to the project in terms of its potential to support development at greater scale. Procedures and guidelines based on the successful operation of these structures should thus be established at this stage, in order to ensure that the model of working can be replicated in new areas and regions, and by new members of staff in OLSET.

## 8.6.2 The Principals in the Project

### A. The Principal as Key Agent in Innovation

The evidence from the international literature on innovation (eg Hall et al 1980; Hall and Hord 1987); Marsh 1988; Louis and Miles 1990) would suggest that principals are key change agents. Berman and McLoughlin (1977), for example, studied innovations in contexts involving some 300 school principals, and concluded that:

"Projects having the active support of principals are most likely to fare well."

(Berman and McLoughlin 1977, 124).

The evidence would suggest that principals are key middle managers (Fullan 1991). As such, they have the classic dilemma of needing to gain and maintain firm rapport with the teachers in their schools, while at the same time fulfilling their administrative role, and their role in keeping the educational bureaucracy happy.

In many innovations (eg Lortie 1987; Potter and Moodie 1991; 1992), principals play key roles. Lortie (1987), for example, concluded that successful innovation requires highly sophisticated management behaviour at both the level of the educational (or project) system, and at the level of the school. In the local context, Potter and Moodie's case study of innovation in a primary science programme in the Orange Free State indicated that principals could use their position to organise teacher development workshops as well as follow-up activities at school level, and could also play a mediating role between the educational authorities and the teachers.

The international literature (eg Fullan 1982) indicates that principals have the potential to facilitate or impede innovation. Ideally, they have dual roles to play in innovation, providing administrative support and stability in the school, on the one hand, and encouragement necessary for innovation in the classroom to take place.

While successful innovations by teachers often occur without the involvement of principals (Crandall et al 1982), at the same time principals can have a major impact on the degree of implementation which occurs within the school (Hall et al 1980). Fullan (1991) thus suggests that it is important to consider the role of the principal in the context of the school, as a key agent in the process of innovation.

### B. Indications Concerning the Involvement of Principals in the Project

The "English in Action" project team have made a point of

including principals in workshops and in focus groups. In the schools observed as part of this evaluation, principals attended certain of the demonstration lessons, and also participated in meetings between the teachers and the parents, in which the programme was discussed.

The evidence from observation of the programme in the schools would suggest that relationships between the principals and the project team are cordial. The regional coordinators have made a specific attempt to gain the cooperation of the principals in each of the project schools. Observation of the interaction between the regional coordinators and the principals in the schools indicates that the regional coordinators have done a particularly good liaison job as regards the principals, for which they should be commended.

The evidence from the focus group discussions, and from the principals' questionnaire administered by Sbongile Nene indicates that the principals as a group are supportive of the programme, and consider it to be an asset to their schools. They have observed an improvement in the English language skills of the pupils in their schools, and believe that the programme is on the right track.

There are few reported clashes in the timetable. There appears, from the evidence, to be no major difficulty in the relationship between the programme and other subjects in the mainstream curriculum.

Data from the principals' questionnaire also makes reference to the issues of increased motivation of the pupils, as well as increased attendance. As suggested earlier in this report, this indication needs to be checked out formally, as part of the case studies currently being conducted in the schools.

The evidence on the current operation of the programme in the schools would thus suggest that the project team have done their work well as regards consulting with the principals, not only initially, but in an ongoing way. The regional coordinators have played a key role in building relationships in this area. In addition, the project has established the focus group structure, with the specific aim of bringing together the teachers, the principals, the parents, the educational bureaucracy, and community leadership in a common forum.

The reader is referred to Sbongile Nene's separate report on the focus groups, as well as her separate analysis of the response of the principals to the programme, for further detail.

### C. Problems and Issues

While the above evidence indicates the satisfactory functioning of the principal side of the programme, it should be borne in mind that the programme still operates in a sufficiently small number of schools for the regional coordinators to know every

school and principal well, and to have ongoing contact with each school. However, the scale of the programme is likely to increase sharply in the future. Are current structures adequate for this? What is the plan for scale development? What are the aims as regards the principal component of the programme?

