

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE MULTI-MEDIA DISTANCE  
EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

By

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that the whole of this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work and that it has not been submitted for any degree in any other university.

Karen Anne van der Wolk  
University of Cape Town  
February 1996

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a report of my work in schools in the Eastern Cape while assisting the Primary Education project (PREP) to develop a resource pack for in-service education.

In-service education has received much attention in recent years in South Africa. Both the state sector and non-government organisations have provided various in-service interventions in an attempt to improve both the qualifications of teachers and the results of pupils in schools. However, the dismal state of education in ex-DET schools bears witness to the fact that such interventions have by and large been ineffectual.

This study shows how one project developed and trialled parts of a distance learning in-service course in conjunction with junior primary farm school teachers. The need for innovative and creative models of distance education is explored and our understanding of the nature of distance learning is detailed. The study goes on to include an analysis of the political economy of farm schools. It also details the constraints acting upon teachers in such schools and shows how these impacted on the study.

The research procedures and methods of data collection are outlined and a framework for analysing the data is developed and justified. The actual data generated during the study is then measured against this framework in order to gauge its effectiveness as an in-service intervention.

Finally, I draw conclusions and make certain recommendations based on the evidence presented. Whilst these recommendations are tentative, they may have relevance in terms of future in-service education policies and procedures.

# The development of an effective multi-media distance education programme for in-service teachers

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## Chapter 1

### The nature and scope of this dissertation

*The sunlight on the garden  
Hardens and grows cold  
We cannot cage the minute  
Within its nets of gold  
When all is told  
We cannot beg for pardon*

(Louis MacNeice, *The sunlight on the garden*, in  
MacBeth, 1967, p 190)

MacNeice's poem, written in the 1930s, serves as a metaphor for the South African educational context within which this study took place. Simply put, teachers have to try and 'cage the minute'. They owe it to the millions of pupils in their care to equip them for critical adulthood in an emerging democracy. Children are 'eager to talk and learn and think' (Macdonald, 1991). The changing societal structure has opened windows of opportunities and teachers must act, for no education system can 'beg for pardon'. Children must reap the benefit of a pedagogy which has their best interests at heart. Findings reported by the Threshold Project of the Human Sciences Research Council suggest that such a pedagogy will focus on initial development of oral, reading and writing skills because these impact significantly on further school progress. Further, such a pedagogy must offer a range of teaching and learning approaches so that children develop a sound basis for further learning challenges (Macdonald, 1991).

This study aims, in a small way, to impact on the building of such a pedagogy. The study begins with an examination of the need for alternative modes of in-service provision and a political economy of farm schools. It goes on to show how one researcher worked (in conjunction with other researchers in an established research project) with junior primary teachers in farm schools to develop distance learning materials for in-service teachers. The data generated in the study is analysed alongside data generated in the wider research project in an attempt to show that the process of development and trialling led to the production of material which could impact positively on pedagogy.

### 1.1 *The idea for the study*

The Primary Education Project (PREP) was first established in 1986 at the University of Cape Town. This investigation into the feasibility of effective modes of distance in-service education evolved from, and was informed by, earlier cycles of research. I was involved as a junior researcher in the initial research with Department of Education and Training (DET) teachers in township schools in the Western Cape. My Bachelor of Education research paper, *Teachers, Schools and Reflections on Practice* (1987), focused on some of the problems inherent in in-service work (INSET). Poor communication systems, work and other pressures on teachers, and researcher inexperience were all cited as obstacles to the effectiveness of in-service work in schools.

When the 1986 phase of the research project drew to a close in 1989, the participants suggested that the intervention should be expanded to include more teachers in other parts of the country. A PREP document written at that time states that '[t]he responsibility of PREP is to take a local intensive study and disseminate it such that teachers, early childhood educators and non-formal educators benefit nationally' (PREP Funding Proposal, unpublished, 1992). This gave PREP the opportunity to explore the possibility of distance education as a vehicle for dissemination of theoretical and practical knowledge about teaching in general and the reading process in particular. In order to redress the imbalance of access to in-service courses pervasive in the education system, PREP further focused its work on rural junior-primary teachers. Other research confirmed that teachers working in the junior primary phase of schooling were the most neglected of any phase (Reeves, 1993, p 14).

PREP set out to trial and develop a resource pack for the professional development of teachers. The intention was that the final pack could function as a multi-media course in the theory and practice of reading and writing instruction. The focus on literacy was not a random or idiosyncratic decision. Rather it was based on the findings of PREP (Flanagan, 1991) and of others (Macdonald, 1991; Taylor, 1989) that illiteracy was a distinct brake on children's progress through the schooling system.

## 1.2 *Nature and scope of the study*

The case study described in this dissertation formed only part of the wider project of trial and development. I chose to work in two schools in the Eastern Cape (see Chapter 6). Other researchers worked in Kwazulu-Natal schools or ex-DET urban township schools. A Model C school was included and used for commentary, comparison and grading. Third and fourth year pre-service (PRESET) students and post-graduate INSET students at the University of Cape Town were also part of the testing and evaluating phase. All in all, the resource pack took five years to trial, evaluate and finalise (*PREP News*, July 1995).

Because this study formed but one component of the larger process, it needs to be viewed in context of a particular chronological period and a specific geographical location. At no point in this study was it desirable to fully separate my own work from the work of the research project as a whole (see *Figure 1* on p 52 of this dissertation).

In order to keep educationally disadvantaged pupils and teachers in focus, PREP researchers made a decision to trial all material in farm schools in the historically most disadvantaged areas of the country namely the Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-Natal. Evidence to support this decision is presented in Chapter 3. Evidence showing the levels of disadvantage in the Eastern Cape, where this particular study was sited, is presented in Chapter 6. In essence, we believed that if we could demonstrate effectiveness in these areas, we could argue for relative ease of implementation in other areas.

It must be clear that the scope of my study is restricted to two farm schools in the Eastern Cape where certain of the materials to be included in the resource pack were tested and developed. My own reflective process involved assimilating data from these schools with data collected in other locations to refine materials being developed by PREP. Consequently, while responses from the teachers in my study informed my opinions, these opinions were often confirmed and/or adjusted in response to other inputs.

### 1.3 *Process of research*

Methods were of a qualitative nature (see Chapter 4 for more detail). Firstly, I surveyed available literature on INSET intervention and materials development. Such literature was sparse, and there were very few South African publications. To supplement my reading I drew extensively from data collected by other researchers and unpublished papers. This approach allowed me to develop a general picture of the trends in distance education as well as an indication of grass roots realities.

In addition to these sources, I was able to draw extensively from PREP archival material. I would suggest that this material was significant because

[t]o our knowledge no other project in the country has such a rich collection of classroom data generated in DET schools (schools for Africans), indeed there are no other long term ethnographies of this kind of apartheid schooling...[and]...PREP has a valuable collection of video and audio material of children from the age of 2 gaining a concept of print

and a concept of literacy. Again there is no other material documenting each year of children's development like this available in our country (PREP Funding Proposal, unpublished, 1992).

Secondly, I conducted a series of interviews with people involved in rural development projects. Amongst others, sociologists like Graaff (University of Cape Town) and development workers like Ralphs (SACHED and the Catholic Institute of Education) provided me with useful points of departure.

Thirdly, once the project schools were established I used more conventional forms of data collection. Interviews, evaluation forms, correspondence with participants and field observations all provided valuable research data. These forms of data collection are described more fully in Chapter 4.

Finally, as a researcher in this project I was also able to draw on earlier research experience with PREP, my own teaching experience and my experience in INSET and PRESET. Teaching experience included work in state-controlled township schools. PRESET included five years experience teaching method courses to third and fourth year as well as post-graduate primary education students at the University of Cape Town. My INSET experience included occasional workshops for the Teaching and Learning Resources Centre at the University of Cape Town and other non-government organisations (NGOs) such as the Primary Science Project. School based INSET was part of my work at the Catholic Institute of Education.

This prior experiential knowledge is valuable in this kind of research work for it allows the researcher to focus on the pedagogical intentions without being distracted by the 'unfamiliar' or 'exotic' aspects of schooling sociology. The value of such a hermeneutical approach to human knowledge has been advocated by scholars such as Thomas Kuhn, with his view that scientific enquiry does not proceed by objective criteria of verification and experimentation alone, but by 'paradigm' constructions which are the product of tradition and scientific research (Hoy, 1988, p vii), and by Michael Polanyi who claims that:

scientific enquiry embodies a dimension of personal knowledge that transcends the disjunction between objective and subjective, reason vs faith, fact, and value, a knowledge that encompasses a tacit or subsidiary awareness analogous to a skill or connoisseurship (quoted in Hoy, 1988, p vii).

By locating my study within the broader PREP structure, I was essentially able to assume the values espoused by PREP. It is not the intention of this study to question those values, although independent evaluations of PREP have subsequently been commissioned. In essence I adopted and supported the PREP's pedagogical stance and views on good practice. These views are inherent in all the PREP material and are detailed more fully in the writings of Flanagan (1991;1993a;1993b;1994;1995). Much of the personal understanding embodied in this study was tacit and unquestioned by other researchers who acknowledged their and my skill or connoisseurship. This is not to suggest that we acknowledged ourselves as experts. Rather we acknowledged that

our combined experiences and expertise allowed us to work sympathetically and comfortably with teachers in circumstances different to our own.

#### 1.4 *Limitations of the study*

This was a micro-study within a broader study, the parameters of which are illustrated in *Figure 1* on page 52 of this dissertation. I trialled material in two farm schools with two teachers who were chosen because they were junior primary teachers. The small sample indicates that opinions and input may not be representative of the teaching corps as a whole. Both teachers were ex-DET teachers and no other teachers from other ex-education departments were targeted. No conclusions about the nature of in-service education could thus be drawn in general terms.

I remained resident in Cape Town and travelled to the Eastern Cape to collect research data. Time and distance proved to be powerful constraints. Communication systems were a distinct limitation. Neither teacher was contactable by phone, nor was the postal service reliable. We developed an elaborate system of message bearing through other NGO field workers, but messages were often forgotten, lost or not transmitted accurately. Flights were booked and arrangements made in advance. Any deviation from the planned schedule created long delays, cost money and often meant the loss of valuable data.

The case study relied on support from local NGOs for facilitation of meetings and other logistical arrangements. Working in the Border region of the Eastern Cape, the co-

operative ethic which existed amongst NGOs in this region was atypical at that stage. In the Western Cape in-service initiatives by NGOs such as the Teachers In-service Project (TIP) based at the University of the Western Cape, the Teaching and Learning Resource Centre (TLRC) based at the University of Cape Town, the Primary Science Project (PSP) based at the Uluntu Centre in Gugulethu, the Primary Mathematics Project (PMP) based at Bellville College of Education and others worked separately without any form of central co-ordination. National NGOs such as the Science Education Project (SEP) and The Community Computer Society which worked together supportively in the Eastern Cape region had little or no contact with each other in other regions. (Researchers in Kwazulu-Natal had no such organisations to turn to). Funding crises are now causing NGOs in other regions to look more closely towards co-operation to avoid duplication of effort and resources. These efforts are supported by organisations like the Independent Development Trust's 1000 Schools Project. In 1992, however, coordinated efforts were the exception rather than the rule. This reliance on others for support was limiting in so far as both the researcher and the teachers had to schedule around existing structures and plans. I tried not to make undue demands on organisations such as the Independent Teacher's Enrichment Centre (ITEC). (A more detailed description of the ways in which ITEC assisted me and supported PREP's work is contained in Chapter 6.)

Most attention in this study was focused on the INSET material being developed for the resource pack. By doing so, I was able to assist in refining the product. The limitation of this focus is that I was not able to pay much attention to classroom practice or pupil improvement as a measure of effectiveness. Teachers talked about pupils' reactions

to the story books developed by us and they described what they had tried in their classrooms, but much of this went undocumented. Although the study was intended to be school-based and classroom-focused, I relied largely on anecdotal evidence rather than personal observation and evaluation of practice.

Teachers were voluntary subjects in this study, co-operating in an altruistic manner. Nothing was offered in terms of accreditation and certification, yet the intervention expected large time and energy commitments from participants. Both teachers said that they would have 'worked harder' and 'tried more' if assessment for formal qualification had been part of the process (Research interviews, August 1992).

The study also had no official sanction. At no time in the year that I worked in the schools did I make contact with the DET, nor they with me. I can thus offer no comment on the departmental position on such in-service attempts.

The lack of published literature on in-service education, and in particular distance in-service education in South Africa, meant that I was often reflecting in a vacuum. Comparison to similar interventions was minimal. Much of the knowledge used in the study was intuitive or experiential or based on hearsay.

### 1.5 *The structure of this dissertation*

The body of this dissertation has been structured in the following way:

## **Chapter 2**

This chapter examines current provision of distance education in South Africa and defines the way in which I refer to such education. It looks at recommendations being made by political and educational authorities and considers some possible options.

## **Chapter 3**

In this chapter I argue that farm schools are sadly neglected in material and educational terms. I draw from the literature and from statistical data to show how the physical, political and legal constraints operating in such schools impact on the teachers who work there. In conclusion I examine the need for effective in-service education in these schools.

## **Chapter 4**

In Chapter 4 I outline and justify the choice of action research as an appropriate methodology for this study. After an overview of the research procedure, I detail the ways in which data was gathered and describe the concurrent and overlapping nature of the cycles of research.

## **Chapter 5**

Here I describe how my attempts to find suitable tools and/or frameworks for analysis of the data led me to use a flexible framework based on characteristics

commonly found in effective in-service education. I draw strongly on the work of Michael Fullan for this framework.

## **Chapter 6**

This chapter contextualises the study. Firstly I describe the Eastern Cape province in terms of educational provision and need. I locate myself in the region and discuss the research partnerships in which I engaged. Finally I give specific details regarding the choice of location and material conditions experienced in the targetted schools.

## **Chapter 7**

An analysis of the data collected in the study forms this chapter. To make such an analysis I show how the data does, or does not, measure up to the characteristics of effectiveness identified in Chapter 5. I tentatively conclude that the research had merit, but acknowledge that some of the characteristics were not evident in the study.

## **Chapter 8**

The final chapter of this thesis contains some conclusions drawn from the study. These are limited to the context of the study and I do not attempt to make conclusions about the nature of in-service education in general terms. The conclusions are followed by some tentative recommendations for future in-service and distance education initiatives. The recommendations are offered in

the hope that the learnings gathered in this study may usefully inform future practice.

## **Bibliography**

A list of readings completed during this study can be found at the end of the dissertation.

## **Appendices**

The body of the thesis is followed by Appendices A to K. These appendices are referred to in the body of the thesis and are included in the interests of greater clarity.

This study contributes towards the body of INSET knowledge. The suggestions which are made, are made with a clear understanding of the limitations of such a micro-study. While conclusions and recommendations may be tentative this is not to deny the value of micro-work in education. Flanagan, in *Teachers and their work: case studies of in-service education in African primary schools* (1991, p 28) points out that because of the lack of detailed ethnographic studies of ex-DET schooling and schools, decision-makers, educationists and writers are apt to over-generalise about South African schooling. Only studies at the micro-level of teachers and classrooms can remove the dangers of inappropriate and ineffective INSET and policy.

## Chapter 2

### Setting the scene

[The] general endorsement of in-service education means nothing without an accompanying understanding of the characteristics of effective as compared with ineffective in-service education efforts (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p 315).

My thesis was that it is possible to develop an effective means of distance in-service education for teachers in an impoverished and disadvantaged sector, namely rural primary schools. By effective I mean that such education should attempt to contribute to increased pedagogical knowledge and theoretical understanding as well as to improved classroom practice in such a way as to impact positively on the learning outcomes of pupils. This dissertation is a description and explanation of that attempt.

Distance education is not in itself a new or unique feature of the educational system in South Africa. In fact, distance education for a long time has been the primary means of upgrading teachers' qualifications in this country. Economy is the main factor as, in most cases, correspondence courses are cheaper than contact-based education. Of course, rural teachers (which includes the teachers in this study) are generally at some geographical distance from the institutions offering certificated courses and the economics of distance education have not yet been finalised in South Africa. Where effective distance education is provided, particularly where facilitation is included, it is not cheap in the short-term. In the longer term, the development of an effective distance

education programme in a developing country like ours could conceivably be cheap. Much research is needed before a final statement could be made on the economics of distance education. Such research is beyond the scope of this thesis.

## *2.1 Definitions*

Before examining the current provision of distance education, we need to distinguish between correspondence courses and distance education. Swift (1992, p 1) explains that 'Distance education is structured learning where student and teacher are separated by space: Distance education describes a group of methods for the "delivery" of education and correspondence education is just one of these practices'. Reeves (1993, p 34) states quite clearly that 'Distance education means more than only a correspondence course'.

In this study I use the term distance education to refer to a broad group of methods for delivery of in-service education. These methods involve the student in a variety of ways. In this study teachers were required to read articles, discuss aspects thereof with colleagues, answer questions and attempt to try out ideas in their classrooms. They were also expected to listen to audio cassettes, to articulate and refine their own opinions and to watch different approaches to teaching on video cassettes in order to inform their own practice.

## 2.2 Provision

There are two main providers of post-matriculation qualifications for in-service teachers via distance learning, the University of South Africa (UNISA) and Vista University. Both of these institutions offer correspondence courses for teachers at various levels and on a grand scale. Based on a head count, Vista University's 1991 student enrolment 'accounted for almost ten percent of the total head count of students at South African universities' (University Annual Report, p 5, 1991). The enrolment figures per faculty show that the education faculty accounts for over 78% of the student population. A closer look at the education faculty reveals that the vast majority of these students are in-service teachers improving their basic qualification (Diploma in Education).

More recently, traditionally contact universities have implemented distance education programmes. For example, the University of Natal has recently implemented such a course for in-service teachers in Madadeni, near Newcastle (*Focus*, 1995, p 16). These courses offer a mix of correspondence and contact teaching. The university staff travel to the learning centres to lecture and tutor on a weekly basis.

In addition to the distance education universities, several colleges of education offer correspondence education for teachers in the previous education departments. Foremost amongst these are Shoshanguve, Roggebaai, Umlazi, Natal, Transvaal and Springfield colleges of education.

### 2.3 *Quality of provision*

When one examines the curriculum and content of some distance education courses offered by universities and colleges, it seems that teachers are expected to engage in an academic exercise which has little, if any, relevance to their day-to-day classroom practice. The director of Vista University's Further Training Campus made it clear that the sole aim of Vista University is to upgrade qualifications, not improve classroom practice. He said:

The basic aim for its foundation was the need to upgrade - through correspondence or distance teaching - the large number of underqualified teachers, thereby enabling them to improve their qualifications while practising their profession (Vista University, 1991, p 9).

This statement does not preclude other aims, but it is indicative of a systemic approach to INSET which focuses on certification rather than professional competence.

Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that any distance education institution engages in classroom practice facilitation. Indeed none have teaching practice as an assessment component. Thus distance education in South Africa can justifiably be labelled as being correspondence courses aimed at academic credit. Teachers themselves also recognise that INSET has been more a case of certificate chasing than improvement in practice. Zuma, in an article in *Teachers and their work* states, 'Finding ways to improve classroom practice is good but one way or another, in the end, everyone is looking for a certificate that is going to give that person a better salary' (1991, p 152).

The intense focus on certification rather than improvement of classroom practice is one factor which has resulted in continual criticism being levelled at INSET institutions for their lack of direct involvement in classroom practice. Brian O'Connell, convenor of the National Education Policy Initiative (NEPI) Teacher Education Research Group (and who is now Director of Education of the Western Cape Education Department) criticises teacher educators for not taking classroom practice seriously when he says:

Currently teacher-education institutions live in isolation from practice. We never go back into the schools except to go and monitor our own students. We're not reflecting on practice in terms of reality because we don't know it (O'Connell, 1993, p 10).

O'Connell would like to see a reversal of this situation 'where teacher-education institutions accept an authentic relationship with the world of practice and somehow connect themselves and take responsibility for what they do' ( O'Connell, 1993, p 10).

A PREP investigation into provision of distance education revealed that education courses for teachers are not responding to the context in which rural teachers are working (Reeves, 1993, p 11) and that:

The current provision of Distance Education for teachers in South Africa has meant that distance education for teachers is generally perceived as second rate and as simply a cheaper way for the state to provide education for the majority of teachers in the short term (Reeves, 1993, p 11).

It is clear that this situation is unsatisfactory in terms of both national reconstruction and quality education. The African National Congress (ANC) Policy Framework states clearly that:

The strong link which the present government has established between formal qualifications, salary advancement and promotion for teachers has resulted in massive distortions. Teachers invest heavily in formal study which is often totally disconnected from their professional work. Upgrading teachers' qualifications is thus de-linked from improving their professional competence (ANC, 1994, p 47).

#### 2.4 *Future trends in distance education*

Whilst recognising that the quality of distance education on offer is generally quite poor, educationists have expressed further (but different) need for distance education. As early as 1987, Hartshorne pointed out that developments in the political and educational sectors of South Africa would cause 'serious consideration of alternative strategies in the provision of INSET, including *distance learning*, because of problems of mobility and access and contact with teachers' (1987, p 15 - original emphasis). He also recognises the need for a more flexible and effective approach:

There is a need to develop basic principles in the setting up of *distance learning* strategies, e.g. the necessity to go beyond the individual teacher to working together with teachers' centres, tutorial groups, groups of teachers working cooperatively in a local situation and all the ways of

providing *people support*, without which distance teaching strategies are likely to be ineffectual (1987, p 9 - original emphasis).

More recently, in its policy framework on education, the ANC dealt with the issue of access to education and stated that:

Distance education is likely to play a much bigger role in teacher development...[and that] part-time studies and distance education will be provided both through specialised institutions and existing institutions of Higher Education. Strong support will be given to institutions which seek to develop systems of open learning and *multi-media distance education* (ANC, 1994, p 12,115 - emphasis added).

During the study our energies were focused largely on the multi-media nature of the PREP material. At that stage the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) did not exist and the buzzwords of open learning and life-long learning were not common property. Debates around the meanings attached to such concepts are current and ongoing. These debates are not included in this study as they were not relevant at the time. PREP, represented by Dr Wendy Flanagan, is however, a founding member of SAIDE and is currently engaged in some of the debates around these concepts.

## 2.5 *PREP's position*

It is obvious, in the light of the above, that PREP was justified in investigating forms of multi-media methods of delivery to teachers. What is not quite so obvious, is the fact that within this already flawed system of educational provision there are other glaring gaps, most notably a dearth of opportunity for junior primary teachers. An extensive statistical survey has shown that these teachers are not provided for in terms of course material; in addition, they are discriminated against in terms of bursaries and subsidies (Reeves, 1993, p 14).

Neglect of teachers in this particular sector has implications for the children in that sector. Thus, PREP's focus on junior primary teachers was not incidental. Indeed, the ANC has subsequently proposed that:

the early years of schooling be targeted for major overhaul. The early years determine whether or not a child becomes a successful learner in and out of school. The present rates of repetition and dropout in the early years of school are intolerable and must be reversed. A completely different approach to the learning needs of young children must be designed and implemented (ANC, 1994, p 95).

PREP's investigations also revealed that changes to the Language Policy Act (1991) would effectively mean that 9 out of 10 South African children would learn through a language that was not their own. Thus PREP's decision to look specifically at the issue of teaching reading and writing was not incidental. As Flanagan (1993a, p 2) explains:

The focus in PREP is presently centred on the first four years of schooling because we argue that if children are going to be expected to perform academically well in a language not their own, there will have to be a substantial improvement in the way reading and writing are currently taught in the initial stages in our schools.

With this background PREP researchers set out to investigate effective ways of providing meaningful and useful multi-media teacher education for junior primary school teachers. PREP felt strongly about teachers having access to debates and current educational thinking as well as having an opportunity to reflect upon pedagogy. We saw this as an important aspect of our work. As Flanagan (1991, p 173) explains:

Essentially, treating teachers as intellectually capable and teachers seeing themselves as capable of intellectualising their work is an important political task of education in this country.

To this end we worked with teachers to develop material:

- which was useful in the classroom;
- which increased simultaneously their own intellectual understandings of their practice;
- which provided them with a range of models of good practice;
- and which presented them with discussions on current and relevant debates.

In addition, we aimed to develop material and resources which were suitably South African and which were developed with rural conditions in mind.

This material included: theoretical articles about teaching, audio cassettes and video cassettes, were accompanied by questions and/or tasks designed to encourage interaction between participant teachers and their colleagues. In addition to these components, PREP developed and supplied a range of story books in African languages and English as well as a range of story charts in the form of wall posters with accompanying text strips. The materials were disseminated free of charge to participating schools.

Selected samples of these materials are appended. Appendix A contains *Article Two: Points about the reading process*. Appendix B contains an example of an original video script and Appendix C contains the text and artwork suggestions of one of the PREP story books. (It is not practical to append actual video and audio cassettes, story books or wall charts although these are all available as part of the PREP resource pack.) These appendices are intended to give the reader some sense of the nature of the material developed and trialled in this study. Subsequent to the study, all material was refined and adapted for final publication. The components of the published pack are detailed in the brochure supplied by the publishers. A copy of this brochure is attached as Appendix D.