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As with the whole area of teacher development, project policy on the issue of work with the principals in the programme is not explicit. In the absence of this framework, it is difficult to evaluate the project in terms of its aims for working in this area, even at this stage. This difficulty is likely to increase with work at greater scale.

There is another side effect of lack of clear policy. It is apparent from the interviews with the project team, that different actors in the project have differing conceptions of the extent of the innovation, and of the roles played by others in the process of innovation. These differing conceptions contribute to a feeling of uncertainty in a number of members of staff as to where they stand in respect of their jobs, as well as their roles within the project as a whole.

The process of innovation is tension-filled and pressured enough as it is, without the feeling of lack of clarity as to where one stands in relation to the whole enterprise, added to a feeling of uncertainty as to how long the project will last. It is thus suggested that the process of working to produce explicit policy frameworks for the different aspects of the project's work may do a great deal to lessen this current situation of ambiguity.

With respect to the principals, clear policy is particularly necessary, owing to the current ambivalence of the South African Democratic Teachers Union towards principals. This produces added pressure on principals in the South African context, to those pressures described in the international literature on principalship (eg Barth 1988; Bossert et al 1982; Fullan 1988; 1991; Hall and Hord 1987; Hord, Stiegelbauer and Hall 1984; Leithwood and Jantzi 1990; Leithwood and Montgomery 1982; 1986; Leithwood and Steinbach 1989 (a) and (b); Manasse 1985; Smith and Andrews 1989) which indicates a trend towards a decrease in perceptions of principal effectiveness in relation to the multiple demands of the job.

An example of the type of pressure currently being placed on principals is the questioning of the role of the principals in the schools, which has emerged as a particularly sensitive issue in the Soweto area. The events leading up to the recent teachers strike have polarised teachers and the educational authorities, while events after the strike have led to action by certain teachers against their principals, and the exclusion of a number of the principals from their schools.

On the one hand, the international evidence indicates clearly the key role principals play in the provision of effective education at school level. On the other, the project cannot run the risk of antagonising the teacher unions. These difficulties indicate

the need for explicit policy in area, to provide frameworks for fulfilling the project's developmental aims within the various sensitivities which currently exist.

It should be noted that a number of other projects have done this. The Science Education Project, for example, has changed its policies on teacher evaluation, formulating an improved structure which effectively got around the union's objections without compromising the work the project has to do, and its ability to work with the teachers in the field.

What the above comments assume is that the project team is likely to grow rapidly as from next year, in a context which is likely to continue to be complex and volatile. All field staff will need to steer a careful course in this area. Clear policy guidelines will reduce the likelihood of the project team being loose cannons in the schools. This is necessary, given the project's need to work with the principals, and given the attitude of the union, which has been that principals are agents of the educational bureaucracy, and should thus be targets for mass action directed against the educational authorities.

While a policy of "wait and see" and "play it by ear" may have been appropriate while the project was in its early stages of development, this will not be possible when the project works at greater scale. Frameworks based on practice are necessary, to guide the practice of further implementation. Constant reassessment of these frameworks will also be necessary. As Fullan (1991) comments:

"There is frequently no definitive "change in question" at the beginning of the process of implementation, especially for complex reforms. Situations vary, and we never fully know what implementation is or should look like until people in particular situations attempt to spell it out through use. Implementation makes further policy; it does not simply put predefined policy into practice."

(Fullan 1991, 92).

One area requiring definition is how far the project is prepared to enter partnership with principals in support of the innovation in their schools. Another issue is how far the project is prepared to support principals.

Given the pressures on principals in terms of the political situation, as well as the evidence from the literature (eg Martin and Willower 1981; Peterson 1981; House and Laplan 1988) which would suggest that the principal leads a pressured existence with little time for reflection, spends a major proportion of his or her time "trouble-shooting", and has to attempt to satisfy the needs of often irreconcilable vested interest groups in the day-to-day running of the school, the project may also need to consider carefully whether it should develop a principal support programme, as an integral part of a principal development programme.

What would be the benefits to the project of doing this? Would there be possibility that a principal development programme could lead to principals undertaking key implementation roles in the project?

The notion of teacher leaders is relevant here. In a previous evaluation conducted by the author (Potter and Moodie 1991; 1992), the organisers of teacher committees in certain areas, and principals in other areas, emerged as having a key role as facilitators and programme implementers in a primary science project.

In schools in which the principals had good relationships with their staff and with the educational authorities, they were able to provide local infrastructure within the project, organise schools into clusters by district, as well as exercise leadership with respect to obtaining financial resources to support the teachers in their role as innovators. They were also key agents in maintaining the commitment of the educational bureaucracy to the project.

These possibilities are mentioned as relevant to the need for policy in this area, in which the notion of who provides leadership to the teachers, and on what levels, is crucial.

#### D. Evaluation

The evidence from observation in the schools, from the focus groups, from the principals' questionnaire and from the case studies indicates that the principals as a group are firmly supportive of the project. The evidence would further suggest that relationships between individual principals and the regional coordinators are good, reflecting the effort put by the project team (and particularly the regional coordinators) into establishing an ongoing process of consultation and contact with the principals.

Given the international evidence concerning the key role of the principal in innovation, this side of the project's work has gone particularly well. Interviews with senior management of the project indicate an increasing awareness that the school is the basic unit of innovation, and that the principal is a key figure in the context of the school, and the district.

As with the area of teacher development, policy on principal development is currently not explicit in the project. Not only does this make evaluation against the aims of the project as regards work with the principals difficult. It also carries the implication that the project team have not considered the issues, are not clear about their aims, and have not considered where their current actions might lead them.

Despite the difficulties of knowing the boundaries of the project's work until the team have had experience of implementation, it would be reasonable at this stage to expect

the project to come up with broad policy on the issues of principal involvement, and principal development. This would state aims and an outline of the project's proposed modus operandi with respect to the principals as a group. This could then be supported by specific guidelines as to how to work with the principals, developed by the regional coordinators, who have at this stage the most relevant experience of working with principals on a day-to-day basis in the field.

The frameworks and guidelines on principal involvement and development would necessarily be provisional, and flexible, owing to the sensitivities applying to the role of the principals in the schools at present. They are nevertheless necessary to underpin the project's further implementation, in terms of work at larger scale.

### 8.6.3 The Parents In the Project

#### A. Involvement of Parents in "English in Action"

Fullan (1991), in reviewing the research on parent and community involvement in schools, concludes that despite the many contradictions in the various studies, there is one consistent message. He phrases it as follows:

"The closer the parent is to the education of the child, the greater the impact on child development and educational achievement,"

(Fullan 1991, 227).

The project has recognised the importance of parental involvement in "English in Action". This has taken place on a small scale in a number of areas this year. The project has also created a number of structures which have included parents, and sought information from the parents in a number of ways.

At school level, the parents have been involved in the demonstration lessons in a number of the regions. Accounts and testimony from parents are also being included in the case studies currently being conducted in a number of the project schools.

In certain schools parent interest has led to wider involvement. In one of the schools visited, the parents followed up the demonstration lesson with maintenance work on the school premises. While this might be regarded as an isolated incident, it is cited in this report as evidence of the potential of the demonstration lessons and the inter-school visiting vis-a-vis bringing together parents and teachers. These structures are significant in a context in which parents have become divorced from the schools, and the education of their children.