The material conditions operating in rural classrooms have not, until recently, been a particular focus of educational research. Yet an understanding of these conditions is important if an endeavour such as that of PREP is to be relevant and a contributor to transformation in these schools. Chapter 3 describes conditions and attempts to reveal

the constraints which operate in rural schools in South Africa, particularly those constraints pertaining to farm school teachers.

## Chapter 3

### **A political economy of farm schools**

In the 150 years that there has been some form of primary schooling for Africans it has always been neglected in relation to other levels of education (Hartshorne, 1990, p 1).

In a paper which she presented at the Farm Schools Networking Conference at Broederstroom in July 1991, Gordon (1991a) referred to farm schools as 'the neglected sector'. In this chapter I show that this description is accurate and make the point that within our country, where a great deal of educational provision for African children is indisputably inadequate or underfunded, a sector exists which is even further disadvantaged by location and a historical legacy of 'baaskap' and disempowerment.

#### *3.1 Laws and acts affecting farm schools*

The 1913 Natives' Land Act and the 1936 Natives' Trust and Land Act essentially established the principles of territorial segregation under which Africans and 'whites' were to acquire and occupy land in separate designated areas. The 1913 Act was also an attempt to suppress occupation of private and Crown owned lands and to outlaw certain forms of tenancy on white-owned farms. Essentially the government was protecting the interests of commercial farmers and reducing tenant farmers and sharecroppers to labourer status. The position of African families on farms was made extremely tenuous by these acts (Readers Digest, 1988, p 290-292). By 1954, the then

prime minister, Verwoerd, made it clear that farm schools were to serve a dual function: they were to be of economic value to the farmer and they were to prevent the migration of black employment seekers to the cities (Gordon, 1991). The Bantu Education Act (1953) effectively created state-aided farm schools. However, these were to be built by the farmers themselves with building costs subsidised by the state. Initially around 10-18% of the cost was subsidised, but by 1988 this figure had risen to 75%. In effect these laws meant that the state did not provide schooling for children on farms.

In recognition of the problems caused by farmers owning the schools, legislation was passed in 1988 to allow the state to purchase farm schools from the landowners, but only five schools were purchased. This statistic reveals that although teachers, unions and NGOs were concerned about the control of farm schools being in the hands of the land-owners and were able to pressurize the government to enact legislation which allowed this situation to change, they were unable to force the state or the land-owners to effect the legislation. State officials argue that they were hampered in their efforts to obtain farm schools by lack of funding (Ralphs, 1992).

### *3.2 Control of farm schools*

In practice the land owner has total authority over the existence of the school on his/her land and can decide to close it at any stage. This is borne out by the fact that since 1988, the number of pupils enrolled in white-owned farm schools has decreased, and between 1987 and 1989, 227 schools were closed down by farmers (Ralphs, 1992).

In addition, land owners have a great deal of control over access to schooling, as they have the legal right in terms of the Trespass Act to decide whether or not to admit children from neighbouring farms. Exercising this right means that many children have to travel unacceptable distances around neighbouring farms to attend school.

Dawie Bosch of the Centre for Legal Studies, Stellenbosch University, at the Farm School Networking Conference (Bosch, 1991) cited this as one of the greatest problems in farm schooling. He argued that the employer should never control the school. Ardington (1990) supports these views and argues that provision of schooling should be the responsibility of the state.

In practice the farmer can have total control of schooling. The forms of control vary from farm to farm, but essentially the farmer has the right to employ teachers, to provide or not provide housing, water, electricity and access to telephones. In addition, salaries are often paid to teachers via the farmers, thereby perpetuating an iniquitous financial control over teachers.

### *3.3 Material conditions in farm schools*

Material conditions in farm schools vary considerably depending on the area in which the farms are located and the attitudes of the farm owners. Where workers are organised, schools tend to be better equipped and maintained, such as in the Western Cape fruit farming areas around Elgin and Grabouw. In a study of Eastern Cape church-owned farm schools (i.e. schools which are under the control of the DET but on church

owned as opposed to farmer-owned land) conducted in 1987, Davies revealed appalling conditions: schools had no electricity, no running water, little sanitation, and buildings were in a poor state of repair. At that stage, Dwa Dwa school (outside East London), one of the schools in this study, had moved onto church-owned property after being evicted from a neighbouring farm by the landowner. The school was operating from a wattle and daub structure constructed by the teacher and pupils. Farm school teachers themselves confirmed that these sorts of conditions were commonplace at the 1990 Farm Schools Networking Seminar. Teachers Mofomme, Mlondo, Hela, Khoabane and Hipondoka all reported similar concerns and problems to the seminar.

Legally, the state is responsible for paying salaries and providing furniture and books. The state also has administrative control of the schools. However, scrutiny reveals discriminatory practices. Farm schools are under-resourced in terms of books and equipment. Per capita spending by the state differs across the education spectrum. For example, annual per capita spending in 1988 (Farm Schools Networking Conference Report, 1991) was R2700 per white child, R560 per black child (DET) and R280 per farm school child.

Response from the state to the problems in farm schools has been bureaucratic and slow. In 1986, the results of an investigation into farm school conditions by a rural task force from the DET was published (DET, 1986). This report argued for parity of provision, but was opposed by Conservative Party members who foresaw large numbers of children being too well educated to remain on the land.

Structural constraints such as the isolation of schools and distance from resource bases further exacerbate the problems of provision and work against advancement of pupils.

Limited educational provision in farm schools is further entrenched by the common practice of withdrawing children from classes to labour on the farms, especially at harvest time. Despite the fact that children below 15 years of age may not be employed on the farms, the practise is still common (Masia, 1990).

### *3.4 Farm school statistics*

In Chapter 2 I reported that PREP's focus on junior primary classrooms was both intentional and strategic. The decision to work in this sector is supported by the findings of other researchers in the field such as Taylor (1989, p 1) who reports that 'lower primary schooling in South Africa has received surprisingly little attention despite the enormous problems which exist at this level'. His statistics reveal that almost one quarter of African children who enter first grade do not reach the second grade the following year, and that many of these children disappear from the formal schooling system altogether at this stage. Graaff (in conversation, 1992) confirmed that the drop-out rate is worst in farm schools, where child labour, distance from schools, poverty and itinerancy of farm workers exacerbate poor attendance.

In past years farm schools did not go beyond the fifth year of schooling (i.e. standard three or grade five). In fact, secondary classes (i.e. standard six or grade eight and upwards) were not permitted until 1980. The 1990 DET Annual Report indicates that

there are 5685 primary farm schools under their control, but only 14 secondary schools. Some schools, such as Smiling Valley (Cobongo District, outside King William's Town), which has Catholic Church funding, are opting to offer an additional standard each year. This is in response to pupils' expressed wish to further their education. Financial and other constraints make this situation an exception rather than a rule, and most schools, including those funded by the Catholic Church, will remain primary schools for the foreseeable future.

### *3.5 Farm school teachers and their working conditions*

Almost half (48%) of the DET farm schools are one-teacher schools. Where there is less than one teacher per year group, the teachers have to cope with the pressures of teaching multi-level classes and mixed language groupings. Such teachers normally have no support or assistance. In addition, many teachers tend to commute from urban or peri-urban areas to stay on the farms alone from Monday to Friday. At weekends they return home to their families. Effectively they are completely isolated during their working and preparation time.

There is no doubt that teachers themselves feel demoralised and unmotivated. Mofomme (1990, p 5) remarked that 'Good teachers leave the farm schools, only frustrated teachers remain', indicating that such attitudes are prevalent amongst at least some teachers.

### 3.6 *The current interest in farm schools*

Researchers in the area of rural development and education are placing greater focus currently on the problems of farm schools. Much of this educational interest stems from community development projects, unionisation attempts and the aim for universal primary education. Reports such as Davies' (1987) have led to significant upgrading of school buildings and facilities. In the Eastern Cape alone, her report has prompted the Catholic Church to raise funds for more classrooms and better toilet and living facilities. Building projects in the Port Elizabeth and East London dioceses were initiated in 1992. Funding from European communities has also been pledged for a national, CIE coordinated attempt to analyse needs and improve both material and educational conditions in all schools controlled by the Catholic Church. In the state sector, injections of funding from the Independent Development Trust (IDT) have made the provision of community-managed schools possible.

At the 1991 Farm Schools Networking Conference (the second of its kind), a large number of diverse and sometimes politically opposed projects and organisations came together to establish a formal networking structure. The DET was invited to attend but were not represented. Many of the organisations which attended stressed the need for effective in-service educational projects, both to assist teachers working in difficult conditions and also to redress the inequalities of provision for some 475 000+ children who attend rural and farm schools.

The nature of these non-governmental in-service initiatives varies. In addition to the distance education approach proposed by PREP, there are small scale localised group contact workshops such as those offered by the Independent Teacher Enrichment Centre (ITEC) in the Border region. There is training for trainers on a national basis such as that offered by Woz'obona, a pre-primary initiative. And there is resource production and training offered by NGOs like READ and the Molteno Project nationally.

Networking amongst these organisations has made it possible to highlight some of the common problems experienced by in-service educators and to show the need for a feasible and effective model of in-service education.

### *3.7 Problems experienced by INSET educators*

Teachers in farm schools find themselves in an invidious position. They are accountable to the DET and subject to its rules and regulations, yet they are employed by the landowner and subject to his/her wishes. In addition, they are often dependent on the landowner for receipt of salary, transport, post and telecommunications. This means that INSET educators operating outside of the DET often tread a thin line for they need to operate with the goodwill and permission of the farm manager or landowner in order to alleviate any possible tension between the school management and the teachers. Once INSET in Catholic schools became the responsibility of the CIE, more INSET providers were able to access the schools. Ralphs (1991) states that certain schools were working together with local NGO groupings to provide in-service support for teachers. However, she also makes it clear that there were isolated schools

in the Catholic system where access was still being denied or obstructed. Until the period of this research, very little INSET work had been provided by the CIE in the Eastern Cape, other NGOs like ITEC, however, were working freely in these schools as part of a larger farm school project in the area.

The farmer controls who has access to the school to provide in-service education. In conservative communities it appears that NGOs are often viewed with suspicion as being politically motivated trouble-makers, so farmers discourage teachers from involvement in projects run by NGOs.

Service conditions require that teachers upgrade their formal qualifications for improvement in salary. This has meant that teachers opt for formal, certifiable forms of education through universities and colleges despite widespread recognition that such courses do not have any meaningful impact on classroom practice. Vista University, for example, does not offer teaching practice or pedagogy courses.

Experience and competence remain unrecognised and unrewarded by the state. As a result non-formal programmes, such as those run by NGOs, may be seen as a burden by teachers with little time or energy to spare.

Other common problems are of a more logistical nature. These include distance, time, availability of resources and technology, communication barriers, availability and location of NGO personnel, overlapping of resource provision and conflicting interests.

### 3.8 *The need for a feasible model of INSET for farm schools*

The DET offers in-service courses for teachers. Davies (1990) points out that such offerings are intermittent and unsustained in farm schools. Residential courses offered by the DET are limited largely to heads of departments and school principals. Despite this, 30% of teachers interviewed by Davies (1990) expressed dissatisfaction with both the DET and its in-service programme. These anti-DET sentiments are echoed by one of the teachers in this study when she says:

There is very little that you get from the DET as courses. Sometimes they choose individual schools and send them to Pretoria. We've been helped by ITEC mostly, we've got little help from the DET [and] when I asked for help I told them [the DET] that I did pre-school, they said it had nothing to do with the DET and that they were still helping the public schools, not the farm schools yet ( Research interview, August 1992).

One consequence of these sentiments is that many teachers will only attend DET courses if they perceive that they have no choice. In group discussions around the issue of what comprised effective INSET at the Farm School Networking Seminar (1990), in-service educators from a range of sectors and organisations concluded that INSET projects should allow for teacher initiative and freedom of choice. Feedback from the group suggested that teachers felt undermined by INSET projects where the project methodology was portrayed as infinitely superior to that of the teachers.

Inadequate INSET provision for teachers, combined with the the above mentioned constraints, effectively results in limited stimulation and impoverished educational provision for farm school pupils. Researchers agree that the issue of educational provision for this sector needs attention. Ardington (1990) suggests that farm schools must offer diversity in the syllabi as the future for many pupils does not lie in the rural areas. Hartshorne (1990, p 3) argues, 'The challenge is not so much to get children into school in the first place but to keep them there for a long enough period for schooling to be of future value and relevance to them'.

It is clear that past provisioning of teacher development and certification of teachers has taken little account of the everyday lives of farm school teachers. It is not surprising, therefore, that Reeves (1993) found that a more effective means of teacher education was vital if we are to address quality of primary education. Moreover, any attempts to do this need to be grounded in the very practices where change and innovation is to happen.

By locating our research in farm schools, we hoped to demonstrate that possibilities for transformation exist in all schools. By choosing farm schools in areas distant from our work place we were able to test our model at distance. We were also able to spread the enquiry across different geographical locations in Kwazulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. This spread gave opportunity for comparison of conditions, understandings, constraints and possibilities. In this way we were more informed as to how to present the final resource pack and its comprehensive multi-media components.

## Chapter 4

### Research methodology

We seem then to be in a period when the principles that guide practical inquiry, like action research, and the focus and styles of scientific research are coming closer together. There are sharp differences in emphasis, of course, and many disagreements about methodology. Most of all, long-term purposes for each type of enquiry still seem to be different. Yet it is possible to detect a degree of convergence between science and explicitly practical work that few would have predicted a decade ago and that bodes well for those who choose to direct their professional studies towards matters like making schools and classrooms better places, here and now (Atkin, 1993, p 188).

The consideration of the quality of INSET provision in the previous chapter suggests that the challenge to INSET educators is to use and develop research methods which more accurately allow for teacher initiative and teacher choice to be part of the research process. This was the challenge for PREP, as PREP was essentially concerned with making schools and classrooms better places. Previous research carried out by PREP used action research as a means of doing that: Phase 1 of PREP included a component which examined the feasibility of action research as a methodology for teachers to use for improvement of their classroom practices. It was against this background that I selected action research as an appropriate methodology for my own study.

This chapter describes the research methodology, the research methods, the cycles of research and how the research was located. It also describes how the research task was conceived as a case study within the broader context of PREP.

#### 4.1 *Action Research*

The nature of the research question dictates to some extent the type of methodology appropriate to the task. Initially, therefore, it seemed inevitable that some form of qualitative research would need to be employed in order to collect evolving information systematically and at the same time, cope with emerging variables and contradictions.

Familiarity with the research procedure has been recognised by prominent sociologists as playing a crucial role in the selection of the methodology (Vulliamy et al, 1990). I was familiar with action research (Morrison, 1987), and had been exposed to the qualitative methods employed by other researchers in Phase 1 of PREP. While other methodologies such as ethnography were also used in PREP, I decided on an action research-based approach as being the most appropriate for my purposes. I selected action research primarily because it offered a wide range of alternatives for working with teachers and a variety of methods of data collection. This meant that I was free to select research procedures to suit particular situations. Such flexibility was essential as I had no means of knowing how the research process would develop. The research design led me to identify a combination of appropriate action research techniques such as participant observation, interviews, reflective observation, triangulation and case study.

In order that the methodology remained flexible and useful, I adopted a fairly broad definition of action research. I took action research to mean a 'small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention' (Cohen and Manion, 1984, p 174). This definition allowed for action research to be employed in what Grundy (1987) would term a fairly technical way to observe teachers at work. I regarded my research procedure as technical in so far as it was not used as a means of self improvement, as described by action researchers like Henry and Kemmis (1985).

In this case, action research was not aimed at my own classroom practice. Rather, the aim of the research was to determine whether a resource pack developed by PREP could be effectively mediated to teachers at a distance.

## *4.2 Research methods*

As the teachers who were involved in the research were based 1500 km away, it was essential that the methods for data collection were flexible and varied and that they suited both the participants and the researcher. It was also desirable to be able to receive feedback as quickly as possible in order to analyse and respond to it. To these ends, seven methods of data collection were employed, namely, evaluation forms, interviews, a research journal, participant observation, comparative observation, detailed reports and minutes of meetings. Each of these methods will be described below.

#### 4.2.1 Evaluation forms

Evaluation forms were used to obtain feedback on the material between visits. These forms were sent to the teachers with stamped, addressed envelopes to facilitate their return. In addition to commenting on the content of video or audio cassettes, readings and classroom resources, the teachers were asked to comment on the structure and content of the actual evaluation forms in order to make them as informative as possible. (See Appendix E for two examples of evaluation forms.) Some of the responses from the teachers in the Eastern Cape can be seen on the forms appended. The teachers were also invited to write to me, which they did on several occasions. Appendix F contains one example of a letter from a teacher in the Eastern Cape study. This letter expresses the teacher's commitment to the project and indicates her willingness to feed her responses and requests back in a variety of ways.

#### 4.2.2 Interviews

At initial meetings with teachers we planned that I would visit the schools in order to record conversations about the material. This would enable me to obtain further and more detailed data than the evaluation forms could provide. At the outset, it was difficult to judge which data would be useful. During the actual data collection stage, few of my interviews were transcribed. This meant that the PREP project leader relied heavily on informal conversations and verbatim reports of these interviews as a form of continuous feedback. This modus operandi had limitations, as it meant that we responded largely to those bits of information which I had selected as relevant. Materials were reworked

and adapted accordingly. While this procedure possibly missed some points which teachers had raised, it did allow for immediate response and 'take-up' in the alteration and development of the resource pack.

Interview questions were developed in advance, often in conjunction with other PREP researchers or the project leader. The following extract from my research journal (originally handwritten) contains one such set of questions. I asked the teachers to respond to these questions during a recorded interview.

*Questions to ask teachers after listening to Audio-cassette 1:*

- What did you like/dislike?
- How did you feel discussing these points:
  - with each other
  - onto a tape?
- Would you comment on this tape? Do you think teachers will find it useful or not? Why?
- If we were to make another such tape, what advice would you give us?
- What sort of discussions/topics would be useful to have on a tape?
- How could we improve this tape?
- If I had not been here, do you think you would have listened to the whole tape?

(Extract from researcher's journal - February 1992)

Responses to interview questions were later critically discussed with the project leader.

(A transcript of a research interview is included as Appendix G.)

Carr and Kemmis (1981) stress the importance of using your own critical faculties to sift data and develop a reflective stance, provided that such sifting can avoid being too subjective. In this case, I worked only with teachers in the Eastern Cape. However, interview data was collected in Kwazulu-Natal and the township schools, this allowed contradictions and similarities to emerge. Working in conjunction with other critical researchers in this way allowed us to avoid as much as possible the subjectivity which Carr and Kemmis warn against.

#### 4.2.3 Research journal

I recorded observations of, and reflections on, my visits in a journal. This on-going self-reporting presented me with an overall image of the process. For example, these notes, reflected things like broken appointments, wasted journeys and idiosyncratic behaviours. The journal provided a medium to record my frustrations and concerns and I jotted down questions as they occurred to me. Where possible, I noted teachers' responses to videos as they watched and minuted the key points in spontaneous discussions around these videos. This information was used in subsequent discussions with teachers and, more importantly, for critical reflection on my own interaction with the teachers.

Such critical reflection is an important principle of action research. McKernan (1991) states that action researchers must be reflective and that 'judgements must be reflexive in order to analyse the process of making judgements' (1991, p 161). Henry and Kemmis show that it is this reflective process which allows us to move forward in the

cycles of action research. They argue that issues and understandings as well as actual practice are only able to develop and evolve when a self-reflective spiral is thoughtfully and systematically followed (1985, p 2).

#### 4.2.4 Participant observation

In order to ensure that teachers were not hindered by my own lack of experience of the local context, a researcher embedded in that experience accompanied me to the Eastern Cape. She acted as a critical friend (Grundy, 1987) to the teachers that I worked with in order to ensure that our understandings were mutual and to avoid confusions. This involved her asking critical questions about the research process in separate sessions with the teachers. She also observed my interactions with local workshop groups. My participant observer had worked previously with groups of teachers in Cape Town and knew the resource pack material very well. She also had particular perceptions which she had gleaned from her own interviews and consequently was able to work these into her questions. Her observations and particularly her discussions with teachers were valuable because, although they were recorded in English, the teachers were given the opportunity of speaking isiXhosa. Their interaction with an African researcher, who was also a teacher, enabled them to pose questions and raise issues which they had not raised with me. I felt that the teachers were more relaxed speaking to a researcher who spoke their language and had similar experiences to them. This data therefore was significant because the researcher was better equipped than I was (by virtue of her lived experience) to overcome the problem

of 'insufficient sensitivity to and lack of fit with the local context and educational milieu' (Wright, 1988, p 280).

#### 4.2.5 Comparative observations

As the project progressed, the researchers in PREP shared, and were exposed to, a variety of opinions from different groups of teachers. The dialectic between researchers and researched led us to conclude that there was a need to inform our work further on the resource pack by having independent evaluation of the materials to support or refute our opinions. To this end, an independent researcher interviewed the Natal farm school teachers (Scott, 1992). I was able to draw from these recorded interviews to inform and contrast with my own impressions and understandings.

In addition, a junior primary teacher in Cape Town was seconded to PREP for one term to work with groups of 'township teachers'. She introduced the resource pack to these PREP teachers and shared her impressions at meetings. She also presented a written report on her work (Mxoli, 1992a). In this way PREP ensured a range of opinions and observations against which I could compare my own observations.

#### 4.2.6 Reports

Many reports were generated during the course of this study. For example, Wendy Flanagan, the project leader, wrote detailed reports of her visits to the Natal schools. These reports were juxtaposed with my own reporting. In addition, reports by

independent evaluators such as Woods (1992) and Parker (1993) allowed us to gauge reactions to the various components of the pack and to adapt material accordingly. For example, we felt initially that it would be useful to supply teachers with audio-cassettes on which the theoretical articles were read aloud. Mxoli's report (1992a) revealed that teachers felt no need for such a series of audio cassettes, in fact, they felt that they were a waste of time. Whereas Parker's report revealed that the teachers had picked up several inconsistencies between text and artwork in the PREP storybooks (1993, p 17). These independent reports further informed the process of trialling material. Parker's findings on the mismatch of text and artwork related only to the isiZulu versions of the PREP story books. But, they alerted us to possible problems in other versions and allowed us to check whether the same problem existed in other versions (in my case these were the isiXhosa versions).

#### 4.2.7 Meetings

I could meet with the teachers in my study only when I was present in the Eastern Cape when we tended to meet daily. The nature and length of these meetings varied. On some occasions we met for a short time to hand over newly developed material, while on others we met for more sustained discussions around material and responses thereto. These meetings usually involved one teacher and myself. I tried to arrange at least one meeting per visit where both teachers were present. My participant observer met twice with each teacher and attended local workshops with each of them.

In Cape Town, the project leader, Dr Flanagan, and I met regularly to reflect critically on our two emerging sets of learnings: our learnings about how the project as a whole was developing and our learnings about the research process itself. This reflection influenced further planning (the next step or decision or development of the material) and impacted on revisions of components of the resource pack. For example, after one meeting where we discussed a video entitled *The concept of print*, we decided to shorten the video considerably and to separate parts of it. We also concluded that it would be appropriate for Dr Flanagan to demonstrate material on video. This conclusion arose out of our separate discussions with teachers, where they had expressed a wish to 'be shown' how they might do things, rather than to be told how they might do things.

### 4.3 *Cycles of research*

Action research is characterised by clear cycles of planning, action, observation and reflection (Henry and Kemmis, 1985). Henry and Kemmis distinguish between an initial cycle of reconnaissance and subsequent cycles of the process. In the reporting of my study I distinguish three main cycles - reconnaissance, developing and trialling, and reworking and publishing. Each of these cycles is described below.

#### 4.3.1 The cycle of reconnaissance

This cycle involved the project leader, teachers from Phase 1 of PREP and myself.

This phase of PREP planning involved discussing how we could develop material and test it in such a way that teachers would find it meaningful. To this end we produced an introductory video cassette. The introductory video was presented to groups of teachers and then they were given the option of joining the project. In addition, we recruited groups of teachers who had previously worked with PREP and had expressed interest in continuing to do so.

This was a useful cycle for us for we were able to record what happened at the actual meetings. For example, we were able to record teacher reactions to video material (many had not seen video programmes before), teacher comments to specific questions about the video, teacher reluctance or eagerness to be part of the research project, and of course, the ways in which they did all of this. This cycle was a sobering reminder of the challenge that lay before us in developing a multi-media resource pack which would not only inform teacher work but would be used by teachers who had actual control of the project.

After the reconnaissance cycle the cycles became less clear. We began to develop material and trial it at different times, in different ways and under different circumstances. Henry and Kemmis (1985) speak about a spiralling process in the cycles of action research. This metaphor explains well the process that I experienced for cycles spiralled so neatly into the next cycle that it was difficult to define the end of one cycle and the start of another. This continual (and typical) process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting moved the process forward and impacted on our behaviours and decisions.

For purposes of reporting and in a more general way, the planning, acting and reflecting which took place can be divided into two overriding cycles which capture the way in which the research proceeded: a cycle of development and trialling, and a cycle of reworking and publishing.

#### 4.3.2 The cycle of development and trialling

This cycle incorporated responses from the project leader, myself and other PREP researchers, audio-visual technicians and teachers from the whole PREP study (i.e. Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Kwazulu-Natal).