Sbongile Nene, in her report on the development of the focus

groups, puts this in the following way:

"The traditional experience of Bantu education has been the gradual alienation of parents from pupils' learning experience. Teachers have become alienated from the parent community. Schools have become arenas of stress and conflict among the various constituencies. With OLSET has come the possibility of the parent community being involved directly or indirectly. Stress is being placed on rebuilding a participative culture allowing for parental involvement."

Besides involvement at school level, parents have been actively encouraged to contribute to discussion in the focus groups. In all regions except the Transvaal, parents have been present at the focus group meetings.

From observation of the focus groups in action, it was apparent that the parents were very much in the minority, and a small but significant voice in the group. They were far more vocal at school level in the demonstration lessons, than in the more formal large-group atmosphere of the focus groups. However, while the focus group discussion was dominated by the teachers and principals, at particular points the parents participated. They asked questions, and were also invited to express their opinions on the programme. In addition, while the teachers and principals were filling out questionnaires in the focus groups, a special discussion involving parents was arranged.

Overall, the evidence would suggest that both the focus groups and the demonstration lessons have afforded parents the opportunity to become involved in the programme. There were specific incidents in which parents entered discussion on general issues relating to education. This was both at the level of seeking clarity on certain issues, as well as delivering comment on the process of education, and what they observed about the programme.

The potential value of these structures vis-a-vis parental involvement would appear to be different. The potential of the demonstration lessons would lie in providing an avenue for parents to enter the classroom, and observe teaching in action. The potential of the focus group structure, in contrast, would seem to be more general, in providing a programme-centred forum for discussion and issue-raising.

Together, the two structures appear to have promise, in providing two forms in which wider involvement of the community and the parents in the programme can be elicited. This year the involvement has been limited to the parent communities of certain of the project schools.

#### B. Problems and Issues

In terms of the context in which the project operates, there are clear needs for a parent programme in providing a community base

for the development. The project has responded by taking a number of actions to involve the parents. As Sbongile Nene writes in her report on the focus groups:

"An effort to rediscover for Black South African in particular, parental involvement as a partnership with teachers in curricula activities has been a conscious effort in OLSET's programme. Parents in particular were encouraged to participate using vernacular if necessary and being assisted with translations."

However, at the same time the question needs to be asked whether the type of involvement currently taking place is all that the project is aiming to develop, what the focuses of a parent programme should be, and what infrastructure is necessary to support such a programme.

This is the focus of the the current section, which reviews some of the international trends in school-focused work with parents, as background to the decisions the project will need to take in this area.

A central issue, given the project's emphasis on learning gains, is whether parent programmes, and parent-related classroom and school-related practices, are likely to make a difference. Epstein (1986; 1988), on the basis of research conducted over a decade on parent and school interaction, comments:

"There is consistent evidence that parents' encouragement, activities, interest at home and their participation at school can affect their children's achievement, even after the students' ability and family socioeconomic status is taken into account. Students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize schooling, let their children know they do, and do so continually over the years."

(Epstein 1988, in Fullan 1991, 228).

Epstein and Dauber (1988) distinguish the following forms of participation by parents in school and classroom-related activities:

- a. Parent involvement at school (eg as volunteers and assistants).
- b. Parent involvement in learning activities at home (eg assisting children at home; as home tutors).
- c. Home/community relations (eg communication; PTA's).
- d. Governance (eg advisory councils; school boards).

Concerning the link of these types of parent involvement with the scholastic performance of pupils, Clark, Lotto and MacCarthy (1980) conducted a review of available research, and found 13 studies involving the relationship between parent involvement and scholastic achievement. Of these 11 reported a positive

relationship. The authors concluded:

"Among the characteristics common to the more successful programs in the basic skills is the active involvement of parents in instruction"

Clark et al 1980, 468).

Clark, Lotto and MacCarthy further concluded that:

- a. Successful schools were more likely to have parents in the classroom as aides, visitors and as volunteers.
- b. Involvement in the classroom, rather than involvement in the school in general, was related to academic success.
- c. Parent involvement, as opposed to instructional teaching aides not drawn from the parent body, was associated with school success.