This cycle involved the development of the material and components which we felt would comprise the pack. During this cycle, we reflected upon teacher responses and feedback and made adjustments to the material we were producing (written, video and audio).

Essentially this cycle contained four phases: development of INSET material, dissemination and trialling of the material, collection and collation of responses to the material, and revision of sample material in accordance with responses. The length of each of these phases was largely determined by the nature of the sample material. Written articles were usually completed more quickly than video material and were not as constrained by factors such as the availability of studio time.

Dividing this cycle into phases as I have done may create the impression of a neatly contained process. Such a perception is erroneous. The phases described in this cycle were neither categorical nor neatly contained, rather they were overlapping and concurrent. At times during this cycle we found ourselves working simultaneously on more than one video, various articles and audio-cassettes. While doing this, we constantly received and reflected upon feedback on the materials from a number of sources.

This cycle spiralled into and overlapped with the cycle of reworking and publishing described below.

#### 4.3.3 The cycle of reworking and publishing

In this cycle the PREP team reflected more generally on all of the material, looked more carefully and comprehensively at the combined feedback and started to rework the whole pack in terms of our combined reflections, learnings and lived experiences in these schools. It was at the close of this cycle, and after the conclusion of this study, that PREP produced a final resource pack which represented close collaboration with and support from teachers. (The importance of collaboration as a gauge of effectiveness will be further explored in Chapter 7.)

One of the reasons for my adopting an action research approach was precisely because of the emphasis on collaboration. Collaboration is crucial if any attempt at teacher development is to be successful. No-one in this project worked in isolation. The

researchers planned and reflected together in different groupings of critical thought. The teachers worked in groups and the research process was shared with other groups both in and outside the academy. In general PREP held to the principles of action research by forming and being informed by an ever widening critical community (Carr and Kemmis, 1983).

The collaborative experience shared in this research, combined with appropriate participant involvement at all stages of the process, allowed us to develop material which is grounded in the actual practices in which the resource pack was to intervene. This grounded approach, I will argue, is rare in South African education at this stage.

#### 4.4 *The Case Study*

A case study, as used here, is a localised intervention in a particular situation. The selection of schools and the reasons for the particular situation of this study are detailed in Chapter 6.

Some proponents of positivist research often malign action research because they perceive a case study to be an inappropriate tool for reaching generalised research findings (Wallace, 1987). Stenhouse (1975), on the other hand, argues that it is possible to generalise from a variety of case studies on the same topic in order to produce public knowledge. I would argue that practitioners can, and indeed do, gain valuable insights into their own study through relating the findings of other case studies to their own experience (Morrison, 1987). This was certainly the case in this research

project, where different case studies raised both similarities and contradictions and allowed us to modify our practice accordingly. This form of triangulation is widely recognised as an important tool in action research based studies (see for example, Elliot (1991), McNiff (1988) and Flanagan (1991)).

*Figure 1* (p 52, below) illustrates how my particular localised intervention formed but one component of a wider research project under the auspices of PREP. In this diagram, PREP is shown as a continuum with this study occupying only one year, 1992, on that continuum.

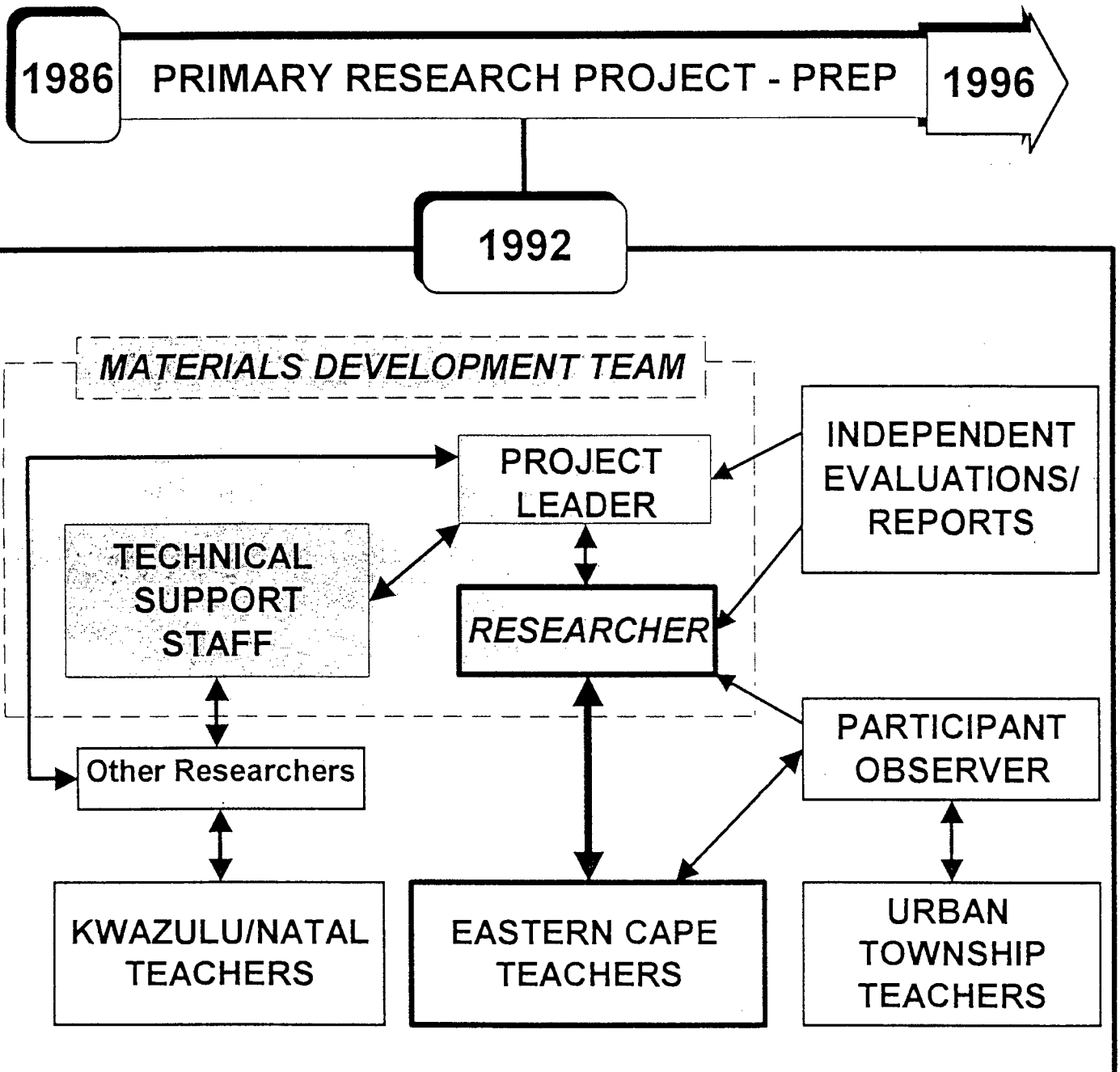
The diagram further illustrates several crucial factors which pertain to this study:

- The study was one of several case studies being carried out simultaneously; This enhanced our ability to make the kind of generalisations to which Stenhouse refers above;
- The researcher was involved in the Eastern Cape study but was also integrally involved in the materials development team;
- The materials development team was informed by, and made decisions based on, a range of inputs. The Eastern Cape case study provided only some of these inputs;
- The project leader was central to the development, trialling and decision making processes reflected in this thesis;

- Triangulation, as described above, formed an important component of this research process;
  
- At no stage in this process were any of the localised case studies perceived as separate from the larger research project;
  
- Materials development within this study was synonymous with and integral to the process of developing an effective means of providing in-service education.

Figure 1 in combination with the factors detailed above should make it clear that the findings of the case study referred to in this report cannot be meaningfully analysed outside the context of the broader research task as it was conceived by PREP.

Figure 1: Placement of researcher and Eastern Cape case study within the broader context of PREP's work.



## Chapter 5

### Identifying a framework for analysing the data

Given the complexity of innovation evaluation contexts, it is often inappropriate to employ evaluation approaches which depend solely upon determining the effectiveness of the programme defined in terms of prespecified standards or criteria. Such evaluation designs tend to be insensitive to both the evolution of the innovation likely to occur during the course of the study, and to the more subjective, qualitative contributions that participants in the innovation evaluation have to offer (Kemmis & Robottom, 1981, p 151).

In Chapter 2 I made the distinction between effective and ineffective in-service educational attempts. In Chapter 4 I indicated how data was collected through interviews, observations, evaluation forms, reports and meetings during the period of the research. This data was subjected to internal reflection and evaluation during the cycles of research. However, our search was not so much for a right answer in the sense of prespecified standards or criteria. It was grounded in the search for 'practical wisdom ... in particular, complex and human situations' (Elliot, 1991, p 52).

The title of this thesis, *The development of an effective multi-media distance education programme for in-service teachers*, makes it clear that the research was concerned with developing good and effective materials for in-service education. However, in order to claim that the material was in fact effective, the process and results of any work done

by PREP researchers needed to be measured. That PREP was novel in the South African context is made clear in Chapter 2. Novelty brings its own problems. 'if methodology is concerned with processes of coming to know a particular phenomenon there is often a paradox in how to select an appropriate means of studying the novel' (Hadfield and Hayes, 1993, p 161).

In order to share the practical wisdom developed during the study, I needed a framework to make sense of the range of data collected during the study. Such a framework would show whether the multi-media distance education provided by PREP was effective. It was necessary to develop my own framework given the novel circumstances. As Hofmeyr and Pavlich point out, 'If the field of educational evaluation is narrowed down to the evaluation of INSET for black teachers in South Africa, then there is little research and few models or strategies'(Hofmeyr and Pavlich, 1987, p 76).

I surveyed evaluations of in-service education carried out in other countries, as well as evaluations of established INSET projects in southern Africa. In South Africa I looked to the Science Education Project (SEP). SEP is probably 'the most evaluated project in Africa' (Macdonald, 1989), and as such, I felt that it might offer some guidance for evaluating the work of PREP. I honed in on recent work in science education in Namibia because the material constraints and vast distances between schools and teachers reflected conditions possibly parallel to my own research.

In surveying evaluations of different in-service initiatives from South Africa and elsewhere ( Ashton et al, 1989; Bolam, 1987; Flanagan, 1991; Hall, 1987; Hofmeyr and

Pavlich, 1987; Joyce and Showers, 1980; Macdonald, 1989; McGregor & McGregor, 1992; Peacock, 1994), it became apparent that the most common strategies for evaluation rested heavily on the observable demonstration of levels or stages of skills exhibited by the teachers involved in the in-service project. The four most common observable stages of skill development are: receipt of basic information, mechanical use of new ideas, refinement, and integration into practice.

Evaluation based on a model using these four stages implies that skills are immediately transmittable, observable and measurable. Such a model discounts the participatory nature of certain in-service initiatives and attempts to determine the effectiveness of programmes using prespecified standards or criteria, precisely the kind of evaluation which Kemmis and Robottom (quoted above) caution against. More importantly, by evaluating mainly teacher behaviour, such a model does not offer the scope for rejection or critique of the content or presentation of the in-service programme (an essential component of the PREP study). In addition, an evaluative process based only on observable outcomes could not begin to encompass the complexities and realities of distance learning in a rural context, particularly when materials (such as those developed by PREP) are novel. In an attempt to remain sensitive to the evolution of the innovation and to the qualitative contributions of participants in the research (see Kemmis & Robottom, 1981, quoted above) I felt that I needed a framework more compatible with the participatory nature of the research.

The nature of the work carried out by PREP researchers meant that I needed to look towards a more participatory evaluative approach in order to ensure that the less

quantifiable, but fundamentally important, aspects of the research were reflected and incorporated in the research findings. According to David Tripp of Murdoch University (1995), participatory evaluation employs special research methods: it is specific and practical rather than general and academic; it is responsive in nature as it recognises that projects and participants change. Evaluation, therefore, has to fit the programme and the people involved. It is expository rather than conclusive, persuasive rather than convincing, indicative rather than proven, suggestive rather than judgemental and verdicts are always partial and open. Tripp also points out that in participatory evaluations, knowledge, which is always generated in collaboration with the participants, is used to critique assumptions. Shaker (1990, p 355) is in agreement with Tripp when he argues that in naturalistic research 'Accuracy, in the end will be ascertained by the cumulative reactions of those with an interest in using the outcomes of the evaluation'. It is a matter of indication rather than proof.

Tripp's focus on the collaborative nature of participatory research, combined with Shaker's emphasis on the usefulness of research outcomes, challenged me to look for a more appropriate set of characteristics than those which simply looked at the transmission of observable skills. Jennings (1994), in an attempt to explain why some innovations in the Caribbean school system have succeeded, designed a framework for evaluating projects based on characteristics (factors) which threatened implementation of change. However, he worked retrospectively, examining three major innovations which were all institutionalised to a greater or lesser degree during the 1970's. Jennings was therefore able to examine evidence of outcomes. Jennings drew extensively on the work of Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), and argued strongly that

innovations need to be evaluated and that change processes need to be monitored if decisions are to be informed by past experience.

So, whilst it was not wholly appropriate to my needs, Jennings's research encouraged me to look towards Fullan and Stiegelbauer for possible characteristics for examining the effectiveness of the PREP material in this case study. Jennings uses the term 'characteristics' to describe more aptly what he identifies as important in an evaluation project. He chooses four characteristics from Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) and shows how these can work against change: characteristics of the innovation; characteristics at school level; characteristics at national level; and external characteristics. Each innovation was measured against these characteristics.

The characteristics which Jennings used are not useful for a local study in a developmental phase. Jennings assumed a macro-view of institutionalised programmes and needed a framework to suit that purpose, I needed a framework to suit my small-scale study. A reading of Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) led me to a set of identifiable characteristics of effective in-service education and it seemed that these would be more appropriate in terms of my investigation into whether PREP could offer effective distance education for in-service teachers. These characteristics were also not context specific, which made them flexible enough to be adapted to fit the specific context in which I operated. So it was from Fullan and Stiegelbauer that I finally took the lead.

## 5.1 *Characteristics of the framework*

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) present ten characteristics of effective INSET as identified by Loucks-Horsely and associates (1987).

These are:

1. Collegiality and collaboration
2. Experimentation and risk-taking
3. Incorporation of existing knowledge bases
4. Appropriate participant involvement in goal-setting, implementation, evaluation and decision making
5. Time to try out and assimilate new learnings
6. Leadership and sustained administrative support
7. Appropriate incentives and rewards
8. Designs built on the principles of adult learning and the change process
9. Integration of individual goals with school and departmental goals
10. Formal placement of the programme within the philosophy and organisational structure of the school and educational authorities.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (supported by other researchers) argue that INSET interventions which display these characteristics are more likely to be successful, i.e they can be considered to be effective.

In order to do justice to the case study and to recognise the importance of classroom practice stressed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, and supported by arguments from

O'Connell (1993), ANC (1994) and Zuma (1991), I decided to add an eleventh characteristic to the list:

11. Support for improved classroom practice.

All of the research carried out by PREP since its inception in 1987 has been firmly grounded in classroom practice and tested in real situations (see for example Flanagan, 1993a) so it appeared that adding this characteristic would allow me to examine the data arising from my case study in a meaningful and useful way.

The data collected during this study, and described in Chapter 4, will be subjected to scrutiny in Chapter 7. It will be compared to and measured against these eleven characteristics.

In Chapter 6, I will provide the material background to the Eastern Cape case study. This background is intended reflect some of the constraints and realities which impacted on my study and to give a sense of the difficulties which all project workers were faced with as they attempted to trial material. In Chapter 7, I will clarify my interpretations of these characteristics in order to argue and illustrate, by drawing from the specific data accumulated during my case study and supported by the other data generated in the wider research project, that the PREP in-service programme displayed all of these characteristics to a greater or lesser degree during this important developmental phase. Thus, I hope to demonstrate that the completed resource pack can be viewed as an example of an effective multi-media distance education programme for in-service teachers.

## Chapter 6

### The Eastern Cape

Action research must be conducted in the naturalistic setting where the problem is experienced (McKernan, 1991, p 156).

That rural schools, and farm schools in particular, have unique and special problems is clear from Chapter 3. This chapter narrows the focus by providing information specific to the context in which I worked while trialling the INSET material in the Eastern Cape.

#### 6.1 *Material conditions*

In May 1995, the Education Foundation published *An Overview of Education in the Eastern Cape*. This document combines census information with educational research in order to identify regional priorities and inform planning and policy making. A reading of the document reveals that the Eastern Cape is the second 'poorest' province. Almost three quarters of all households live below the minimum poverty line. Only 12% of the schools in the region are classified as farm schools, although 73% of the 2 million school-going children are at school in rural areas. Higher than average pupil:teacher ratios in ex-DET schools are compounded by pupil:classroom ratios of over 50:1. Teacher qualifications are low. 60% of teachers are under qualified and a further 6% are unqualified. These figures reveal that the Eastern Cape has the third greatest number of poorly qualified teachers in the country.

Appendix H contains two graphs and a map which compare the Eastern Cape to the other provinces of South Africa in terms of educational provision and reveal that this province is the worst off in terms of educational deprivation (Kwazulu-Natal is the second worst and the Northern Province is the third worst). The map indicates that this deprivation is particularly evident in the former homeland areas of Ciskei and Transkei. Further, the Education Foundation (1995) estimates that this province will need 60 000 new teachers as well as 60 000 new classrooms by 2004 if the deficit is to be tackled in any real way. At the same time, the province has to restructure and rationalise six former education departments with top-heavy bureaucracies into a single education ministry. In addition rumours of corruption, nepotism and incompetence continue to hamper any reform initiatives.

## 6.2 *The researcher and the schools*

During the period of this research I was employed by the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE). My job was to provide in-service support for teachers in primarily Catholic schools throughout the Cape Province. A clause of the CIE staff's mission statement reads as follows: 'In order to address the imbalances and divisions of the past, we recognise that our organisation is being called to give priority to working with those who have been historically most disadvantaged' (Catholic Institute of Education, 1992). In Chapter 3 I made it clear that rural and farm schools in South Africa fall into this group.

To fulfil this brief, the CIE put substantial funding and person power into upgrading the farm schools on church-owned land. A damning report by Janet Davies (1987) had

highlighted the poor material conditions of church-owned farm schools in the Eastern Cape diocese and a redemptive process of material improvement was under way by early 1990 (Catholic Institute of Education, 1991).

Having worked as a research assistant in Phase 1 of PREP (Morrison, 1987), I wished to become involved in developing and trialling material in the subsequent phase. The director of the CIE, the project leader of PREP and I met in early 1991 to negotiate incorporation of PREP research into my job description. We agreed that PREP would fund part of my salary and that I would work in two schools in the East London diocese. These schools were suggested by the CIE largely because redemptive work was concentrated in the Port Elizabeth area and very little had been done by CIE field workers in the Border Region, where these schools were located.

The two schools which were selected for the case study displayed certain similarities with, and reflected the conditions prevalent in, most of the farm schools in this region. The medium of instruction in the junior primary phase in both schools was isiXhosa. In addition, the conditions in these schools were fairly typical of farm schools in general: no electricity, teachers living on school property during the week, intermittent attendance by pupils, unhelpful administrators and poor access to public transport (Ralphs, 1991). The specific constraints operating in each school will be highlighted later in this chapter.

Once the schools had been selected, I approached the school managers to inform them of my intention to work in the schools. Both managers were Catholic priests and

discussion revealed that whilst one played an active role in the management of one school, the other was overworked and tended to largely ignore the other school. After explaining what I wished to do and having secured permission to do so, I approached the principal of each school to explain my intentions and to request permission to recruit teachers to the PREP programme. At School A, the principal, Mrs Nini, was also the junior primary teacher, who agreed immediately to work with me. Her interaction with the local Catholic community was a beneficial one for her school and she perceived that I could possibly help her to achieve some of her own goals, one of which was to have someone visit the school weekly to teach English to the pupils. This motivation for joining PREP was revealed to me in conversation over time. At School B, Ms Ntloko, the junior primary teacher, was more hesitant and elected to reserve her decision to join the project until she had a clearer idea of what her involvement would entail. She agreed to consider the possibility and let me know within a few days.

My own involvement with the Farm Schools Networking Forum had led to a collegial relationship with Ingrid Daniel from the Independent Teachers' Enrichment Centre (ITEC) in East London. Daniel was the project leader of the centre's Farm School Project. The central aim of her project was to research and address the problems of 54 isolated farm schools in the Border region. The Border Region was sub-divided into seven districts with approximately eight schools in each. The position of the two schools is shown on the map in Appendix I.

Initially Daniel's programme was beset by farmer suspicion, teacher apathy and transport problems. However, by 1992, ITEC had established an extensive transport

system and had begun to establish a good rapport with the local farming communities (ITEC, 1992).

Research carried out by ITEC revealed a distinct lack of in-service education in the region. Their response was to set up central workshop groups in each of their seven districts. Teachers were able to attend weekly in-service training sessions run by ITEC field workers in their local areas. During 1992, Sub A (Grade 1) and Sub B (Grade 2) groups were meeting regularly in all regions. Both the schools in which I worked were part of this project but they were placed in different districts. (For a more complete description of the nature and extent of ITEC's Farm School Project see Appendix I.)

One of the advantages of working with ITEC was access to an existing infrastructure, which neither the CIE nor PREP had. ITEC had established a system of using local farm owners and other volunteers to transport teachers from different schools to central meeting places. They owned a mobile resource unit and a mobile generator which made it possible for teachers in outlying areas without electricity to view videos. In addition, Daniel had established, over a four year period, relationships of trust amongst both the farmers and the community (ITEC, 1992). Given the socio-political and legal constraints highlighted in Chapter 3, this relationship, combined with ITEC's desire and willingness to enter into non-competitive networking relationships with other NGOs (Sam, 1991), made it easier for me to access and work with the farm school teachers.

During the course of the study, PREP developed INSET materials in Cape Town. It was my task to post these materials to the teachers as they were completed, to establish

their responses and to reflect upon these with the project leader. At my initial meetings with teachers they agreed to make their own arrangements to listen to audio cassettes and to watch video cassettes. They also agreed to read the articles and to complete the accompanying evaluation forms. We further agreed that I would visit the area every two months to discuss their responses to the material. During the course of my study, the teachers were expected to read and respond to eight articles like the one contained in Appendix A and to listen and respond to four audio cassettes, the first of which required peer-interaction and discussion of 'talk-points' i.e. questions derived from issues raised on the tape which the teachers were asked to discuss and answer. The audio cassettes were technologically unproblematic as both teachers had access to battery powered recorders. The teachers were also expected to make their own arrangements to watch six video cassettes, one of which was almost 90 minutes long. An example of the letters which accompanied these video cassettes as well as the script of Video 3.1 (Video cassette 6 in the final resource pack) can be seen in Appendix J. Note that <> on the script indicates points where PREP archive material was inserted on this tape.

Neither school had access to video playback technology. However, teachers made use of ITEC's facilities in East London, field workers' homes, and friends and neighbours who had access to video recorders to watch the tapes. The video cassettes were popular with the teachers and interviews revealed they watched video cassettes more than once. Their specific responses to the video material will be explored more fully in Chapter 7.

## 6.3 *The two schools*

### 6.3.1 School A

School A is 45 kilometres from East London in the farming district of Dwa Dwa. To reach the school you turn off the main tarred-road and travel for approximately seven kilometres along dirt-roads. When a local farmer evicted the school from his property, the principal had moved onto the neighbouring property which was owned by the Catholic Church. Initially the school operated out of wattle and daub structures which the principal and pupils had built. But subsequently, a volunteer worker from the Catholic Church in East London had helped to raise funds to build two bricked classrooms, it was these classrooms which were used during this study. Both teachers lived together in a sub-divided rondavel on the property during the week. There was electricity to the property, but the school itself was not electrified. The care-taker of the church alongside the school refused to allow the teachers to use the electricity supply. He threatened to cut the supply to the workers' cottages if the teachers switched on the lights in their rondavel. The teachers thus used paraffin lamps while electric overhead lights went unused. (This issue was raised with the school manager and eventually the Bishop. However, by the end of the research period, the teachers still had no access to the readily available electricity supply.)

The school had only the two classrooms described earlier and two teachers. Sub A (Grade 1) and Sub B (Grade 2) pupils were taught together in one of the rooms. The Std 1 (Grade 3) to Std 4 (Grade 6) pupils were taught next door. The pupils were drawn

from the neighbouring farms in a 5 to 10 km radius. Attendance was intermittent and often weather dependent.

The school had no postal service of its own. All correspondence had to be sent to the rectory in East London. Ester, the principal, and combined Sub A and B teacher, collected this at least once a month. In order to do this, she had to walk 7 km to a road where she waited in the hope that a taxi would come by. On rare occasions the school manager brought the post to the school.

### 6.3.2 School B

School B is situated alongside the Macleantown road in the Kei Road farming district, approximately 80 km from East London and 40 km from Zwelitsha, on church property. There were five classrooms and rooms for the teachers. During 1992 the church funded the building of new rooms for the teachers and more classrooms so that the school could expand to include secondary classes. There was no electricity to the property at the time of the study. The manager had been pro-active in the sense that he had employed building contractors and initiated the building project before the funding for such a project had been secured by the Church. He expressed that the Church had an obligation to ensure that the school was upgraded in line with their stated intentions. Whilst he was popular with the school staff, I observed that he was less popular with the Church authorities who regarded his actions as somewhat irresponsible.

There were eight teachers at the school, all of whom lived on school property during the week. Classes ranged from Sub A and B (Grades 1 and 2) combined to Std 6 (Grade 8). Ivy was the combined Sub A and B teacher. The pupils were drawn from local farms in a fairly close but extensive arc.

The school had no postal deliveries of its own, although correspondence could be sent to the local Kei Road post office for collection. A local farmer's wife was recruited by ITEC. She worked with the teachers and assisted with logistical and educational problems on an ad hoc basis.

Both schools were part of ITEC's organised workshop groupings for junior primary teachers. This meant that the teachers were collected regularly to attend meetings with teachers from five or six other schools in their immediate geographical area. At these workshops, participants work at making classroom resources supplied by ITEC, they are given an assignment for the week, and they discuss teaching methods. The pedagogical aspects of these groupings is not under discussion in this dissertation, but I mention these groupings as they became a forum for discussion of PREP material as the year progressed. It will become clear in my analysis how learning centres of this nature are useful in multi-media distance education initiatives.

The trialling component of my research was conducted in the two schools described above. I worked closely with the Sub A (Grade 1) teacher in each school. *Figure 1* (on page 52 of this dissertation) shows how any understandings and interpretations which I constructed were continually influenced and supplemented by reports and evaluations

generated by other researchers working in the wider research project. This additional data allowed me to reflect on my field experience and juxtapose my perceptions with those of other researchers in fundamentally similar but geographically disparate situations. In Chapter 7 I will draw from and incorporate this 'other' knowledge to allow for more realistic description and significantly enhanced data interpretation.

## Chapter 7

### Applying the framework

We should strive to find meaning in assessing specific innovations and be suspicious of those that do not make sense - a task made no easier but all the more necessary by the fact that the goals of education in contemporary society and the best means of achieving them are simply not that clear or agreed upon (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p 28).

In South Africa, as we await the overhaul of our state education system, it is difficult to make sense of specific innovations without an understanding of context. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 I demonstrated that stated educational goals were often unsupported by, and in fact subverted by, developments in reality. I also pointed out that these goals were in the process of changing (ANC, 1994). In Chapter 6 I provided background to the material conditions in and constraints operating on the two Eastern Cape schools involved in this study.

At present, much educational research is evaluated in terms of its significance to producers rather than in terms of its usefulness to consumers (Shaker, 1990, p 357). As shown in Chapter 5, observable and measurable generalised outcomes remain the most common test of effectiveness of educational innovation.

In Chapter 5 I described how an extensive search led me away from such generalised outcomes to Fullan and Stiegelbauer's (1991) characteristics of effective INSET. These

ten characteristics, I will argue, can be demonstrated to have been present to a greater or lesser degree during the case study. In Chapter 5, I also explained that our commitment to grounded classroom practice led to the development of an eleventh characteristic, namely support for improved classroom practice.

Before attempting to analyse the data it is necessary to clarify an important factor relating to this research. None of the PREP researchers viewed the materials being developed as separate entities. These materials were perceived as part of an in-service programme aimed at improving classroom practice. INSET was not viewed as something one did apart from the materials. In our view, the materials constituted the INSET programme. This is important as it distinguishes PREP from other INSET projects where field workers train teachers to use materials which are often developed independently of the project. (You will note that the teachers in this study frequently refer to PREP rather than to my work indicating that they too understood the materials to be part of PREP's larger in-service initiative.)

This factor has bearing on the use that I make of the eleven characteristics. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) identified the characteristics as descriptors of a developed INSET programme. I use them as descriptors of a developing programme, arguing that if they are present in the developmental stage, the final product should also evince these characteristics. Therefore the characteristics refer to the whole project, not just to the Eastern Cape teachers.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991), in presenting the characteristics of effective INSET, do not explain what they understand these characteristics to mean. In this chapter I will explain how I have interpreted these characteristics and draw from research data generated from a range of sources during the period of the study to show how PREP's work in this period demonstrated most of the characteristics of effective INSET. Each of the eleven characteristics will be dealt with separately and in numerical order as set out in Chapter 5.

## *7.1 The eleven characteristics of the framework*

### 7.1.1 Collegiality and collaboration

McKernan (1991, p 160) states that 'Action research is usually group-based and/or collaborative'. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) talk about developing collaborative work cultures and distinguish these from contrived collegiality. Contrived collegiality is characterised by set procedures in normally formal settings, for example, a staff meeting. Collaborative cultures, on the other hand, are 'deep, personal and enduring' while 'contributing ideas to others and seeking better ideas is the cornerstone of collaborative cultures' (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991, pp 136,138).

Collegiality and collaboration, then, imply some degree of interactive (voluntary) professionalism leading to an expanded network of people working towards solutions to shared or similar problems. Collegiality and collaboration suggest a will to share on a sustained basis.

Within this study, professional interaction was demonstrated in various ways. The project leader had worked with and knew the researchers. The researchers had studied together and knew each other. The teachers, once they had met each other, quickly developed collegial relationships based on shared experiences and membership of the same clan. A clan in this context is an extended isiXhosa kinship-grouping to which various families belong. At their first meeting the teachers discovered in conversation that they were members of the same clan. This evidently had a strong significance to them. The relationship between the teachers and the researchers is explored in greater detail later in this discussion.

In addition to these examples, hundreds of hours spent in the film studio, working with the technicians to prepare and edit video and audio tapes, meant that new collaborative and supportive relationships developed. As the relationships between technicians and researchers grew, it became possible and usual for the technicians to offer advice regarding the video and audio material being developed and adapted throughout the year. This advice from the technicians was added to the critical input given by the teachers in order to produce material which demonstrated the collaborative nature of the project.

The organisational links outlined in Chapter 6 also led to greater collaboration than would have been the case had the researchers worked in isolation with the teachers. ITEC's work with farm schools extended beyond the educational arena to focus on whole communities and on economic advancement of the rural poor. PREP, and ultimately the CIE (by whom I was employed), could not hope to cover this ground with

their limited resources and person-power. In this case, it seems that the collaboration between these organisations allowed the research project to focus on educational restructuring within an appropriate and politically acceptable context. More importantly, the collaboration led to my acting in a much more informed and contingent way. The collaboration also meant that I was accepted by the teachers more easily than I might otherwise have been. In an interview, Ivy from School B was asked how she came to join the PREP study. She says: 'I met her last year, it was 1991, and she came here. I didn't know her, but she was sent here by Ingrid of ITEC ...'

Later in the interview, when asked if she had initially understood what I wanted her to do, she says (R in this case denotes the participant observer):

Ivy: No, I phoned Ingrid ...

R: And then, what happened after that?

Ivy: Ingrid said to me, no don't worry, everything is going to be easy for you, it just needs practise. And Estelle, the one who is helping us here, she will help you.

And I say all right ... ( Mxoli, 1992b)

It would seem that it was my collaboration with ITEC, rather than my position with the CIE, which convinced the teacher that my intentions were sound. It also reveals that my initial meetings with teachers to discuss our intentions and expectations were fraught with communication problems.

Involvement in the Farm Schools Networking Forum allowed me to keep abreast of other initiatives and trends, and also to interact with colleagues who shared similar

concerns and problems. This interaction allowed for generalisation which could inform my own study.

The relationship between myself, as researcher, and the teachers developed into an easy collegiality over time. I was freely welcomed into both schools and invited to visit the teachers in their homes. This collegiality was extended to the participant observer when she interviewed the teachers later in the year.

In action research, it is essential to maintain continuity of discussion and to ensure that different values and views are heard and respected (McKernan, 1991, p 161). The collegial relationships which developed in my case study over a year contributed to both continuity of discussion and to the consideration and development of divergent views. As the researcher, I was able to incorporate divergent views expressed by teachers into case reports and reflective discussions with the project leader around the actual PREP material. The teachers themselves expressed divergent views in taped interviews and on the evaluation forms. The evaluation form for Video 3, 'Using story books in the classroom' contained the following under item 6: 'The style of this video is different from the others because Wendy is teaching you. Write your opinion of this kind of style below.'

Ivy from School B writes: 'The style is OK, but it was long. Wendy should have cancelled the explanation of books. Everything else is helpful'. Ester from School A writes: 'The style is thrilling because it sort of sums [up] the other videos.' (Video 3, 'Using storybooks in the classroom' was filmed in a different style to the others in response to teachers' expressed preferences.)

The above extracts demonstrate that teachers had divergent views. More importantly, these extracts show that they felt confident enough to offer their criticisms in writing. (We had been told by other NGO workers not to expect responses to our evaluation forms nor to expect divergent views. However, PREP had many responses and many views were expressed.)

The teachers thus collaborated, albeit sometimes indirectly, to develop an improved product. This is normal procedure in action research. For example, when defining principles of procedure McKernan (1991, p 162) states that 'through its systematic and collaborative nature, action research can throw up prescriptions for improved practice'.

I would argue that there is enough evidence to show that PREP indeed demonstrated the characteristic of collegiality and collaboration.

#### 7.1.2 Experimentation and risk taking

In terms of PREP's work in schools, we were constantly putting ourselves and our material at risk. Risks were possible failure, lack of support, lack of response, lack of product, poor decisions and wrong moves. Teachers on the other hand were going against well-rehearsed practices and their own belief systems. This required them to take great personal risks.

In South Africa, teachers have traditionally been seen as passive recipients of INSET rather than as active agents of change (Van den Berg, 1987, p 26). Against this

background, experimentation, which often challenges the status quo, is synonymous with risk taking. However, as far as action research is concerned, 'most projects' aims and objectives are inconsistent with the status quo' (Whitehead, 1980, p 21). One of our aims was to encourage teachers to try out and reformulate ideas in their own classrooms, i.e. experiment with material and methodology in order to test whether our distance learning material was effective. This required both the researcher and the teachers to risk failure. However, risk taking is a fundamental principle of action research. McKernan says 'The action researcher must be prepared to take risks. In taking risks we expose our competence and beckon failure' (1991, p 162).

This research task invited experimentation and risk taking. Firstly, we were challenging entrenched institutional perceptions of distance learning through correspondence course as a cheap means of mass education. Secondly, to put our material to the test in poorly resourced rural areas was to risk failure simply in terms of logistics. Thirdly, to expect teachers to work through the material on their own, knowing, as we did, the constraints operating in these schools meant that we were subjecting them and ourselves to an enormous challenge.

The following extracts demonstrate how Ivy from School B began to experiment with some of the ideas contained in the PREP material. Early in the study, in response to Audio Cassette 1, Talk Point 2: 'How did you come to have this opinion [About how people learn to read]? In other words, how are you able to say what you did, and how did you know this?'

Ivy: Ooh, this question is, you know, confusing. A little bit confusing. But, otherwise, I would say ... it [knowledge of teaching] comes from inside, and you know, my little bit of experience. Otherwise it is too early to try this ... *I didn't try it yet* (Research interview, February 1992 - emphasis added).

At this stage, no experimentation has taken place, but the inclusion of the 'yet' indicates that there is a willingness to try. This is borne out by her comments on 24 April, where she says:

Ivy: Now? Hmm, I am trying to use both the methods, the sentence method with pictures and that method of mine with the mixing of the vowels and consonants (Research interview, April 1992).

Three months on, the same teacher says:

Ivy: My comment is this, you know, this PREP is really very good, now I don't know now what I will do next year, but I am continuing using it, and even though you will not come ... I don't want you to come next year ...

Interviewer: So you are saying that next year you will take some of these ideas and try them out?

Ivy: Yes ... But I am worried because I did not practise

Interviewer: But you have got plenty of time to practise next year ... (Research interview, August 1992).

Ivy's responses recorded during three different interviews over a period of eight months indicate that she became increasingly more willing to experiment. She moves from not attempting the innovation, to mixing it with existing practice, to a resolution to try out

new methods and approaches to reading instruction in the following year. Ivy's experimentation in this case may be regarded as risk taking because she is exposing herself not only to failure, but to the scrutiny of her peers and pupils.

The teachers also shared what they were learning with other farm school teachers in their workshop groups with ITEC. During June 1992, Ester from School A presented a workshop to the other members of her workshop group. She was observed by the facilitator from ITEC, my participant observer and myself. This was the first time she had done anything of this nature, but it demonstrated her commitment to change in classroom practice. That she was prepared to risk peer criticism by exposing her grasp of the innovation is an unusual step for most teachers and therefore remarkable.

In terms of developing the distance learning material, the process was entirely experimental. None of the researchers had written distance education material before. Neither had they developed audio or video teaching material. This meant that our materials were bound to undergo several draft phases before reaching a final product. Feedback from teachers was useful and surprising. For example, in Article 3, 'Two popular approaches to the teaching of reading' I anticipated that teachers might struggle with the terms 'behaviourist' and 'psycho-linguistic'. This view was shared by the isiXhosa-speaking participant observer. However, teachers had their own concerns, as this extract shows:

Interviewer: Then when you read Article 3, you started having problems?

Ivy: Uh, huh

Interviewer: Was it because maybe there were certain terms that were unfamiliar to you or what? Like, I do have Article 3 with me ... [takes it out] there was something new, what was new exactly?

Ivy: I think it ... the language

Interviewer: The language that they used?

Ivy: Yes, like I have to use the dictionary, for there is that name ... that word ... text. The meaning of text, I think ...

Interviewer: [very surprised] Text?

Ivy: Ja! T-e-x-t [spells word]. So now I think the meaning is a story. I found out the meaning when I read another article (Mxoli, 1992b)

However, when asked which approach she followed in her classroom, the same teacher was clearly able to distinguish between the two approaches to reading instruction.

Interviewer: ... Were you able to say: Now at the moment I am operating in the behaviourist or in the psycholinguistics approach?

Ivy: I think this side, the behaviourist ...

Interviewer: What you are doing in your classroom ... you can say it's part of the behaviourist approach?

Ivy: Yes.

This kind of information allowed the producers of the material to examine their own assumptions and consider the real problems which teachers had to face. We (i.e the isiXhosa speaking participant observer and myself) had assumed that words which

were familiar to us, such as 'text', would be easily read and understood . The difficulty which Ivy experienced with this term raised our awareness and alerted us to the language difficulties which the teachers experienced.

In addition to experimenting with written material for distance learning, the researchers also had to experiment with audio and video production. Technically this was made easier by the fact that we had support from experts, but in terms of content, we relied on experimentation and feedback from teachers. Initially teachers were impressed with, rather than critical of, the video material. However, soon they began to ask for more classroom scenes and demonstration lessons, and we had to adapt our proposed content accordingly. Many of these requests were expressed in ordinary conversations and as such were not formally recorded. However, we did take these requests seriously. This is evident in the change of presentation style from Video 1, 'What is reading?', where teachers were faced with on screen text and anonymous voice over, to Video 6, 'Using storybooks in the classroom' (see attached script, Appendix B) where teachers were exposed to demonstrations by colleagues filmed in a range of settings.

Very few distance education institutions or curriculum developers trial their materials before putting them to use (see for example Coetzee, 1992). PREP is the only project to my knowledge which has sampled and then piloted material before going to scale and formally inserting the material into existing structures. The novelty of this developmental and trialling process, as opposed to the top-down implementation procedures used by Vista University for example, brought with it very real risks. These are underlined by the following quote from the project leader:

I'm going through a phase again at the moment, when I wake in the night sweating over PREP, really in a cold terror because the responsibility of it all, for me anyway, weighs very heavily. It always has done, this time round even more so because it's going to have a more formal product. It's going to have a more graspable usable product. And it's that sheer grandeur that scares me. It doesn't scare me in terms of having made it ... because one could just be flippant and say we had a whole lot of fun on the way ... But the responsibility of actually inserting it into all the formal structures exhausts and scares me because you now confront all of the constraints: personalities, kingdoms, empires, territorial threats, professional expertise and lack of expertise and recognition of expertise and ownership. All of those very, very scary things ... (Research interview, September 1992).

As the project leader points out, PREP was not flippant. All participants in the process demonstrated their commitment to experimentation and exposed themselves to the risk of failure and lack of impact throughout this developmental phase.

### 7.1.3 Incorporation of existing knowledge bases

PREP viewed teachers as bearers of unique and valuable knowledge derived from their expertise and everyday insertion in the classroom. (See for example Flanagan, 1991.) In addition, we recognised that knowledge about the process of in-service education generated in the earlier phases of our research was extremely valuable in informing our

practice (see pages 1 & 2 of this dissertation). Thus PREP regarded all forms of existing knowledge (skills, theories, practices, concepts) from all stakeholders in the endeavour as important.

Recognising that both teachers and research practitioners had existing knowledge bases meant that we were obliged to develop material which combined research-based knowledge of the process of in-service education with a recognition of the position of teacher as expert in a given context. PREP believed that:

Promoting the higher order mental functions of teachers, together with the conscious realization of such processes, is a prerequisite for teaching in such a way that children also acquire higher order thinking skills (Flanagan, 1991, p 172).

Audio Cassette 1, 'How did you learn to read?' is a good example of incorporation of existing knowledge bases. The programme required teachers to answer certain questions based on their own knowledge and assumptions about the reading process. Included on the cassette were recordings of both teachers and pupils giving their views on the process of learning to read. As part of the study, I observed while Ester from School A and Ivy from School B listened to the trial audio-cassette and recorded their answers to the questions posed on the cassette. Whilst the observation was useful to me, the teachers were irritated that I had not intervened nor told them how best to work with the tape. They said afterwards that they would have liked to listen through and then re-listen and answer the questions. My response was to ask them why they had not

done that. They felt that my presence had prevented them from doing so (Research interview, February 1992).

In an interview with the two teachers after the session with Audio Cassette<sup>1</sup> they remarked that they had particularly enjoyed hearing Nzukie (another junior primary teacher) speak on the audio-tape.

Ester: It's consoling in the end when you hear Nzukie's experiences and you compare them with what you have said and what you really experience in your own classroom, then you feel comfortable and you can compare well, and it gives you a summary of what you have been discussing (Research interview, February 1992).

Ivy: I was crazy to hear, you know, from Nzukie, because Nzukie is not from around here, she's from Transvaal, no? (Research interview, February 1992).

Hofmeyr says that effective INSET depends upon adequate human support: 'peer-group support and interaction are also crucial'(1995, p 8). This inclusion of peer experience and thus recognition of the importance of teachers' knowledge was essential to the success of the material which we developed. This was especially apparent later in the year when teachers in Natal had also experimented with the material, and their opinions and classroom practice were incorporated into the final resource pack for wider dissemination.

Also significant was the incorporation of teachers' knowledge gained during the earlier phases of PREP's work. The following extract from an interview with the project leader in September 1992 demonstrates how this knowledge affected the trialling and development of distance learning material (W in this case denotes project leader):

W: Well not different ... developed. It's a development thing, it's not different, you can trace the routes of it all through PREP over the last seven years. Where we stand presently in PREP is rooted in its own praxis and so its not new, it's distinctly developmental. So there are cycles which cause change of some sort, but it's all linked, you can trace it through the one thing to the other. How do you formalise what you did in PREP the last time, how do you nationalise it, how do you certificate it? How do you disseminate it? Those questions came from the beginning of PREP. The very original the 1986, proposal for PREP, had phases of testing the feasibility of action research, that first phase would lead into another phase, and that phase would be the establishing of action research, which would lead to national exposure, national direction ... and that's exactly what its doing. It isn't doing it in the way that I understood it in 1986. I sit down and I think, 'Good Lord, yes, that's exactly what was being said then.' And we've learnt how to do it on the way ... and at the same time, shifting ... being tentative enough to respond to the shifting political terrain and situation ... which I think is in the spirit of action research in any case. So I think in that sense PREP is a project which one could actually use as an example of how action research informs the teacher educators all of the time. Because right from the beginning the

action research was always feasible, or became very feasible for the teacher educators in a way it never did for the teachers, and the teacher educators have, I think, benefited enormously, and learnt an enormous amount through PREP. And through that learning have been able to be that much more effective this time round on the farm schools. My feeling is that the farm school phase this year has run in a much more ... I almost want to use the word disciplined, but it's not quite the word I want, but I'm pleasantly surprised that we have managed it, we've organised it, and it's happened. And we could never have done that seven years ago ...

The above comment captures the spirit of PREP's work. It was tentative and we did learn as we went, and through that learning we attempted at all times to take cognizance of and incorporate existing knowledge bases. The resources that PREP produced, while regarded as modern or progressive, did resonate with the material conditions of South African classrooms. (See Flanagan (1995) and Video Cassette 9 (1995) as fine examples of this learning.)

#### 7.1.4 Appropriate participant involvement in goal setting, implementation, evaluation and decision making

Appropriacy of involvement is a very subjective criterion. Whitehead (1980) points out that teachers are often expected to use project material with little or no experience of how those materials have been developed. Such teachers, in his opinion, have no real

reason to take on the project philosophy. He goes on to point out that researchers have to recognise

... the crucial role that teachers play in the process of innovation. They are no longer to be considered just the passive recipients of curriculum packages, but rather the focus of curriculum development work, contributing to dissemination as much as receiving help because of it (Whitehead, 1980, p 20).

Although PREP was committed to participant involvement, it must be made clear that the project goals were set by PREP. My immediate goal was to involve teachers in the trialling of distance learning materials in order to develop a more effective end product.

I attempted to make these organisational goals explicit to the teachers before they joined the project. However, we did not test whether these goals were understood in the same way by teachers as they were by project workers. And, as I pointed out in Section 7.1.1, it appears that these goals were not always effectively communicated in the first place.

In the Eastern Cape study, evaluation took different forms. The teachers did not participate in deciding or developing forms of evaluation. These were imposed by me. For example, teachers were asked to complete evaluation forms drawn up by us after each reading or viewing. Because teachers did complete these, one can conclude that they were appropriate. Where teachers did not see them as appropriate, they did not complete them. In response to a question about this, Ester from School A remarked:

I am sorry also that I didn't respond well with the answering of the questionnaire ... but I did read them [the articles] up ... and I found that easy, so I didn't think anyone would mind if I didn't answer. But actually I should have replied, I know ... (Research interview, August 1992).

In addition to the evaluation forms and the interviews conducted with teachers, we also underwent a process of self-evaluation and discussion within the project. This allowed us to consider input from different sources and different regions. It also allowed us to consider current research, such as that by Vista University (Coetzee, 1992) and to juxtapose our findings with those of others working in similar fields.

Decision making within the project was informed by teachers' responses to material as well as research findings. The teachers who participated in this case study were sent materials as they became available. Decisions about how to, or even whether to, engage with the material were left largely up to them. The only constraints placed upon them were the dates of my visits, as these had to be planned in advance. Decisions around sharing the material with colleagues or discussing it in groups were left to the teachers' own discretion. We did express some concern regarding copyright and recognition of sources as we did not want the raw material to be copied and disseminated in rough form. Ivy from School B chose to work collaboratively with teachers in her own school, whilst Ester from School A claimed to share the video material with neighbours and other teachers during the weekends. She indicated in conversation that she had also made it available to two subject advisors from the DET.

It must be acknowledged, however, that while the material was developed in response to needs and was reworked according to responses, PREP researchers, rather than the teachers, set the goals and made the final decisions.

#### 7.1.5 Time to try out and assimilate new learnings

My main task in this research process was essentially to glean responses to the nature and content of the material, rather than to assess how teachers 'unlearned' old habits and assimilated new learnings. In an interview with the participant observer in June 1992, I make this clear:

But, you see, I haven't focused so much on that because for me, it's much more about what they think about the material, rather than what they do in their classroom. But now that they have most of the material, my focus has got to be more: what did you do with the material? How did it affect your teaching? But because I am not in contact with them, that has to happen at the end ... (Research interview, May 1992).

In the end most of this assessment of improved classroom practice took place in the Kwazulu-Natal study (see Flanagan 1993a; 1993b; 1994; 1995; 1996).

Nevertheless, it is interesting that Ivy, at least, felt that she was in control of the learning process. At an interview in August, Ivy responds to my question on control:

Ivy: In control? ... by you?

Interviewer: No, that you were able to control the speed that you worked at, to decide when you wanted to work at it, or did you feel that there was pressure on you?

Ivy: Uh-huh. I noticed that there was no pressure, because you were not with me when I was practising what I read ... So there's no pressure on me (Research interview, August 1992).

This is, of course, a somewhat naïve understanding of control if you consider that PREP did work to a time schedule. Pace was imposed and no extra time was given to assimilating new knowledge. However, Ivy's perception of self-pacing is not to be disregarded in a voluntary situation such as this one. Her comments do reveal a will to learn and to know as well as a confidence in her own potential for individual study - two very important ingredients in successful distance learning.

Did we give participants enough time to assimilate and try out new learnings? We cannot make grandiose claims about practice or assimilation of ideas, as we did not conduct a sustained empirical study. Nor were we able to force teachers to meet certain deadlines as, for them, there was no real time constraint and no assessment of outcomes. A more formal or certificated programme would involve time and pacing more directly. Teachers would have externally imposed deadlines with measurable consequences for non-completion of tasks and assignments. At the time of this study, PREP was in a developmental phase. It was inappropriate to attempt formal measures or assessments of kinds of learning; instead, we used personal testimony and classroom observation together with some individual reading by pupils. This data allowed us to claim that in the time allotted, new learnings were assimilated.