Barth (1979) and Fantini (1980) reached similar conclusions based on review of the literature.

In general, however, the international literature (eg Becker 1981; Epstein 1986; Fullan 1991) would suggest that, despite a general endorsement by teachers of parental involvement at home, very few teachers or schools make systematic attempts to ensuring that parental involvement at home accomplishes particular learning goals in a particular way. Many teachers also did not know how to go about gaining parent participation in the classroom, or the positive effects that such involvement could bring. Many teachers also did not know how to direct parents at home towards accomplishing specific learning goals.

Parents, from their side, responded positively to teachers' activities to involve them in learning activities at home, and said that they would do more if teachers would tell them what to do (Epstein 1986, 291).

In the context of the "English in Action" programme in the schools, evidence emerged on three separate occasions in discussion with parents after the demonstration lessons, and in the focus groups, that parents wished to become involved in home activities. One group of parents indicated that they would club together to buy a tape recorder, if the project made the tapes available to them.

There would thus appear to be potential in involving the parents in home as well as classroom-based activities. Taped instruction would lend itself to this type of involvement.

In the African context, Hawes (1979, 140) has observed that long-term sustainability is dependent on how projects deal with three fundamental issues:

- a. The need to develop a feeling of shared endeavour between all those working towards implementing new programmes -- to make teachers as well as inspectors, teacher trainers and curriculum

workers feel responsible for its success or failure.

b. The need to reward workers within the system for helping it grow and develop rather than merely for obtaining certificates and passing examinations; and to offer a viable career structure through which the good teacher, principal, inspector and curriculum worker can remain involved with the all important tasks of maintaining and improving quality in primary schools.

c. The need to maintain impetus after the first effort of implementation has died down. Hawes concludes that this is only possible if teachers have some form of practical control over their own curriculum at school and classroom level, and if they have some responsibility, however circumscribed, for improving standards which are perceived to be theirs, in schools which are perceived be theirs, as opposed to the Government's.

Hawes further concludes that innovations work best in situations in which teachers can feel that they have a likelihood of developing specialist knowledge, and can exercise this in specific educational or subject areas. With respect to "English in Action", this raises the possibility that teachers can become specialists not only in how to teach English in the classroom, but also in how to show parents how to reinforce the programme at home.

Hawes further raises the key issue of need for the training of teacher leaders and implementers to support innovation at school level. The evidence from the literature on projects in the African context (eg Hawes 1979; Potter and Moodie 1991 (a) and (b); 1992; Holderness and Altman 1992; Musker 1993 (forthcoming)) would suggest that teachers as well as principals, have the potential to become teacher leaders and implementers.

Central issues on which a policy decision will need to be made is whether the project should engage on a parent development programme on a larger scale; how far such a programme should extend; and how such a programme should be supported.

### C. Evaluation

The project has recognised the importance of parent involvement in the programme, and has taken steps to include the parents in the project's work on a number of levels. At school level this has taken the form of inviting parents to demonstration lessons, and to discuss the education of their children arising from this contact. At regional level, this has taken the form of inviting a number of parents to the focus groups.

The evidence from observation of the demonstration lessons and focus groups would suggest that the parents have become involved in discussing the "English in Action" programme, as well as broader educational issues. The demonstration lessons and focus groups would thus appear to have potential as structures which can facilitate greater parent involvement in the programme.

Given the pilot nature of the work with parents this year, ~~no policy as yet exists as to whether a parent development programme should be implemented as part of the "English in Action" programme, how broad the focuses of such a programme should be, and how such a programme should be supported.~~ These are areas requiring a policy framework, and decision from management.

OLSET has created an infrastructure in the schools, with the potential to involve the teachers in a process of parent education. This could have positive benefit for the scholastic achievement of pupils, not only with respect to the "English in Action" programme, but also in other areas of the curriculum.