### 7.1.6 Leadership and sustained administrative support

Leadership can be defined in a variety of ways within this study. PREP itself had strong leadership from the project leader. Her personal commitment to teacher education and academic rigour, combined with her experience both in schools and within the research project, meant that the researchers could turn to her for advice and encouragement at all stages of the study. However, it is not clear whether the teachers themselves experienced any form of leadership from me as a PREP researcher. I was responsible for driving the project in the Eastern Cape and I supplied the material, but I did not lead them through the process in an measurable way, intentionally so as I wished to observe whether and how the teachers coped with the various materials developed. Neither can I claim to have provided sustained administrative support for teachers in the study. They made their own arrangements to watch videos and collect parcels. Some support was provided by ITEC, but this was intermittent rather than sustained. I, on the other hand, was able to rely on the project and university staff for administrative assistance and my position within the CIE meant that I had additional access to administrative assistance and support from colleagues.

In reflecting on the study, it is difficult to find data to support this characteristic. PREP itself did have administrative support via its office and staff at the University of Cape Town. However, the teachers who worked in the project had little on-site administrative support although attempts were made to make it easier for them to contact us. For example, every evaluation form was accompanied by a stamped envelope addressed to PREP. Considering that the teachers had to make a substantial effort to get to a post

office, this was perhaps not as helpful as we initially thought. In the Eastern Cape schools a certain degree of administrative support was provided by ITEC, in the sense that they offered their facilities for viewing the video tapes and were prepared to allow me to meet teachers at workshop venues and use the mobile generator.

Ester from School A points out in the following discussion that the support offered in this trial phase was not sufficient. In doing so, she presents a superb argument for regular facilitation and sustained administrative support.

Ester: It is important [to have somebody who can help] because I know the teachers in the different farm schools don't have video machines, but ITEC is the mother of all those teachers and is doing everything they can.

Interviewer: OK. So if we, let's say for example, that we wanted to work in ... let's take a completely different place, let's take the Free State. Let's say we wanted to work in the Free State, are you suggesting that we would need to find a facilitator to control the project, or to help people in the schools?

Ester: I think that it is necessary. For one thing, as I say, the farm school teachers don't have videos and I think that there is a lot in the videos here that inspires a teacher.

Interviewer: So if we, let's say if we wanted to start it in the Free State ... what would the job of the coordinator be?

Ester: Now and again the teachers [need] to get together and discuss it. Maybe if they were to write out ... Like me, I was not good at answering the questions but I did listen and I could even write an exam on it, but I didn't answer the tests, or assignments on it. Now if she were to help to see that they answer after every part ...

Interviewer: I never thought about that, because obviously the evaluation forms are only part of this phase. They are only part of the research, but there are little assignments in the articles ...

Ester: And I think they are important to know how much the teacher has imbibed and what her comments are, and whether there is anything that she would like improved. That is also written in the articles, which is important.

Interviewer: So if I was running a course, let's say in junior primary reading ... then we would need to have a facilitator who goes around, helps to transport, helps to sort out the technical stuff like the videos, but is also there to sort of oversee that people are doing the work ...?

Ester: Yes, and to collect the assignments afterwards, maybe give them so much time, afterwards they should answer up and give them the things to post ...

Ester highlights the necessity for regular and sustained facilitation and she alludes somewhat obliquely to the need for leadership and guidance in a study programme. In doing so, she recognises that if innovations are to be more formalised or institutionalised, support in the form of leadership or guidance, combined with administrative assistance, is essential. Her arguments for regular and sustained facilitation will be explored further in Chapter 8 where I make recommendations based on these learnings.

#### 7.1.7 Appropriate incentives and rewards

What is an appropriate incentive for a teacher? Is it appropriate to offer resources and support? Or should incentives be more personal, in the form of qualifications or financial awards? These questions were ones which we grappled with in the earlier phase of PREP (see for example, Zuma, 1991), and they are issues with which most NGO in-service providers have had to grapple. The answers are neither apparent nor simple. The National Teacher Education Audit (1995) revealed that even in 1995:

A range of monetary and non-monetary incentives are recommended for teachers participating in INSET, but the problem of disincentives is not as thoroughly understood. Which support systems and incentives are the most appropriate, effective and affordable in our context still have to be investigated and more widely debated (Hofmeyr, 1995, p 8).

It could be argued that one of the reasons why teachers were willing to engage with and commit time to a project which offered no certificates or financial reward was the lack

of powerful disincentives in the form of departmental or managerial opposition. As this was not the focus of our study, however, such a claim could only be made inferentially.

In 1992, political changes made the possibility of certification of in-service education more likely, but in the early stages of the research there was no such option. The teachers themselves recognised that certification would be the 'cherry' on top of the cake in terms of incentives. When asked how they thought certification or salary incentives would impact on their working with the project, they replied:

Ivy: I think it would encourage me to do my work because I know I am going to be [better] ... I am going to have something ... (Research interview, August 1992).

Ester: It would affect the pack because although teaching is a profession one also looks forward to a better pay. I think more teachers would join in and get the course, but still the children would benefit. And the teachers would also benefit, so all the better. (Research interview, August 1992).

The prospect of self-advancement is an incentive, but there is also the underlying recognition of the more altruistic sides to teaching - the nurturing and the transmission of cultural knowledge.

None the less, resources are appealing to teachers in cash-strapped, under-resourced schools. The story books and picture charts produced by PREP also played a role in the teachers' ongoing participation in the research project. Although no data was

generated in this case study to support this argument, my participant observer, in a report on her own work with teachers wrote:

The story books are very useful because in our education there is no reading material for young children. And the love for reading is not developed effectively. The availability of the books as the teachers have told me in the workshops brought a big change in their teaching of the reading process as a whole (Mxoli, 1992a, p 5).

Ivy from School B described her feeling of self-worth when she attended a workshop where the presenter talked about similar approaches to teaching reading as she had learnt about with PREP. Ivy was the only person at the workshop who had existing knowledge of the psycho-linguistic approach. I asked her how that made her feel:

Yo! I shouted ... and in the end, I was, you know, telling them all about what we are doing in PREP. Now we are coming together, doing the same thing, and now they are very interested (Research interview, August 1992).

In instances like this it seems that knowledge is its own reward and its display by a peer becomes the incentive for others to learn.

Personal empowerment as indicated in this teacher's response is a powerful form of incentive and one that is poorly understood in the South African teaching profession where policies of linking salary to qualification have undermined a more liberal approach to education.

### 7.1.8 Designs built on the principles of adult learning and the change process

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) often remind us that change is a process rather than an event. In this study, there was no expectation that the innovations we were suggesting would lead to radical, overnight transformation. We recognised from previous experience that change happens in small, often inexplicable ways, and that it is a gradual and ongoing process.

Under Characteristic 3, in Section 7.1.3, I pointed out that PREP was guided by knowledge generated in earlier research cycles, as well as by current research into distance education. This whole process was characterised by changing approaches and ideas. We were also guided by input from adult learners in the form of feedback from the teachers themselves.

Hofmeyr and Hall (1995, p 19) stress that there are certain key concepts underpinning this characteristic of effective in-service education. They identify stakeholder collaboration, interaction, negotiation, teacher participation and professional development as the founding principles of adult learning and the change process. Because these principles were so integral to the planning and development stages of PREP, it is difficult to provide actual empirical evidence. Under Characteristic 1, in Section 7.1.1, I showed how collaboration, interaction and negotiation occurred. Teacher participation as a concept underpins all of the work in this study; without it there would be no data and no material. Ester from School A attempted to explain how she had gained in terms of professional development:

Sometimes as a teacher in an isolated school one doesn't have much to discuss with others. But when one gets this type of work, it develops one's mind ... when you get this type of work then you get a good inspiration (Research interview, August 1992).

What PREP can claim to have done is to recognise that teachers are the key implementors of innovation. We encouraged teachers to be active participants in their own learning. We expected, indeed invited, them to make choices and adapt material to their own contexts. The knowledge and skills which were presented in the PREP material were constantly linked back to the teachers' prior knowledge. The learning activities were varied, ranging from individual reading and task completion, to group discussions combined with audio-visual input. The teachers tried out material for themselves, at their own pace. They were active participants in the process. By discussing the material and their experimentation, I was able to reflect on processes and encourage teachers to evaluate their own performance with a view to improving it further. While materials developed were biased theoretically, dogma and blatant didacticism were avoided. The appeal to the intellect and its critical potential was fundamental to the resource pack. We viewed our design as imbued with the best of adult learning principles. (See Flanagan (1995) and the PREP Pack Video Cassettes (1995) as illustrative of these principles.)

Change is never easy. Schofield (1995, p 166) argues for an approach to school change which recognises that chaos, complexity and contradictions are essential elements of the process. The South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE)

(1994) argues that: 'change is eased by "modelling" new practice in smaller contexts while larger policy planning continues'. It states further that handling the change process in this way will positively influence longer term implementation plans. PREP modelled good practice in smaller contexts in order to assess reactions to such practice. The reflective and critical responses of teachers allowed us to continue designing material built on the principles of adult education and the change process.

#### 7.1.9 Integration of individual goals with school and departmental goals

There were separate sets of goals within this study. As an individual researcher, I had longer-term goals of school improvement in mind. However, by virtue of my position in the CIE, I was not required to integrate these with school or departmental goals. I was, nonetheless required to justify my work with PREP to the CIE (my employer), who in turn had to report to the managers and diocesan 'owners' of the schools. My goals were thus integrated into a larger structure where they were echoed and reinforced in other Catholic farm schools.

The specific goals of the two schools in the study were never made explicit. However, I inferred from both school managers and principals that teacher improvement, and through that, pupil improvement was one of their goals. The goals held by the ex-DET were never the focus of this study, although it is reasonable to assume that all education departments would aim to improve pupils' learning.

At no time during this case study did I attempt to integrate PREP's goal of testing the material in a real situation with any goals which the DET might have had. I had no contact with the DET officials, although I indicated earlier that some of these officials were informed of the research by Ester from School B.

One of our over-riding goals was to develop material which could improve practice and thereby pupil performance. While I did not measure pupil performance in any quantitative way during this phase, the current work being done by PREP includes such an element. Teachers remarked that they saw improvements in their pupils' performance, causing the project leader to conclude in 1994 that:

Provisioning of rural schools, both in terms of the professional development of teachers and stocking the schools with children's books and more suitable texts, does make a significant difference to children's progress (Flanagan, 1994 p 56).

Most teachers measure their success in terms of children's progress (see for example Flanagan, 1991). Educational authorities want schools to be effective in producing successful pupils. By allowing teachers to gauge and measure their success in these terms, we allowed for integration of our own goals with those of the teachers and the education departments. To put this in another way, our goals and those of the schools and departments are compatible at the altruistic levels of education. Nevertheless, if individual goals are not integrated with school and departmental goals the innovation is unlikely to succeed. There is much evidence to support the view that without senior

authoritative support, innovations may flounder. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991, p 197) point out that:

Even when the source of change is elsewhere in the system, a powerful determining factor is how central office administrators take to the change. If they take it seriously, the change stands a chance of being implemented. If they do not, it has little chance of going beyond the odd classroom or school.

#### 7.1.10 Formal placement of the programme within the philosophy and organisational structure of the school and educational authority

1992 was a year of great political change in South Africa. These changes meant that progressive organisations could begin to envisage working within formal structures and alongside government departments for the first time. At that stage, researchers in the project began to talk about the possibility of inserting PREP into those formal structures. Subsequent to the case study, there has been much progress along these lines. But at no stage during the period of the research reported here did we attempt to place the work we were doing within the formal structures of the education department controlling farm schools. (The Molteno Project and READ Educational Trust had done precisely this.) For us to have done so would have been a death-knell to our work. Here is an extract from an interview with Ester to illustrate the point:

Interviewer: Would it have the same status? This is a University of Cape Town project. Would it have the same status if it was a DET project, do you

think? Politically ... would it be still as believable, would people go for it if it was a DET thing?

Ester: I think it does impress them when they hear it is a university, and they think they are learning something post-matric when they do this, and they feel great, I mean something famous, it makes them excited a bit. Because some people really are not happy at the moment with the DET, so whatever is DET stuff, they think it's an overwork, you know. They don't think it is something that is going to help them. They are learning to help themselves and help the children. They will think the DET is still overloading them again. They will have that attitude (Research interview, August 1992).

That PREP was not formally placed within the structure of the education department was not viewed in negative terms by the participants in the research process. Nevertheless I concede that no innovation can be institutionalised without the sanction of at least the school and its governing body and then the education department. In the case of the Eastern Cape schools the Catholic Church provided such sanction.

With regard to individual schools, there is no evidence to suggest that my intervention with Ester and Ivy led to any formal placement of the PREP resources and approach in the school. However, there is some evidence of this in the other studies done by PREP in this period.

### 7.1.11 Support for improved classroom practice

This characteristic, perhaps more than the others, singles PREP out as novel. A brochure (see Appendix K) describing the resource pack in August 1992, says the following:

Teachers (or student teachers) are expected to innovate in their lessons as they work through the pack. The pack, therefore, is not suitable for rote learning. The pack has an open approach to teaching and learning, recognising that teachers work under different constraints. The emphasis of the pack is on the understanding of the theory and practice of the reading process. In this way teachers can make informed decisions and gain some control over their work. We note that when conditions allow for self-control and self-learning, change in classroom practice is more remarkable and more potent.

The brochure goes on to say that 'teachers in the sample study have shown that a resource pack of this nature can improve classroom practice markedly' (PREP, 1992).

However, it must be remarked that my case study ended rather abruptly when I left the employ of the CIE and I was unable to gather data to show that my intervention did support improved classroom practice. However, the data from the other sample studies does support this claim. (See for example Video Cassette 5 (1995) where some teachers display their improved practice.) In addition, informal discussions with Ester and Ivy, as well as discussions with other farm school teachers in the Eastern Cape, indicate that the resource pack did lead to improved classroom practice.

## 7.2 Conclusion

The data used in this chapter was collected during the initial stages of the development of the resource pack. Subsequent to the closure of this particular case study, PREP continued to work in schools and to develop a final product shaped largely by the data generated during these initial stages. It is outside the scope of this analysis to include developments beyond the context described in Chapter 6, even though those developments support my argument that PREP was able to develop an effective multi-media distance education programme for teachers .

PREP did fall short on some of the characteristics explored above. For example we did not fully provide leadership and sustained administrative support (Characteristic 6). However, I would argue that there were certain uniquely South African political justifications for not fully measuring up to some of these characteristics. The DET was not regarded as legitimate by a great many educationists, for instance. These political justifications would not have been taken into account when Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) drew up these criteria for effective INSET. Given this, it seems prudent to allocate lesser importance to Characteristic 7 (Appropriate incentives and rewards) and Characteristic 10 (Formal placement of the programme within the philosophy and organisational structure of the school and educational authorities) for this particular study. This is especially valid in the light of subsequent cycles of the publishing, piloting and going to scale of PREP.

I have tried to show that the PREP pilot material displayed the characteristics of effective in-service education. In Chapter 8, I would like to draw certain conclusions and make recommendations based on the learnings and practical wisdom generated in the study. It is to be hoped that the conclusions and recommendations inform future in-service distance education initiatives in this country.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusions and recommendations

The horizons of the present cannot be formed without the past; understanding is always a 'fusion of horizons'. Every encounter with tradition that takes place within historical consciousness involves the experience of tension between the text and the present (Hoy, 1988, p 3).

Hans Gadamer (1982, pp 261, 264) defines a horizon as everything that can be seen from any one standpoint. History can never be bound to any one horizon or standpoint according to Gadamer. PREP is an ongoing research project, the horizon of which has broadened to include insertion of material into formal structures and the possibility of certification for teachers who formally work through the research pack. The past, in the form of earlier cycles of research, has shaped and informed this present standpoint and action just as the present will shape future 'horizons'. The tension between the text, in the form of reporting on past cycles, and the present actions, is explored later in this chapter.

The final chapter of this dissertation presents the conclusions that can be drawn from this particular study (bearing in mind its placement within PREP). In doing so, it reflects upon the stated intentions of the study described in earlier chapters and explains how the limitations and successes allow for certain conclusions. Finally, this chapter makes some tentative recommendations based on the specific features observed in this study.

Whitehead (1980, p 22) says in an analysis of school-based INSET projects that 'to fail with a project is comparatively easy; to succeed is hard'. In earlier phases of PREP, the researchers grappled extensively with questions of success or failure (Morrison, 1987; Flanagan, 1991). In terms of the action research methodology of trialling, reflecting and reworking employed in this study, applying the terms 'success and failure' as an analysis is too simplistic. Action research (as applied here and described in Chapter 4) does not seek to transform structures through actions which are empirically verifiable, it seeks rather to make a real difference to the practice of the participants at a micro-level.

On that basis, this study cannot make grand claims. I cannot claim to have significantly transformed the schools in which I worked. Neither can I claim to have impacted in a major way on the attainment levels of the pupils. Farm schools themselves and the material conditions under which teachers operate have not changed significantly as a result of this (or any other) study. That the problems identified in Chapters 2 and 3 still exist is clear from a recent needs analysis carried out in the Eastern Cape by the Rhodes University Mathematics Education Project. At the end of 1994, the issues which still plague farm schools were identified as: multi-grade classes, very high or low pupil-teacher ratios, under/unqualified teachers, poor material conditions, lack of facilities, unsatisfactory teacher accommodation, poor transport systems, and communication and access difficulties (Mboyiya, 1995, p 1).

In order to draw conclusions about what I did achieve or observe during this study, it is pertinent to review what I set out to achieve.

My case study was small and localised. My intentions were to develop, in conjunction with teachers and other researchers, multi-media material which teachers could use at distance. The choice of material was predetermined by earlier research phases, and the nature of presentation of the material was influenced by availability of accessible and easy to use technology. We opted to develop audio and video cassettes combined with written material and classroom resources (the contents of the final resource pack are described in Appendix D). The aim of my particular research task was to gauge how teachers coped with and reacted to early versions of the material in order to improve it. This aim must be borne in mind. It was not my task to measure actual change in teachers' practice, nor indeed to monitor pupil progress although PREP was obviously interested in hearing of or seeing any improvements. Observations which supported improved practice or improved pupil attainment levels were incidental, but of note.

That I am reflecting on the case study some three years after it was concluded brings to the fore some of the tension to which Hoy refers. Hoy says that 'distance in time is a productive and positive possibility' (1988,p 3) and that we produce our own interpretations of events in so far as we understand and participate in their evolution. Gadamer (1982) emphasises the interplay of the past and the interpretation thereof in the formation of an 'hermeneutical circle' which is neither subjective nor objective. In the light of this, the meaning which we give to text is not to be considered subjective or objective. Gadamer argues further that 'the hermeneutical task is not covering up this tension by attempting a naïve assimilation but consciously bringing it out where old and new continually grow together' (1982, p 273). This chapter aims to draw together the

past, in the form of data collected during the study and the present, in the form of my current interpretations of the events that transpired and were recorded at that time.

The data generated in the study has not changed. But my interpretation of that data is coloured by subsequent learnings and experience of both myself and the research project as a whole. The conclusions which can be drawn, and the recommendations that follow, must be read with an awareness of these influences and tensions.

## *8.1 Conclusions*

1. It is useful to network with and receive support from outside organisations.

In Chapters 6 and 7 I described the work done in the Border region by the ITEC Farm School Project. The help and support that I received from ITEC, together with the services which they offered to the farm school teachers, made it much easier for me to operate effectively in the schools. ITEC's credibility and popular support meant effectively that my association with them was interpreted in a positive light by the teachers. In Chapter 7 I detailed how Ivy from School B expresses this when my participant observer asked how she came to join the project. She states quite clearly that she phoned Ingrid (Ingrid Daniel, the ITEC Farm School Project leader) before making her commitment.

My association with the CIE was also fortuitous. The CIE was committed to farm school upgrading, and as such allowed me the space and opportunity to build the PREP

research into my job description. A long-term CIE field worker introduced me to the farm school managers and physically showed me to the schools. At both schools, the Church had been instrumental in providing material upgrading in recent years, and the CIE was also viewed in a fairly positive light. In terms of in-service work, the region had been irregularly serviced by the CIE field workers. Some workshops had taken place, although these were of a general nature and did not deal with or impact directly on classroom practice.

This leads to the conclusion that research projects carried out collaboratively and in conjunction with like-minded organisations have a greater chance of success in terms of acceptance and impact.

2. The use of modern technology is possible in poorly-resourced rural areas.

In Chapter 6 I showed that the Eastern Cape is extremely impoverished both in terms of quality and quantity of educational facilities and resource provision. This led me to question whether teachers would have access to tape-recorders and video-recorders. This reservation was reinforced by my own experience with teachers in well-resourced urban schools. This experience had shown that a high proportion of the staff were 'techno-phobic' and/or inept at handling video, audio and photocopying technology.

The case study showed without a doubt that the teachers coped well with the technology and that they were easily able to make arrangements to watch video

cassettes. Ester of School B travelled into East London regularly to watch and re-watch the video cassettes. At the final research interview she says in response to my query:

R: So, you've clearly enjoyed the videos, despite the fact that there is no machine here and you had to travel quite far to watch them ...

Ester: No, I didn't mind, because even in the location, I had nice neighbours who were willing to let me listen to the videos in their houses.

R: So you don't think that its too 'high-technology'? You think that video and tape is quite acceptable even for farm school teachers?

Ester: It is! It is! ... I know if they were to practice or to learn through this, Ingrid is always willing to lend them the machine. Or, she would arrange to take them to ITEC ...(Research interview, August 1992).

This extract highlights the relative ease with which teachers accepted modern technology as a tool. It also strengthens the argument for local networking and support.

Audio-cassettes were even easier for teachers to work with, as battery powered tape-recorders were available at both schools. The expense of the batteries was an issue at one stage. Ivy from School B had no transport and could not replace batteries that she had worn out by rewinding and re-listening to audio cassettes. The issue was resolved when I bought her a stock of batteries with CIE funds.

However, Van Zyl (1992, p 436) argues that access to technology alone does not guarantee results when he says, 'To have access to a technology is not necessarily to use it in the most effective way. There is a need to train the teachers and students who are going to use it'. He also points out that some of the reluctance to engage in distance

education of this nature is the result of a lack of educational broadcasting expertise in South Africa, compounded by the fact that no training or research of any significance has been undertaken in this field. Training in the PREP project took the form of experimentation. Part of our task was to determine whether teachers could use the technology effectively without training. PREP researchers also did not undergo any formal training ourselves in the writing or production of material, although we did engage people with technical expertise to make the actual videos.

Van Zyl also stresses the need to keep the technology in perspective when he says:

It is not the television monitor that provides the education; it is the entire process of trained teacher, motivated student, adequate supplementary material as well as well-written and well-produced programmes that provides education (1992, p 441).

PREP relied not simply on the technology, but a combination of materials which complemented each other, and indeed led to effective education.

By opting for video programmes and pre-recorded audio cassettes we were able to address the fundamental problem of access to transmissions from commercial television or radio broadcasters. Van Zyl points out further that:

'Live' broadcasting of radio and television programmes is increasingly seen as being problematic since it is tied to a fixed schedule, must be viewed when transmitted, does not allow for one segment to be studied in depth and is inconvenient for follow-up discussion. Recorded material on the other hand can be viewed and reviewed at leisure and integrated

into the supplementary material through the 'pause-go' method (1992, p 449).

Within this study, teachers quickly learned to view and review material. They worked on articles in conjunction with audio and video presentations and watched videos over and over as they wished. PREP thus offered them the benefits highlighted by Van Zyl. This leads to my second conclusion that the effective use of modern technology is possible and beneficial in all schools, and that the use of such technology is not limited to well-resourced urban centres. Teachers in areas with few services have shown that they can make effective use of such modern technology. This means that distance education programmes can make full use of multi-media presentations of material.

3. Peer-group discussion allows for greater understanding of the intentions of the researcher and the content of the research material.

Elliott says that 'the belief that individual teachers have the power to improve their classroom practice in isolation from each other is naïve' (Elliott, 1993, p 180). Keiny (1993) suggests that 'dynamic group discourse' occurs when participants come from different schools and have different learning backgrounds and status. Such discourse, she argues, has an enriching effect on practice and offers a broader view of the concept of learning in general. In addition, she points out that the establishment of mutual respect between participants and authentic open modes of relating to each other can enhance social integration (1993, p 89). The collaborative nature of the PREP study encouraged teachers to discuss material in groups. These group discussions did, I

believe, lead to deeper understandings and gave teachers a greater sense of their own roles as implementors of the innovation.

An example of this can be found in one teacher's reaction to joining the project described in Chapter 7. Ivy's initial reaction to joining the project revealed that she was uncertain of my intentions, and that the goals of the project had not been clearly communicated and/or understood. She resorted to discussion with peers to clarify my intentions and inform her decisions.

Once Ivy met with Ester the teachers developed ways of working which suited them. They were able to discuss audio and video material with each other. When they did this, it was interesting to note that they assessed the new knowledge in terms of their own situation and formed understandings grounded in their own experience. This was highlighted during their discussion around Audio Cassette 1 (described in Chapter 7). One talk point required the teachers to discuss which method of teaching reading that they had viewed in the PREP video was the most effective. After a few minutes and various shared experiences, the teachers agreed that the best method was the one that achieved results for the child. Here were poorly qualified teachers who had realised that no one method offered a panacea and who were prepared to change their methodology if they felt that the one they were using was not producing results in terms of pupil success.

This experience led me to conclude that the development of a collaborative reflective framework allowed teachers and researchers to reach greater understanding of

research intentions. It also allowed for a deeper and more meaningful conceptual grasp of the content of the research material.

4. Provision of the required resources means that teachers are more likely to experiment with new ideas.

PREP provided everything the teachers needed to experiment with new methods of teaching reading. That the material was freely available and on hand meant that the teachers did not need to struggle with logistical details in order to put ideas to the test in their classrooms. Under these circumstances innovation is much more likely than where the teacher has to physically seek out, or produce, the material herself. Both teachers used the story books in their classrooms. They did not have to find the books nor did they have to order or buy them. This obviously had positive benefits for the study, and I could conclude that such provision was useful.

However, the provision of resources alone will not lead to improved classroom practice. This was demonstrated in different ways. For example, at the ITEC workshops which I observed, the teachers were provided with classroom resources which they had to colour in and complete (see Chapter 6) Some of these were displayed in the two schools which I visited, often being used simply as wall decorations. At another school, Breakthrough reading schemes (Molteno Project material) had been provided. But the teacher found it too difficult to operate in a large combined class, so she simply did not use it, taking it out only when visited by Molteno Project workers.

What then accounted for the taking up of PREP resources in the targeted schools?

Mxoli, another PREP researcher, says the following about the story books:

The resource pack as it is serves the role of feeding the teachers with the theory of reading and the effective methods to use to achieve best the aims of teaching reading. *The storybooks are very useful because in our education there is no reading material for young children and the love for reading is not developed effectively.* The availability of the books, as the teachers have told me in the workshops, brought a big change in their teaching of the reading process as a whole (1992a, p 5 - emphasis added).

Parker (1993) evaluated the PREP story charts in Kwazulu-Natal schools. She identified several reasons for the popularity of the material: it was presented in the pupils' home language (isiZulu), some material reflected the home life of pupils and the visual images represented rural settings. She also pointed out that teachers found the notes accompanying the story charts useful. More importantly she points out that:

materials are being tested by teachers who are enthusiastic about new reading methods and PREP provides an educational environment that enhances new learning and teaching methodologies in the classroom (1993, p 3)

and that:

the evaluation findings reveal a consistent theme where teachers' voices have expressed the suitability of the curriculum materials being researched and developed by PREP. From discussions, teachers'

scepticism of their pupils' ability to cope with extended text was overshadowed by children's enthusiasm for the story charts (1993, p 19).

It appears that the appropriacy of the PREP materials combined with the theoretical and other teacher support made the resource material useful and attractive to teachers.

Access to books and other resources is limited in rural schools, which are removed from libraries and resource centres. The PREP material filled this gap. The material was written in the pupil's home language. This provided a learning environment which teachers could tap into and use effectively. In addition, theoretical input from the articles combined with video demonstration of the material in use meant that teachers could see the material being used in farm school classrooms and thus see the potential for using the material in their own classrooms. (In this way the material differed from that provided by other projects like the Molteno Project, where teachers were expected to engage with material which they had never seen applied in real classroom situations.)

Both teachers in my study used the story books in their classrooms. Ester used them later in the year with her Sub As (Grade 1s) and let the Sub Bs (Grade 2s) use them at home (Interview with Mxoli 24/4/92). Ivy created a class library and put all the story books on a shelf. She felt that the Sub A's only read the pictures, but that all the children benefited from the books (Research interview, April 1992). However, I would argue that they used the resource materials to try out new ideas in the classroom because they were motivated by and interested in understanding the process of reading

outlined in the rest of the PREP material despite the fact that I have no empirical evidence to support such an argument.

Provision of the required resources, especially where they are supported by material which teachers find useful, makes it easier for teachers to try out new ideas. This is borne out by Ester's earlier comment (Chapter 7, Section 7.1.6) that the videos were 'an inspiration' and that the readings were 'easy'.

5. Demonstration or 'modelling' can be a valuable learning tool, especially for educationally impoverished teachers.

In Chapter 7 I pointed out that PREP had no experience of making educational videos. I also stressed that we were informed by learnings from earlier phases of PREP. In the light of these learnings, we were very careful when we made the videos, not to be authoritarian in style. The initial PREP videos thus assumed a non-didactical mode of presentation. Material and film clips were shown with voice-over and scripting. Responses from the teachers revealed that this confused and annoyed them. They recognised the grounded experience and expertise of the project leader and expressed a wish to see this demonstrated. Reflection on their comments led the project leader to write:

By not only writing the text, but by reading it to the viewer as well, we prevented (or tried to) a multiplicity of readings (of both the written text and the images). The text became a cultural weapon, for we were the interpreter. We not only blocked the autonomy of the reader's eye (i.e. the

speed of reading), but we were using print with a group of teachers whom we knew did not have a well founded text based reality (Flanagan, 1993a, p 7).

We had not created the learning situation we had aimed for. More significantly, the teachers recognised this. While it was not couched in academic or intellectual arguments, their response was to ask why we were not showing them what we expected them to do in terms of the theory and practice of reading instruction which we were transmitting.

This observation of the teachers impacted immediately on our actions. In response to this, we made a video wherein the project leader presented information and demonstrated certain techniques. No longer were we ignoring our role as mediator of knowledge. This was so well received that we adopted a more instructional approach for the rest of the video material. Flanagan (1993a, p 8) found that:

It was clear that the nature of the engagement between the teachers and the video material shifted when I presented personally. Not only did it become less abstract in terms of what was demanded from the reader/viewer, but it was easier for the teachers to locate me in space. Thus in introducing new cultural possibilities to the teachers I was more able to define the situation, at least from my perceptions.

This was not to say that the teachers instantly learned new practices. They did appropriate some of the ideas demonstrated to them, and tried them out, although it was clear that they did not have a full conceptual understanding of the material. As Ivy

says to the participant observer (Mxoli, 1992b) when asked whether the videos and other material had led to improvement or change in her practice:

Ivy: Yes ... my method that I was using then [before the intervention], I am still using it, but adding on bits of this [the PREP ideas]. So it is useful like that ...

Ester reveals that she 'dabbled' in the material, trying things that appealed to her when she says:

Ester: One of the important things that I learned was punctuation. In the beginning I thought that punctuation could only be taught in the upper classes. But since I saw it on the video, then I tried it out with my children ... then I thought it was a great help (Research interview, August 1992).

In Chapters 3 and 6, I showed that these teachers were isolated from colleges, other schools and that it was difficult for them to get together with colleagues to discuss classroom practice. In addition, most African teachers were taught by rote. Often they did not have exposure to a range of methodologies in their pre-service training, and their theoretical underpinnings are biased by a legacy of Fundamental Pedagogics and Christian National Education Philosophy.

The comments from Ivy and Ester suggest the power of demonstration as a learning tool. By demonstrating what PREP meant by good practice, we provided a range of cultural and spatial experiences for people to choose from and share in, albeit vicariously. The importance of demonstration has been ignored in some popular theories of learning. However, Tharp and Gallimore (1988), amongst others, point out

that teachers learn through assisted performance. Demonstration of the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching on video assists the performance of the teacher.

The PREP video material demonstrates and models a range of good practices. Flanagan (1993b, p 11) in her review of the value of video demonstrations to isolated teachers, comments that:

Video presentations with similar intentions to ours can more easily assist teachers to think, choose and reflect. Tharp and Gallimore (1988, p 260) support this view when they state, 'Give teachers something more than the recitation script, and they will respond accordingly ... teachers' thinking will become strategic ... and implicitly theory-based'.

While our experience of this kind of demonstration of good practices and modelling of good teachers is limited, it does suggest that modelling and demonstration are impressive ways in which to teach teachers and to assist them in improving their performance in the classroom.

6. Innovative multi-media distance education material (combined with regular facilitation) offers a viable model for effective in-service education.

In Chapter 2, I explained that distance education has traditionally been simply a correspondence course aimed at improving qualifications. However, a move to multi-media distance education is more in keeping with our need to improve the quality of teaching and learning (see point 5 above for example).

'The technologies, print, video, computer, etc., often associated with distance education allow degrees of openness not possible in the past, and access to numbers not possible in the past' (SAIDE in Hofmeyr and Hall, 1995, p 3). In terms of South African educational needs, this is encouraging as it suggests that the use of available technology allows teacher educators to reach a large audience. It also offers the opportunity to produce material which can impact significantly on classroom practice.

The Open University in the United Kingdom reports that certain educational themes are well suited to television programmes (and thus video programmes). Two of these are:

- demonstrations of practical activities for viewers to follow and
- supplementing teachers' own knowledge (especially primary teachers who are expected to have knowledge of many subjects) (in Van Zyl, 1992, p 446).

This information suggests that effective distance education material will make use of modern technology. It will also support improved classroom practice through the development of appropriate programmes. This conclusion, however, is based on the perception of distance learning discussed in Chapter 2, rather than referring to correspondence courses designed solely for improving academic qualifications.

Distance education offers solutions to some of the problems of provision experienced in South Africa. My study suggests that this is the case if, and only if, the material is interactive, grounded in classroom realities and able to impact significantly on teacher behaviours and theoretical understandings. I am supported in this view by the findings of the National Teacher Education Audit (1995) on distance education which state that:

Most institutions in the distance sector are not producing good quality distance education. This is evident from the lack of mixed-media, interactive problem centred approaches to learning, and face-to-face tutorial support for students (Hofmeyr and Hall, 1995, p 53).

I have tried to demonstrate in this report that the PREP material did all of these things. Teachers' comments, such as that of Ester (see Chapter 7) where she says: 'the approach is thrilling' reveal that they were excited by the material. Engagement with the subject matter was demonstrated by Ivy's willingness to try out ideas contained in the PREP material. Many of their comments (quoted earlier in Chapter 7) reveal that the practical activities such as the talking points on Audio Cassette 1 and questions and discussions contained in the written articles were an integral part of the material.

It is in the light of this current mood that I conclude that the multi-media distance education developed and trialled by PREP can offer a viable means of providing effective in-service education in South Africa.

## 8.2 *Recommendations*

My study was a finite, small-scale, localised intervention which ended in late 1992. But it was also novel and ground-breaking - one the first interventions of its kind in South Africa. I explained in Chapter 1 that the scope of this study was limited to a very small sample as only two schools and two ex-DET teachers in one region were targeted. I also stressed that the study was finite, although the work of PREP has continued in

other areas. Further, I pointed out that much of the knowledge used in the study was intuitive, experiential and based on hearsay. In the light of this, the recommendations which follow need to be read with both the size of the study and the ground-breaking nature of the intervention in mind. All of these recommendations are tentative and are made with the awareness that they need to be tested on a larger scale before being thoroughly convincing.

PREP has continued to develop other material for distance education, the impact of which is currently being measured. Some of the recommendations have thus already been acted on by PREP. It is to be hoped that these recommendations may also assume significance for other in-service education ventures.

I list eight recommendations for consideration. An explanation of each follows.

1. Distance education material should be trialled and tested by end-users before implementation.

Very few existing distance education programmes trial their material in any substantive way. The National Teacher Education Audit revealed that:

The courses offered are of poor academic quality and show little understanding of the realities of South African schools or concern to improve teaching competence. There is little integration of theory and practice. Thus, these courses are unlikely to lead to improved classroom competence (Hofmeyr and Hall, 1995, p 53).

Within PREP, an understanding of the realities of farm schools was acquired through sustained work in these schools and careful reflection on that work and the learnings it generated. Our work in farm schools allowed us to become familiar with conditions in those schools. This familiarity allowed us to develop appropriate material with considerably more understanding of the realities which impact on adoption and implementation of such material. By trialling the material in farm schools we were able to gauge whether our material was relevant to teachers in those schools.

If in-service education is to be effective, curriculum developers need to spend more time exploring the role which teachers in real situations can play in the development of such material. The PREP study showed how material can be developed and then refined in collaboration with teachers and other INSET providers. The refined material should undergo further trialling in pilot projects before going to scale to ensure that it does offer what it claims.

2. In-service providers should consider the merits of networking and combining resources, including human resources and expertise.

By combining the resources of the CIE, ITEC and the University of Cape Town, PREP could operate more efficiently. Co-operative structures need to be investigated whereby universities, colleges of education, local learning and resource centres and NGOs share expertise and research findings for the benefit of the in-service teachers. Brian Gray, in a study of non-formal INSET in Kwazulu-Natal concluded that:

The hope is that one day the depth and richness of knowledge that lies in the experience of these projects (and mostly stays there) will be captured and made available to all engaged in this field. The problems and challenges of inadequate teaching and scarcity of resources is too great for it not to happen (1988, p 40).

It is recommended that organisations begin to develop co-operative structures for sharing and fully utilizing existing resources. These resources include physical buildings and other space, communication systems and vehicles, and human resources in the form of personnel and expertise. Such co-operation can lead to more effective use of limited resources, larger coverage and less duplication of effort. Networking and interaction can prevent the 're-inventing the wheel' syndrome, and lead to greater benefits for teachers.

3. Regular facilitation should be an integral part of distance education initiatives for teachers.

In Chapter 7, Ester from School A argued that regular facilitation involving administrative support and sustained follow-up would have made the PREP material all the more efficient. Such support is rare in South African distance education institutions (Flanagan, 1996, p 1). The debilitating pedagogy of ex-DET and homeland schooling and teacher training effectively means that in-service distance education on its own is likely to flounder.

Research has shown that 'the prior knowledge of students is in direct relation to the amount of, or need for facilitation or support of some sort' (Flanagan, 1996, p 7). In forms of distance education where classroom practice is given credit, such support becomes even more crucial. Many African teachers have had little or no exposure to methodologies or classroom behaviours beyond their own schooling and as such, cannot be expected to absorb and implement new ways of working from print or other media. Facilitation thus becomes essential.

I indicated in Chapter 1 that distance education can conceivably provide a cheap way of upgrading qualifications. However, if we are committed to raising the overall levels of education for pupils, then we need to revisit this argument. Because 'paper-chase' qualifications do not impact on classroom practice, cheap correspondence courses actually cost the whole country a great deal. More interactive courses where sustained facilitation is included may require greater financial inputs initially, though in the long run, the value of the benefits will far outweigh the original outlay.

#### 4. Certification should form an integral part of in-service courses.

By recommending certification, I am not suggesting that each and every in-service experience be certified and/or accredited. However, where teachers are engaged in long courses which offer the potential for improvements in schooling, assessment and certification should be an option. And, where teachers are engaging in a range of in-service courses, such certification should be accumulated for credit and/or job purposes.

In order to develop and trial material, the offer of certification needs to be suspended until final course material is produced. However, comments made by the teachers in this study showed that they would have liked some form of formal recognition or certification. This suggests that the developers of in-service material need to develop material with a view to inserting it eventually into formal structures so that teachers can be certified upon completion of the course. At present there are strict statutory accreditation and certification procedures which need to be followed. The nature and form of certification may change in the future, and the practice of linking certification and qualifications to remunerative rewards may well be phased out. (A National Education and Training Forum Green Paper was released while this chapter was being written. The impact of such a document has yet to be assessed.) However, comments such as those by Zuma (in Chapter 2) reveal that, at least in the interim, teachers want certificates. Unless in-service courses offer this, these teachers are likely to continue opting for state-sanctioned correspondence courses.

5. In-service initiatives, particularly those using distance education, should make maximum use of all available forms of technology.

Modern technology has huge potential as a teaching and learning tool. It is too easily accepted in South Africa that lack of facilities makes multi-media distance education difficult. The PREP study, based as it was in rural areas without electricity and other resources, showed that this is a myth. This finding can be substantiated by research findings in Lesotho, a country which is one of the world's ten poorest. Tim Quinlan, working in the remote Malut-/Drakensberg catchment area with rural herding

communities found that 'video technology is a useful medium for articulating theoretical and practical efforts' (1992/3, p 64). Further, he shows that:

The medium provides an audio-visual record which is easily communicated and which allows for immediate recall and feedback to clarify issues and problems. Secondly the method draws together participants with different backgrounds and knowledge to engage directly with that knowledge. In other words it promotes collaboration. Thirdly the method stimulates debate and reflection, thereby facilitating sharing of knowledge and exploration of ideas expressed (1992/3, p 62).

Quinlan was using video in a different way in his study, but what is significant is that he was using it successfully in some of the remotest regions of the sub-continent with people who had not ever seen television programmes before.

The possibilities are endless and exciting. Video and audio technology is fairly cheap and easy to use. Such technology can be used to overcome the logistical and financial constraints which impact negatively on contact teaching. Increased use of technology may also help to overcome the reluctance of NGOs like the Primary Science Project and the Mathematics Education Project to operate at any great distance from their centres.

6. In-service materials should contain a combination of theoretical and practical elements.

My study showed that teachers benefit from demonstration combined with theoretical insight. I have also argued that the teachers in the study chose to use the resource material provided by PREP because it had both theoretical input and practical demonstration which gave them the impetus to try out some of the ideas. Flanagan (1993a) argues that teachers need to have cognitive control of the pedagogy involved in an innovation. Unless teachers develop this cognitive control by understanding the content of the material rather than simply following a prescribed method, they cannot reflect on their practice in order to improve on it. I cannot argue that such cognitive control was demonstrated in this study. However, I did show that Ivy's tentative understandings of the reading process led to a sense of personal empowerment when she recognised an ITEC facilitator presenting similar ideas. Her response, 'Yo, I shouted ... and in the end, I was, you know, telling them all about what we are doing in PREP' (Research interview, August, 1992) indicates her sense of empowerment arising from her own intellectual engagement with the material.

The combination of theory and practice is particularly appropriate for junior primary teachers. These teachers are fundamentally engaged in teaching the skills required for numeracy and literacy. These skills, and an understanding of how children can acquire them, underpin junior primary teaching. Content teaching is less important at this stage. What we need therefore is material which demonstrates the skills in action, but which

at the same time challenges teachers to develop a strong theoretical basis for the choices they make in teaching the skills.

7. Research findings should be made public and knowledge and experience should be shared.

Sharing research findings in an accessible form is a key component of action research. What is needed are more forums for such sharing. The question is, who should take responsibility for ensuring that research findings are disseminated? I would argue that researchers in funded projects are in a privileged position and that there needs to be greater accountability in terms of sharing research findings. This dissertation is one means of sharing research findings, although the issue of accessibility is still at stake. How will policy and decision makers get to know that this dissertation exists, and will it be easy for them to access? There is no easy answer. Walsh (1993, p 190) states that one of the challenges of action research lies in '[t]he diffusion of action research through the wider educational system'. In terms of Recommendation 2, that organisations share resources and expertise, it is clear that the issue of dissemination of findings is one which requires more research. It is crucial that we begin to build up a sound knowledge base to inform policy and other decisions accurately.

8. South African educationalists need to develop frameworks and models of INSET that work, are informed by local realities and are less reliant on assumptions or observations tested only in foreign contexts.

Indigenous models of in-service education develop out of a conviction that our experience has intrinsic value. The colonisation of schooling has ignored entirely our indigenous understandings and settings. For example, a review of reading schemes used in schools shows a predominately male and White Anglo-Saxon Protestant society which does not remotely resemble the reality of the majority of pupils in this country. Locally developed material is better able to take cognizance of the multi-layered complexities that surround us. For example, nine out of ten pupils learn through a language that is not their own. By developing local material in a range of vernaculars for use in a bilingual approach, PREP was able to take this factor into account.

Future policy decisions should be informed by local research which is:

rooted in concrete and proximate situations ... Inevitably, explorations of this sort are particularised, context-bound and saturated with considerations of value and worth (Atkin, 1993, p 187).

I would further recommend that educationalists begin to recognise and value the wealth of indigenous experience and learning fast becoming available in South Africa. Work by Flanagan (1991-1996), Gordon (1991-1993), Hofmeyr (1988-1995) and Reeves (1993), among others, contains valuable and applicable lessons which can inform the development of indigenous models of working. Jennings (1994, pp 309,329), whilst recognising the value of policy decisions being informed by experience, also cautions

that innovations need to be evaluated and change processes monitored in order to prevent us from re-inventing the wheel. He also stresses that evaluation allows us to monitor the consequences of any innovation long after its implementation as part of a project.

### *8.3 Concluding comment*

The examples of teacher improvement and material development described in this study may seem insignificant in the face of the immense challenges currently facing educationists in South Africa. I would counter that the grounded knowledge and understanding generated in this study have implications that extend far beyond the scope of this report. However, if action research projects such as this one are to have an impact on broader educational reform, they need to be conducted in enabling conditions and be taken seriously by educational authorities. Only through a recognition of the importance of grounded, classroom-focused research can a ripple effect be generated. Such a ripple effect could, I believe, provide a powerful impetus for improvement in schooling in South Africa. The power of ordinary people to effect meaningful educational change is summed up, albeit somewhat idealistically, by the Northern Province Discussion Document (1995):

Democracy wants us to come up with tangible programmes which will salvage us from the world of doom and oblivion. Let us put right what was wrong. Let us broaden our scope of vision. Let us generate information and strategies to address our vision and mission. A winning nation shall

be judged by the quality of its education system. We have a million and one ideas to restore what rightfully belongs to us...(1995, p 3).

This study has the intention to contribute, in a small way, to putting right what was wrong and to building a winning nation.

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Apart from the bibliography and eleven appendices which follow this thesis is now complete.

Appendices A, B and C have reference to Chapter 2, Appendix D to Chapters 2 and 8, Appendix E, F and G to Chapter 4, Appendices H, I and J to Chapter 6 and Appendix K to Chapter 7.

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In addition to the readings listed above, I also drew extensively from transcripts of interviews with teachers recorded during 1992 as well as from unpublished PREP archival material, such as funding proposals.



## ARTICLE TWO:

### POINTS ABOUT THE READING PROCESS

*This article has some reading tasks included in it. It would be best if you could work with a colleague while doing these tasks as shared learning is very powerful.*

#### Goals in reading.

Have you ever thought about why you bother to teach children to read? *What is your goal?*

Below are 5 possible goals for reading. Do two things:

- i. Put a tick next to the goal that is **most** like your own.
  - ii. Put a cross next to the goal that is **least** like your own.
- \* The goal of reading is **to promote intellectual growth** (that means, to help people think more intelligently). In reading this means to develop the pupils' ability to use a variety of strategies on a variety of reading tasks and types of content. Pupils should be able to process information efficiently.
  - \* the goal of reading is **to change the social and political structure** so that oppressed people may work towards a more just society. Reading teachers should believe in the potential of their pupils, sensitizing them to their social situation. Reading teachers should help learners to become literate in the areas most likely to improve their social conditions.
  - \* the goal of reading is **to develop a pupil's self worth and autonomy**. Reading teachers should focus on developing self-knowledge in their pupils by offering a range of experiences which can increase their knowledge.

- \* the goal of reading is **to acquire survival skills** for living in a complex technological society. Pupils should learn to read the kinds of materials that they will encounter in real life - application forms, license forms, health regulations, law enforcement procedures and so on.
- \* the goal of reading is **to pass on the knowledge, skills, and social values of the culture** that has been recognised as having the greatest scholars. Pupils should learn to reproduce these facts and ideas from the different texts. Only someone who is an authority on each text can judge whether the reader understands the text.

*What questions did you ask yourself as you tried to decide which goals to mark?*

*What else were you thinking about?*

Purpose for reading what follows.

When reading what follows think about:

- i. whether the points being made below are correct, or useful, in terms of your goal for reading, and
- ii. what the difference is between these points and your own understanding of the reading process.

(If you are working with a colleague or colleagues while doing this, then compare your thoughts afterwards.)

**Points about the reading process.**

1. Learning to read is done by reading and more and more and more reading, however young or old you may be.

*How many books are you or your pupils reading each year?*

2. We learn to read all of our lives, there is no end point where you say, "Ah, I know how to read." For example, when you first read an official document you have to learn how to read it; when you first learn a new subject like, say, geography, you have to learn how to read it; and now you are learning how to read about the reading process.

*Does this understanding of how we learn make you feel better about your own ability to read or worse?*

3. Reading is not just about being able to identify the words or make the sounds. Reading is about being able to understand the text, the story, the article or whatever else it is we are reading, as a whole. Reading is about being able to critically understand what has been written. So reading for meaning must come right from the start as it is essential to the reading process.

*For example, can you understand the following bit of legal jargon?*

Where particulars of a partnership are disclosed to the Executive Council the remuneration of the individual partner for superannuation purposes will be deemed to be such proportion of the total remuneration of such practitioners as the proportion of his share in partnership profits bears to the total proportion of the shares of such practitioner in those profits.