Formalised involvement of parents in support of the programme would be likely to have positive effects not only on instruction and learning, but also in broadening the base of parental involvement in the school in non-instructional areas (eg PTA's, advisory committees and school boards).

In terms of the focus of this evaluation on the effects of the project on the school environment in its widest sense, it was apparent from the interactions as well as the discussion in the focus groups and teacher support groups that parents were interested in the programme, and welcomed the opportunity to become involved in the education of their children.

Sbongile Nene's conclusions with respect to the potential role of parents in the project are relevant:

"Educational restructuring in South Africa today calls for a review of apartheid induced divisions and tensions between the parental communities and teachers. A search for cooperation between professionals and parental communities is part of a democratic movement that started in the 80's of PTSA's (Parent Teacher and Student Associations).

"OLSET is exploring tentatively at this phase parental involvement with curriculum issues as well as with material support. There is new nationwide awareness that something has to be done to rebuild parental capacity to engage with the education of their children among blacks. A study by the Energos Foundation Education Board jointly with the Urban Foundation Education Policy Unit attests to this need. Professionals, education departments and parental communities have to develop partnerships around educational reconstruction.

"The NGO sector presently appears to be the best vehicle to explore different models for engagement and to play a catalytic role.

"OLSET's efforts in this direction are timeous and require further exploration."

8.7 What is the Cost Effectiveness of the Programme, and the Economies of Scale for National Implementation?

This issue has not been explored as part of this interim report, but will be one of the focuses of our final report. The reasons for this are as follows:

a. Policies on staffing, curriculum development and teacher development are not yet sufficiently developed within the project to enable accurate projection of costs to be made.

b. The curriculum is central to the enterprise in which OLSET is engaged. Questions have been raised in this evaluation concerning the form of the curriculum, and the low proportion of staff with lower primary school qualifications and expertise in second language teaching, or with qualifications and expertise in curriculum development (refer Findings 1 to 5, and our original evaluation documents).

c. We understand that the project team are currently addressing these issues, which may have direct implications for policy as to the content, form, and structure of the OLSET curriculum. Not only will this have implications with respect to the radio lessons, supporting aids and complementary lessons, its pedagogic principles and its relationship to other subject matter taught at the lower primary level (both at Sub A level and at Sub B level and beyond), but it may also have implications for the way in which the project plans its regional staffing.

d. What is available at this stage is a broad framework relating to the research and development phases of the project. Once the project's response to the issues we have raised on curriculum is clearer, it should be able to provide broad cost estimates, based on a number of scenarios. We envisage that the project's response to the criticisms made of their approach will become increasingly clearer and more defined, and that as this takes place, more detailed costing should be possible. It is our intention to commence this aspect of the work in January 1994.

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NOTES:

1. The project management and advisors were asked by the evaluators to write this section of the paper (Aims, Background and Main Structures, Section 2, pages 5-8) in keeping with accepted evaluation practice.
2. The design of the case studies was agreed with the regional coordinators in July, and implemented over September and October. Thus the case study data was relatively incomplete at time of this interim evaluation.
3. Refer Denzin (1970; 1978) for a fuller discussion of triangulation. Cohen and Manion (1980; 1985; 1989) and Miles and Huberman (1984) present a good discussion of the value of triangulation in naturalistic designs, while Guba and Lincoln (1983) have a good treatment of reliability and validity issues, and the role of triangulation in strengthening naturalistic evaluation designs.
4. Refer Denzin (1970; 1978), and Cohen and Manion (1989) for discussion of use of investigator triangulation in naturalistic designs.
5. Refer Guba and Lincoln (1981; 1983) for discussion of naturalistic counterparts to validity and reliability in naturalistic designs.
6. Following the suggestions made by Robert Stake (1973; 1983) on responsive evaluation.
7. Subsequent investigation uncovered an error in the categorization of informal schools which in effect were urban (especially in Natal and Transvaal regions). This has been rectified for the post-test.