*I certainly cannot. I can certainly identify the words and make the sounds but I cannot make meaning of the text because I have not learnt how to read such language. So I cannot claim to be able to read it - I still have to learn how to read it so as to make sense of it.*

4. The purpose of reading is the construction of meaning. Meaning is not in the print on the page, but it is meaning that authors begin with when they write. Somehow readers strive to reconstruct this meaning as they read.

*What is meant by "meaning is not in the print on the page"?*

There is nothing intrinsic in any writing system or its symbols which has meaning. There is nothing in the shape or sequence of any letters or grouping of letters which in itself has meaning. Meaning is only in the mind of the writer and the mind of the reader.

5. Prior knowledge - what we already know about language and the content - will affect what we learn from reading any text. Prior knowledge determines the kinds of interpretations we can make from text. Often people who can make sense of a lot of different texts are called 'clever'. But really it is because they have a lot of prior knowledge to bring to the texts. Often some people are called 'experts' in a certain area of reading. This is because they have a lot of prior knowledge about that specific area, and so when they read they bring this prior knowledge to the reading and are able to construct meaning more easily than others of us can.

*[This text that I am busy writing now makes great sense to me because I bring a lot of prior knowledge about the reading process to this writing. I can critically understand it and even try to write it in different ways to make it easier for the reader to understand. It is knowledge that I can act on independently from someone having to teach me. I can act independently of a teacher.]*

#### **Further discussion and consideration.**

The above points that have been made about the reading process emphasise particular things which count towards calling someone a good reader. In Article One of this Pack the point was made that "it is no good reading if you do not comprehend what you are reading", and that reading for comprehension "is a matter of getting your own questions answered". If you as the reader of this article have read it through and reflected on its meaning, what questions do you have in your mind still that are not answered? To put this another way is to say, 'What still confuses you about the five points made?' Or, to put it in academic terms, 'After reading this article, can you argue for or against the five points, or do you still need more information before you can do this?'

## Further PREP Resource Pack material.

### Articles

Below is a list of three more articles that we are producing. We will send them to you as soon as each is ready.

Sometimes the articles will complement the videos (they will be directly related to what is on the video tape). You will notice that some of these articles are more to do with the theory of the reading process than the practice. That is because the videos are dealing more with the practice of teaching reading. However, comment on methodology will be included in the articles as it becomes appropriate to do so.

We also want guidance from you on how best to do all of this, and remember to let us know what sort of source material you need so that we can develop that too.

Article Three is about **two different views on the reading process**. One view is the behaviourist view of reading. This view is probably the one that is most familiar to us. The other view is the psycholinguistic view of reading. This view is becoming more popular with educationists.

Article Four is about a **language experience approach to reading** based on the psycholinguistic view. This article complements Cycle 2.A.1 video.

Article Five is about **developing a concept of print**. It explains what children need to know about print in order to read, and suggests some ways of how to go about this. This article complements Cycle 2.B.1 video.

### Video Tapes

Cycle Two will have at least two videos to it:

2.A.1 will deal with the different ways in which teachers go about teaching reading in the first term of Sub A.

2.B.1 will show the reading progress of individual children during their year in Sub A and then their year in Sub B. The aim of this video is to show how competently children can read if we go about our work correctly.

### Audio Tapes

Audio Tape One will be a sort of discussion tape about how we teachers come to know things about reading. It will include the voice of a teacher talking about her understandings of the reading process and the voices of children talking about reading. This audio tape complements Articles Two and Three.

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## Appendix B

VIDEO 6

CHILDREN WRITING

(ARTICLE EIGHT)

### SCRIPT

Type in:

The Primary Education Project (PREP)  
Children Writing  
Cycle 4

### SCREEN

What I think about, I can talk about.  
What I can say, I can write.  
What I can write, I can read.  
I can read what I write and what other people can write  
for me to read.

ME:

This video is about children writing. In the past writing in school was regarded as something you had to master all at once, as though you were an instant expert and as though you knew exactly what you wanted to say all of the time. So children had to write a composition and then have this corrected and marked by the teacher and that was the end the writing lesson.

But recent research has shown that is not really how anyone writes something that is to be read by others. People usually develop a story or an argument over a few drafts. In other words people craft their writing as they go. So with children. Once children begin to appreciate that for others to understand what we write we must include certain information and events and so on, then they too need time and opportunity to draft their writing into a final version.

So this video tries to capture some of the ways in which teachers go about teaching writing, and how they generate writing lessons in their classrooms.

Lets start with the teaching of writing in the first language or mother tongue.

At the beginning of Sub A, of course the children have little control over the shape of letters and they are also very slow so you cannot demand too much at the start.

Voice over: Children writing in words for sandwiches

In the first week or two of Sub A children can only cope with the writing of one word to complete a sentence that is familiar to them.

Voice over: Shot of painting on display

Then the children can begin to copy a sentence that they have dictated to the teacher. As pre-writing activities the children have talked about their families, they have drawn their families and they have made a graph representing the families of each child in the class. In this way it is not difficult for the children to make up a sentence about their painting.

ME:

By Sub B the teacher should be demanding a lot more from the children. The Sub B class that you are going to see are writing quite well because these children have a more sophisticated concept of print and understanding of how story works. Let us look at one typical series of writing lessons done in August of the Sub B year.

Voice over: School play

As a pre-writing activity the children participated in a drama production about a clown.

Voice over: teacher showing pictures

The teacher also showed them some pictures of clowns.

Voice over : Teacher with Anna's group

As a further pre-writing activity the children get a chance to talk about clowns.

Voice up for discussion on clowns (Teacher with Anna's group).

Voice over: children writing (Matthew's group)

The children write their stories in their jotters. They talk to each other when they want to and they get help from the teacher when they need it.

Voice over: teacher talking to Sarah

During the revision stage of the writing the children read their stories to the teacher. She comments on the stories and edits the work for the children. Most importantly she responds as a reader to what the children write.

Voice up to hear teacher

Voice over: children writing final draft

When each child is satisfied with her or his story they write a final draft which is then read by the other children.

SCREEN: Two examples of the stories

ME:

Let us look at a Standard One class now so that we can see the progression in children's writing. These children are now in their third year of writing in their mother tongue and so one can expect them to have more control over language and ways in which to express their ideas. We will take you through the steps that this teacher takes in her writing lessons. The writing that you will see was done in August of their standard one year.

Voice over: Children on mat with teacher

The teacher first introduces the lesson to the children and explains some of the things that they need to think about while planning their writing.

Voice up for Bev explaining. "Listen to what you have to do ..."

Voice over: Children on their own outside.

The children begin to shape their stories by first sitting alone and jotting down some notes and ideas that they want to develop into a story. The teacher moves around talking to the children about their ideas.

Voice over: Lisa and Jason

Then the children work in pairs outside to try out their ideas on each other and to get other ideas. They are preparing the first draft of their story.

Voice up at "read yours again ..."

cut to

"Ja snakes curled around .."

go to

"green mambas that twirl around her legs"

Voice over: Close up of some children at desks writing

The children then settle down to write and shape a story. They are crafting their stories as they go. The classroom is quite quiet now so that children can concentrate. Any children who do want to talk go outside to do so. The teacher moves around helping where necessary.

Voice over: Showing spelling list.

The children refer to a word list for the spelling of words that they do not know, or they refer their own private spelling lists, or they ask the teacher.

Voice over: Two children in corridor making changes

During the revision stage the children read their story to another child. Further changes are made if necessary. Voice up for the two children talking together.

Voice over: Showing children at teacher's desk.

The children then go to the teacher to have her comment on their work. She talks to them about their story, makes suggestions, and begins to edit the work.

Voice over: Children outside in pairs.

As the children finish they pair off with someone else who is also finished. They go outside and try out their final story on each other. This is an important stage because it helps children to write for an audience or for other readers. Only writing for the teacher as reader or audience is not enough if you want to develop a good sense of the power of the written medium.

Voice up for children reading

Voice over: SCREEN of two stories

Here are two of the final versions that this class wrote.

ME:

I hope that that has given you some idea of how to go about encouraging children to write for enjoyment and for learning. Because we write to learn just as read to learn. You will have noted that good writing uses up paper and that is a scarce resource in some schools. Slates and little chalkboards are of some help for initial notes but in the end you do need a supply of scrap paper for the children to use while preparing a final draft. In fact as the children become more engrossed in writing so they need scrap paper to try out new ideas and experiment with different formats and different kinds of stories and so on.

Children learn a great deal about writing from what they read and so the more various their reading, the more various their writing is likely to be.

Now all of that is very well but one can hardly expect children to write in a second or foreign language with as much ease. You cannot be creative, original and expressive in a language over which you have no control. Under these circumstances the teacher must help the children into the writing by providing the story, or the plot and much of the vocabulary. Linking reading and writing in this way is essential if we want children to write sense not nonsense.

This child for instance has written something in response to a story that was read

SCREEN: Story "My favorite character ...."

Voice over: Group completing sentences

While these children are working from the story they have read. They are writing out the main ideas of the story in their own words.

ME:

Getting children to work sensible and meaningfully in another language is not easy. But for children who are going to switch to another language for instruction it is even more important that they get an understanding of how written language works, and that they get to write as fluently and easily as possible.

The thing is that they must get satisfaction from the experience. No one likes to sit with a blank page in front of him or her desperately trying to think of something to write and knowing that you do not have enough of that language to write anything worth reading.

Let me show you how a Sub B teacher helps her children into English which is to be their language of instruction soon. This teacher treats some of her lessons as bilingual lessons for very particular reasons. She wants to keep the children's confidence alive and she wants to keep the emphasis on meaning rather than on parrot like repetition.

Voice over: drawings

As a pre-writing activity the children have an art lesson.

Voice over: Children lined up at teacher's table

The children then dictate a sentence about their picture to the teacher in Xhosa. She immediately translates this sentence into English and writes it down for the children.

Voice over: children at desks writing

Back at their desks they copy this sentence into their books. Notice the variety of sentences that are being generated in the classroom in this way.

Voice over: Children reading each other's sentences

The children learn to read each other's sentences so that the children are already experiencing an audience or other readers.

Voice over: cutting and sticking

The children then cut up the sentence and build it up again. The teacher does this because she says she is trying to get them to develop a concept of english print - the words, the letters, the order of the words and so on - as this is different from xhosa.

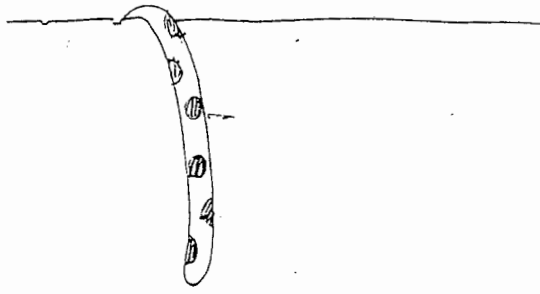
Voice over: display

Written work is displayed so that she can teach all the children all the sentences. In this way she is creating plenty of reading material for these children and all at a meaningful level.

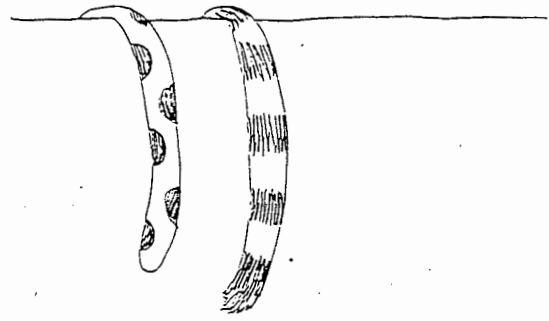
Voice over: children reading Good For Us in english and xhosa

Because she links writing and reading together she does this in her bilingual lessons as well. The children read the same story in both the languages that are being used by this school.

# Appendix C



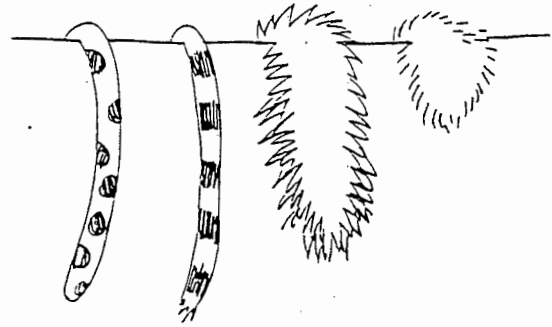
Page 1.  
spotted tail



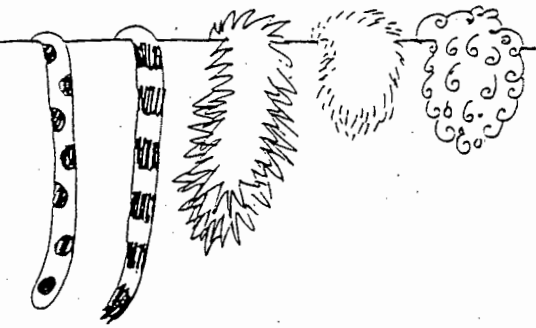
Page 2.  
spotted tail, striped tail



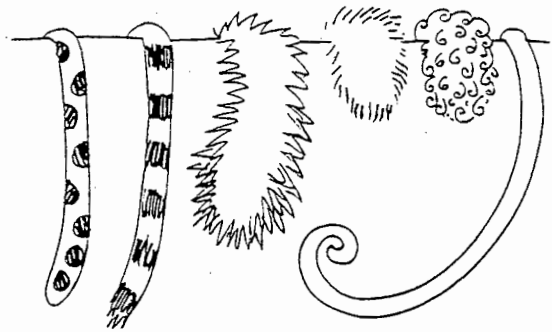
Page 3.  
spotted tail, striped tail, bushy tail,



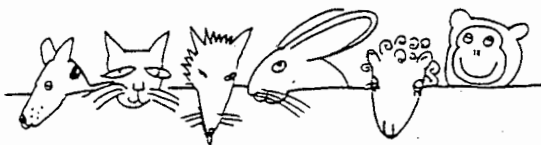
Page 4.  
spotted tail, striped tail, bushy tail, fluffy tail,



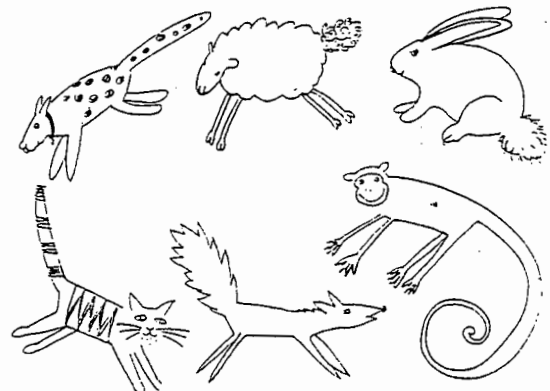
Page 5.  
spotted tail, striped tail, bushy tail, fluffy tail, woolly tail,



Page 6.  
spotted tail, striped tail, bushy tail, fluffy tail,  
woolly tail, long tail.



Page 7.  
dog, cat, fox, rabbit, sheep, monkey.



Page 8.  
What a tale!

# The PREP Pack

A multilingual reading and writing course for early schooling



The PREP Pack consists of:

- Story books
- Story charts
- A teacher's resource book
- Audio and video programmes for teacher development (available as optional extras)

 Maskew Miller  
Longman

# What is The PREP Pack?

**The PREP Pack** is an exciting range of colourful story charts and story books which introduces children to reading and writing skills. The materials have been workshopped in classrooms all over the country, in rural and urban areas. The emphasis is on good stories, written in authentic language, which make learning enjoyable. The authors have also taken special care to avoid racism and sexism.

**The PREP Pack** is available in the main languages of southern Africa, and can be used in a child's home language, as well as to introduce a new language. The same artwork is used for each language. Some of the components are also suitable for bilingual learning: children can be taught to read and write in both a familiar and a new language.

**The PREP Pack** has been developed over a period of ten years by the Primary Education Project at the University of Cape Town. Research has shown that if children are to become competent and independent in their reading and writing they must have access to many stories and story books. The PREP Pack provides material that can be used in different ways to help children develop those skills.

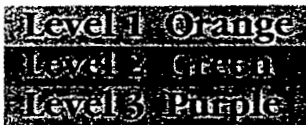
## The PREP Pack

### Story charts *for whole class or group teaching*

- Ten sets of full colour **picture charts** tell a variety of enjoyable stories. Each set of charts has Teacher's Notes with suggestions for teaching beginners and more advanced readers, as well as suggestions for bilingual reading lessons.
- Ten sets of matching **text charts** are for use with the picture charts. The text charts are divided into three difficulty levels and are available in English, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi and other languages spoken in southern Africa.

### Story books *for individual or paired reading*

- Twenty stories in full colour are divided into three difficulty levels. To facilitate group work there are five copies of each title in the pack, i.e. 100 books. The levels are indicated by the colour on the back covers.



- Each story is available in all the main South African languages.

### Teacher's resource book *for teacher reference*

- *Reading and Writing in Junior Classes* by Dr Wendy Flanagan. Written by a well known expert on primary education, the teacher's resource book offers a variety of ideas on how to teach reading and writing.

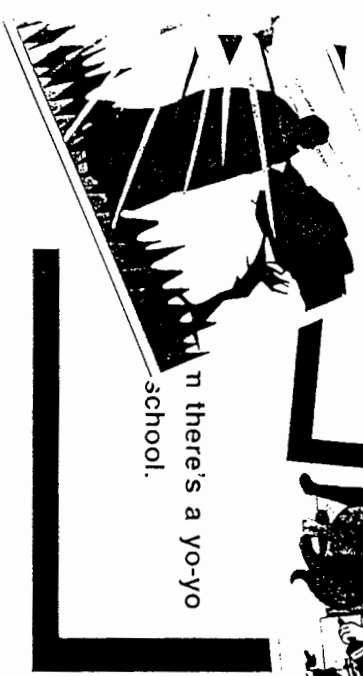
### Audio and video programmes *for teacher development*

- Nine video tapes and eight audio cassettes are available as extras. They reinforce the ideas in the teacher's resource book and offer specific suggestions for using the PREP materials.

# The PREP Pack



Inyaka  
luthu  
uCookie wapenda injja,  
isicabha naye gobo  
lwakhe.



...n there's a yo-yo  
school.



## STORY CHARTS

Text charts

Picture charts

Free  
teacher's  
notes



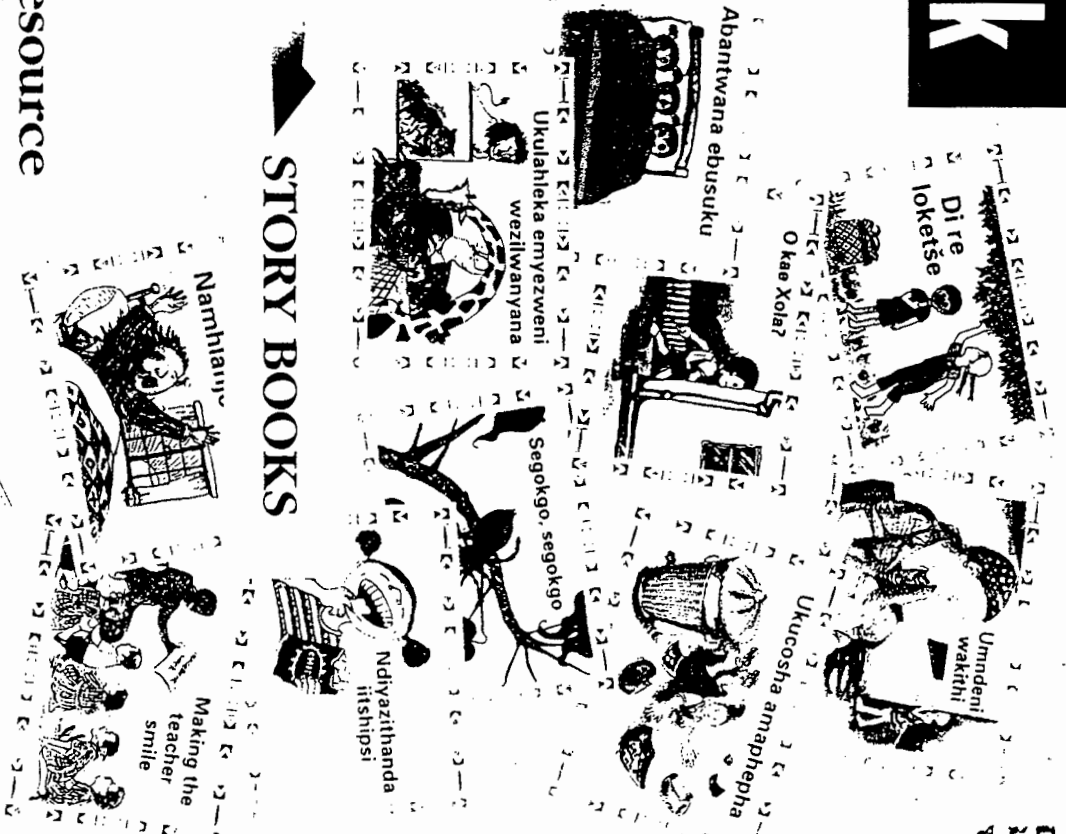
Video training  
programme



## Teacher's Resource Book



## STORY BOOKS



Audio training  
programme



# The PREP Pack

## What makes The PREP Pack special?

- multicultural, available in all the main languages spoken in southern Africa
- locally developed, tested and produced
- easy for teachers to use without extensive training
- covers a wide range of reading and writing skills and approaches
- strong storylines that are fun to read

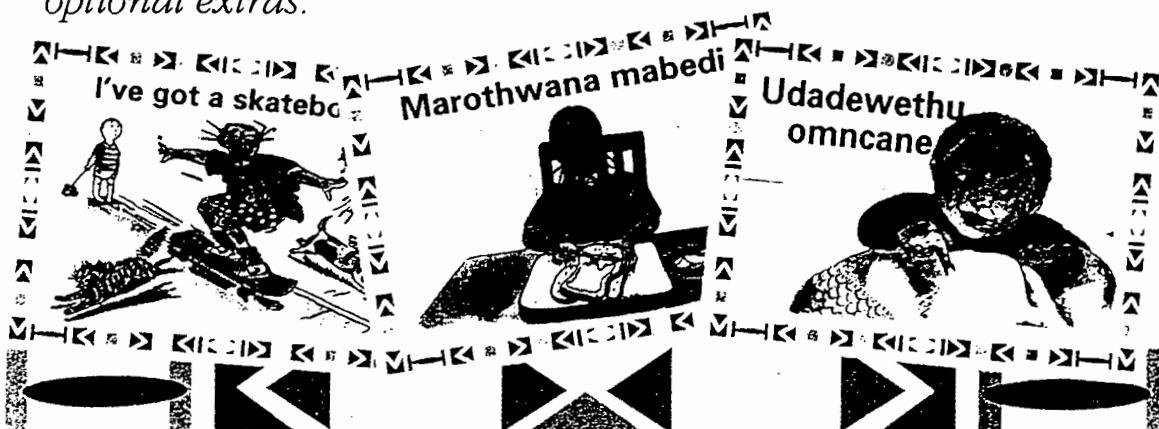
## Where can The PREP Pack be used?

- classrooms
- in-service training
- distance education
- colleges and universities
- non-governmental organisations

## How can The PREP Pack be used?

- to teach reading and writing to young children
- as supplementary reading
- to learn a new language
- for teacher development

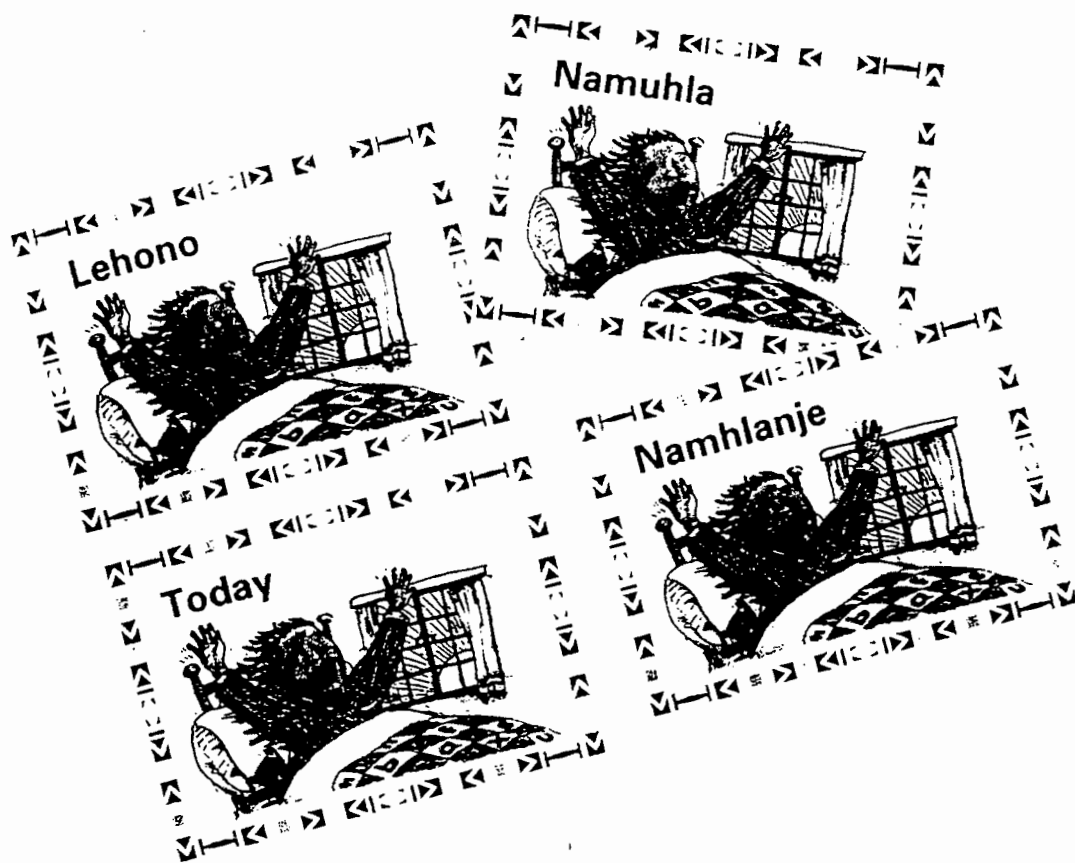
*The PREP materials are available as a pack, or as separate components. One complete PREP Pack equips three classes of 35 children each. Supplementary materials can be purchased for larger classes or to replace lost components. Video and audio programmes for teacher development are available as optional extras.*



# The PREP Pack

## What makes The PREP Pack affordable?

- One PREP Pack equips three classes of 35 children each
- For bigger classes supplementary storybooks available separately to boost kit
- All components available separately to replace lost or damaged components
- Teacher's Notes for story charts free of charge
- Optional video and audio programmes for teacher development do not have to be purchased with The PREP Pack



**Maskew Miller  
Longman**

Maskew Miller Longman, P O Box 396, Cape Town 8000.

These books can be ordered from your favourite bookshop or from Maskew Miller Longman at 021 531 7750 or Fax 021 5314049. For more information contact the Marketing Department on the same number.

## Appendix E

### Two Examples of PREP Evaluation forms

#### PREP STORY BOOKS

#### EVALUATION FORM

*If you have been given some of the PREP story books, please complete the back of this evaluation form after you have tried the books with your pupils.*

Use **one form** for the english books and **another form** for the Zulu or Xhosa books.

#### How to complete the form

1. List each title that you have in the column headed **TITLE**.
2. Decide which level of difficulty you think the book is and write A, B or C in the **LEVEL** column. Use the following scale.

level A = easy
level B = harder
level C = hardest

3. Write a comment about each book in the **COMMENT** column. We need your comments and opinions so that we know which titles work best with your pupils. Printing is very expensive so we only want to publish the titles you think are best.

When you have completed your forms please give them to Karen or Nombuyiselo or Wendy. Or post them to

Dr Wendy Flanagan  
Primary Education Project  
School of Education  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch 7700  
Phone (021)6502767

PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT (PREP)

USING STORY BOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM  
EVALUATION FORM

Please fill in this form and post it back to us.

1. Is it alright to have everything about story books on one video even if it makes it so long?

Yes

2. Does breaking the video into sections help you? Please comment.

Yes

3. Section One - Reading to the class.  
Write any comments or advice that you may have about this section below.

The Reading lesson was excellent.

They enjoy that.

4. Section Two - Teaching story reading.  
Write any comments or advice that you may have about this section below.

The lesson was good, but my method is:

to draw their attention, I show them just pictures first and if they have an interest in text, I tell them.

5. Section Three - Individualised reading.  
Write any comments or advice that you may have about this section below.

Individualised reading has disadvantages,

eg making noise, uncontrollable

6. The style of this video is different from the others because Wendy is teaching you.  
Write your opinion of this kind of style below.

The style is okay, but it was long

Wendy should have cancelled the explanation of books. Everything is helpful.

Appendix F

Smiling Valley School  
P. O. Kei Road  
4920

19 November 1991

Grimley Building  
14 Tuin Plein  
Cape Town  
8001

Dear Karen

I received your letter during the week-end on the 10th November. Ingrid gave me the video cassette and I watched it but the first part has no sound.

About the decision, I do like to join the Prep but next year in May I will be having a baby so I don't know what to say. Can you draft a programme for next year? so that I can see, think. We are closing on the 4th December 1991. You can send cycle 2

Yours faithfully  
Ivy NTLOKO

## Appendix G

Ester and Karen - 13/8/92

K: Mrs Nini how do you feel now that your role as part of the research project is almost over?

E: I am very pleased with the project that we've gone through, so much that I wish it could never end. Because I've picked up so much about reading and it has made me so interested, and I could feel, putting my interest, injecting my interest into the children, I feel they also love reading very much.

K: How did the pack affect your actual teaching of reading? Did it in any way?

E: It has improved my approach to reading...

K: How?

E: In that I felt I could improve each time, make the children do something, draw something and write some sentences. Things which I didn't do before, and I always wanted to write out reading materials that the children could read at home. I always feel that they should read on and on so that they can improve.

K: What would you say...You are saying you've learnt some things from the resource pack, what would you say is the most important things that you've learnt?

E: One of the important things that I learnt was punctuation. In the beginning I thought punctuation could be taught in the upper classes. But since I saw it in the video, then I tried it out with my children, then I thought it was a great help...So, they could divide words up and start with a capital letter each time they write a sentence, and of course a full stop, then it made meaning into their lessons...

K: And did they manage that?

E: They are trying, yes, some of them managed well

K: You learned that from the video. My next question is which material has been most useful to you and why?

E: The material that was most useful...I think that in the beginning, because I am taking sub A and Sub B. I was still foundering with Sub A because I was not a Sub A teacher. But I found lots in the beginning. I think its mostly Stella's approach to teaching children reading, or they wrote sentences out, or they read them to her. And sometimes, we thought it was wrong to write out sentences during school time, but as she did it in actual fact, I thought it was the best way, to write it whilst the children can use it, and then theres lots of inspiration that one gets on a school day, and then one just takes a koki pebn and writes it out and the children get busy on the spot...I thought it was wonderful the best ways of approaching reading...

K: Ok which material was least useful?

E: Pause...Well some of the things that were in the video like writing out cards, flash cards, its some of the things we did and sometimes I felt it could be improved like when, children were pasting letters together to make sentences on the board...sometimes one felt they could do it better if they were placed in groups...sometimes one has ones own ideas but it does make one think and see how much to improve and what oneslef would do in that instance...

K: So, Let me understand this...You are saying that the material that was least useful was showing you stuff that you'd already done?

E: Yes

K: Have you used all the material that you've been sent?

E: I did listen to the cassettes and the videos' and when I showed others they also loved them and said that they were useful...but I didn't lend them the cassettes to listen to...

K: Ok, and the articles?

E: The written articles?

K: Uh huh

E: I .... used them also

K: If we go back to that, you've shared the material with quite a few other people

E; Yes

K: That we've talked about...What made you decide to do that?

E: Well there were teachers in the same class as I did, and whatever, like...that punctuation...most teachers didn't do that so I felt they needed to see it to get impressed like me and also do it in their own classrooms....

K: And what was their response? What has been people's response when you've showed them the material?

E: They were impressed, and they loved it so much that one teacher copied the cassette so that she could look at it now and again and show it to the others?

K: Which cassette did she copy?

E: the one...It was the first one,

K: You haven't sent me any evaluation forms of the material...is there some reason for that? Did you not find them useful?

E: Its not that I didn't find them useful. AS I say, the first ones were misplaced. I think the first and the second were together and they were misplaced and I couldn't find them when

I wanted to use them. But on the other hand, I am a very poor correspondent. I mean to do it, but then time just flies and then it is not just done...

K: OK, so you found that part not good for you, m having to correspond ...

E: Correspondence...but I did imbibe whatever was sent to me, but it was just that I didn't reply...

K: Ja, I know you did, because when I arrive then you talk about it...so I'm just interested to know because some teachers don't like filling in forms and sending them off, others have found that quite helpful, so its nice to have that information...so you are saying that the forms were helpful but that you just...

E: Misplaced them, yes

K; Ja but also correspondence is not your strong point...

E; Yes, I am very poor in correspondence

K: Could you see this pack, let's say we have the final pack with the articles made into a book, the cassettes and the videos some books and some material and that's final. Could you see that being used well ion schools?

E: Yes, because even our facilitator, Miss Nolene, was very interested because she wants to show it to the whole group, in Kingwilliamstown, East London, Alice everybody, as soon as she has gone through the whole thing. She looks at it and evaluates it on her own then she does like to show it to the whole workshop.

K: So, you see it being used by a facilitator, you think that would be the best way to do it?

E: Yes, because she has a bigger group, and they can see it, and she can have their own comments, and most people will love it I think..

K: The readings as well?

E: Yes, I think they would

K: Can you compare this type of inservice where you work through stuff on your own, at your own time, to say DET courses? Can you give me some comparison of how...I mean you've been on quite a few DET training course, haven't you, in-service course?

E: There is very little that you get from the DET as courses...Sometimes they choose individual schools, send them to Pretoria and most, we've been helped by ITEC mostly, but we've got little help from the DET

K: SO can you not compare this kind of work with the work that the DET does?

E: It does, I don't know how good it is...because its not given to everybody...I know there are courses that are given by some lady teachers who are doing mainly this type of work. Because when I asked some help, I told them that I did pre-school, they said it had nothing to do with DET and that they were still helping the public schools, not the farm schools yet.

K: SO they do not actually offer much...

E: Not for farm schools, yes.

K; What was, you gave some of the material, or you talked about the material to the DET inspectors, what was her response?

E: She was very interested and she asked me to lend her the video. But I was still using it with a few teachers, so I have not given it to her yet, but she did ask for it... I don't know whether she wants to show the video to the other teachers, but I think she wanted to see because when I talked about it, she was very much interested...

K: When you do give it to her, will you give her the articles that go with it?

E: I think I should....

K: Ja, I think so, and also make sure that she doesn't copy it and use it, because, its still research, and we haven't acknowledged all the people..you know we haven't put your name, and Stella's and everyone else who was part of developing that material,

E: Uh huh

K: So we don't want the DET to take that and use it as though...

E: AS a finished thing...

K: ja, its not finished, and actually its part of a bigger project.

E: uh huh, OK

K: Do you think this kind of approach, this kind of mdel of in-service education could be useful in other subjects, and I'm thinking of for example history in the senior primary. We talked a little bit about history the other day...If you received some readings about histry, some cassettes that talked about history, some videos about teaching histry, do you think that would work,

E: It would work. Because sometimes as a teacher in an isolated school one doesn't have much to discuss with others. But when one gets this type of work, it develops ones mind and it does remind one of the things that she was taught at college many years back...When you get this type of work then you get a good inspiration...

K: SO do you think that we could do this with any subject?

E: I think so yes,

K: maths, geography...

E: It will give much help to everybody

K: OK, in your opinion, what could be done to help more teachers to become aware of the reading process and how children learn to read?

E: Well one has his or her own experience in one's own school, but when people have this type of help, altogether in different schools then there's some uniformity and there's a lot of inspiration and I think it would help everybody...

K: You think so? Because I found it quite interesting you obviously have done quite a lot of work on reading, and you've thought through that...

E: Yes,

K: So, you've got some very firm ideas of your own about what you should and shouldn't do in your reading lessons. Do you think that you have much influence on other teachers that you meet?

E: I have because I like discussing reading now that I have gone through this and whenever I meet another teachers, people that I think should be interested, I talk about it, and when I have time on a Saturday, I go to their houses and we look at the video together...Like Gettie, Nothando who was teaching at Smiling Valley was very interested, so I went to her house and showed her some of the videos and she thought she wanted to join in too...

K: And Violet, have you talked more to Violet about reading?

E: I've not met Violet lately, but I know she loves it, but she is involved with the Molteno Project. yes...And she disapproves of things like eh, type of reading like, what you call it...like a - e - oo. What you call it?

K: Phonics?

E: Phonics, ja, she doesn't believe in phonics, and she thinks individual words should not be spelt out, but I think if we teach the children a word like mama we should make sure that the child can say it and write it, then you can proceed to other words. Maybe if they learn 5 words, then let them spell it. Then after that we teach them verbs to match the words...Her ideas are different to mine, but I know she loves teaching reading

K: But you are still able to discuss some aspects of it...

E: Yes

K: You've said that you were glad that you had worked through the material because you gained quite a lot...

E: Yes,

K: Have you got...any other comments that you'd like to make generally about the material?

E: Well, it helps in this way...It makes a teacher work after school and prepare the childrens reading material not just rely on the book. Like writing out flash cards, and well, thinking of drawings that they could make to form sentences or words..and some of the, this, I combined it with the ITEC work, because we are given cards with say bread, and the word is somka next to it, and the child is able to draw bread and write the word, and since the children draw it, I think it keeps them in their mind and they don't forget the word easily, because they've actually drawn it and wrote the word. then it is matched with what I learned also from the project.

K: If we managed to get this approved, this pack, say by the DET, and it then came to you as a course. How would that affect things? If it came as a course and at the end of it you wrote an exam, or you taught a lesson and somebody watched you, and you then got a certificate or something from the University and a notch..lets say a salary notch. How does that affect the pack, let's say?

E: It would affect the pack because teaching is a profession but one also looks forward to a better pay. I think more teachers would join in and get the course, but still the children would benefit. And the teachers would also benefit, so all the better.

K: So you think it would be a useful way of providing in-service education?

E: Yes, it would be...

K: More useful than say doing matric?

E: Ja-aa, it is easier because one has the material here, and one can work it out in short parts, you know, not like having to get books in town, get books from the library and get people to discuss with in a bigger way. This one can work out quietly on one's own and practise on the children on one's own on the spot...

K: SO you liked the fact that everything was provided...

E: Yes

K: Ah that's quite interesting

E: And the children were just here to practise on and I look at the video and listen to the lessons, and read up...everything was just there for me and the video was just like discussing, I could hear everything, and I could also criticise it as I was looking it, and could even write down the criticisms as I was listening...

K: So you, clearly you've really enjoyed the video, despite the

fact that there is no machine here and you had to travel quite far to watch it...

E: No I didn't mind, because even in the location, I had nice neighbours who were willing to let me listen to the videos in their houses....

K: So you don't think that its too...what's the word, high technology. You think that video and tape and everything is quite acceptable even for farm school teachers?

E: It is, it is...I know if they were to practice or they were to learn through this, I know that Ingrid is always willing to lend them the machine. Or she could arrange or even take them to ITEC, because she is always willing...to help the teachers

K: SO having somebody there who can help is also quitre important then?

E: It is important becасue I know the teachers in the different farm schools don't have video machines, but ITEC is the mother of all those teachers and is doing everything they can

K: OK so if we, let's say for example that we wanted to work in...let's take a completely different place, let's take the Free State. Let's say we wanted to work in the Free State, are you suggesting that we would need to find a facilitator to control the project, or to help people in the schools?

E: I think that it is necessary. For one thing, as I say, the farm school teachers don't have videos and I think that there is a lot in teh videos here that inspires a teacher

K: SO if we, Let's say if we wanted to start it in the Free State...what would the job of the co-ordinator be?

E: Now and again the teachers to get together and discuss it. maybe if they were to write out...Like me, I was not good at answering the questions..but I did listen and I could even write an exam on it, but I didn't answer the tests, or assignments on it. Now if she were to help to see that they answer after every part...

K: Now, I never thought about that, because obviously the evaluation forms are only part of this phase, they are only part of the research, but there are little assignments in the articles

E: I think they are important to know how much the teacher has imbibed and what her comments are, and whether there is anything that she would like improved. That is also written in the articles, which is important.

K: SO if it was running as a course let's say in junior primary reading..then we would need to have a facilitator who goes around, helps to transport, helps to sort out the technical stuff like the videos, but is also there to sort of oversee that people are doing the work...

E: Yes, and to collect the assignments afterwards, maybe give them so much time, afterwards they should answer up and give them the things to post...

K: AH, so you are seeing it in quite a structured way...Who do you think the best people would be to give a certificate at the end of this...the DET, the university, the state, local people?

What are your feelings on that?

E: I think since the DET pays, maybe it would be their job to examine.

K: Would it have the same status? This is a university of Cape Town project. Would it have the same status if it was a DET project? Do you think? Politically...would it be still as believable, would people go for it if it was a DET thing?

E: I think it does impress them when they hear it is a university, and they think they are learning something post-matric when they do this, and they feel great, I mean something famous, it makes them excited a bit. Because some people really are not happy at the moment with the DET, so whatever is DET stuff, they think it's an overwork, you know. They don't think it is something that is going to help them. They are learning to help themselves and help the children. They will think the DET is still overloading them again. They will have that attitude.

K: SO that's a difficulty that we have to work through as we go...

Can you think of anything else that you'd like to say at this stage?

E: I think besides just getting this, taught to the teachers, they should also get some practice. Somebody comes and they do practical teaching, so they are coached also how to place the children when they are listening to a story, or listening to a lesson, we are doing that in ITEC. But it should have more stress, how the children are placed when they are looking at the teacher and when they are learning...I think also the children should do more talking sometimes and be made to be active during the lessons....

K: That's quite an outrageous view for a DET teacher

E: Laughs

K: I mean a lot of teachers in the schools believe that the children should be quiet and that they should only speak when the teacher allows them to or tells them to..It's very rigid and strict in some schools...

E: in the beginning when I was taught it was the method of the day that the children should be quiet. But with group work, with the modern teaching it can't make them quiet, they must have useful noise, that includes their teaching...not just noise for making

them happy, or that is useless. They should make noise that is connected with teaching...maybe they are reading or answering questions or one of them is calling out spelling...then they are making noise in those different groups, so much that its like when children are singing soprano and alto, they don't disturb each other, when they get used o it, they work quietly in different groups without disturbing each other. And still, even if one comes in, they are noisy but they are learning. Like drama, if they are dramatising, they ought to make some noise...

K: I agree, I just find it interesting that you have these outrageous views...OK, then, I'd just like to say thank you for all the time you've given up....

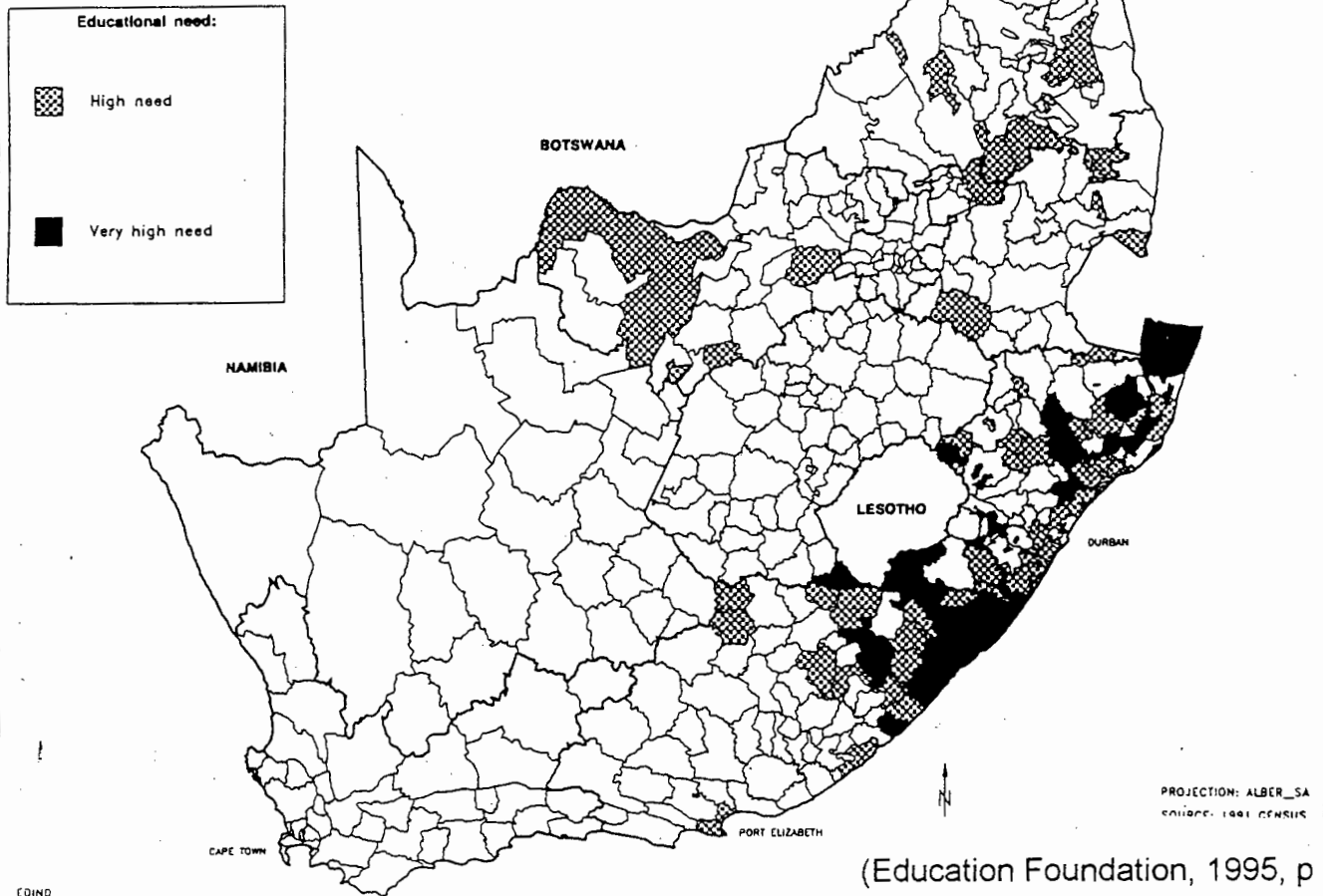
E: I am sorry also that I didn't respond well with the answering of the questionnaire...but I did read them up..and I found that easy, so I didn't think anyone would mind if I didn't answer. But actually I should have replied, I know...

K: But now you've done this one?

E: Yes, here...

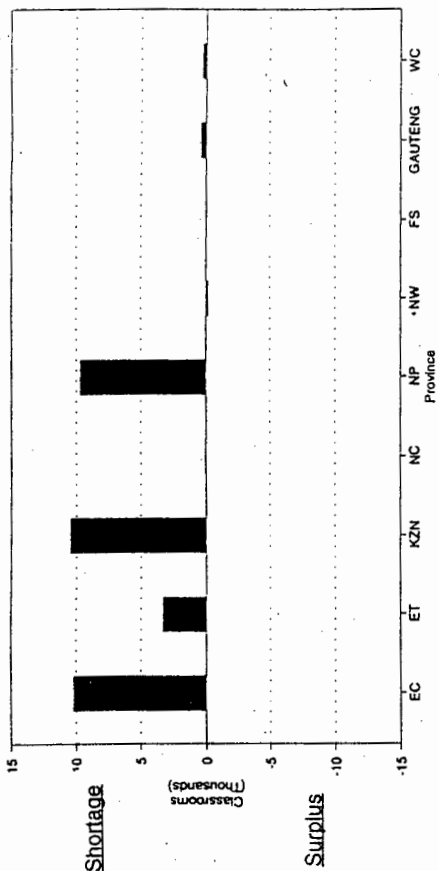
K: Good, thank you

**FIG 39: AREAS REQUIRING URGENT EDUCATION INTERVENTION**



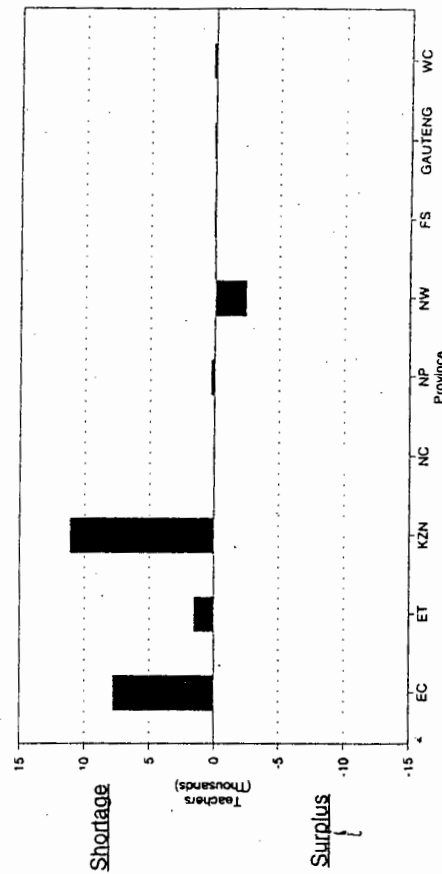
(Education Foundation, 1995, p 62)

**FIG 54: AFRICAN RESOURCE NEEDS: CLASSROOMS**



(Education Foundation, 1995, p 80)

**FIG 51: AFRICAN RESOURCE NEEDS: TEACHERS**



(Education Foundation, 1995, p 82)

## 7.2 Farm School Project

**Team:** Ingrid Daniel (Project Leader)  
Lancaster Bottoman  
Nosizwe Njeza

• **Overview:**

Breaking the educational drought in the farm school world is what the past 4 years have achieved in the farm school project. The identification of suitable land, the planting and watering of seeds, the initial waiting period for the first green-shoots and then the steady growth to a sturdy plant ably assisted by constant nurturing and watering are the norms of the farming world. The ITEC farm school project is no different. In 1988 the concept of a farm school project was mooted; 1989 saw the appointment of Ingrid Daniel as farm school researcher for a joint ITEC/Border Early Learning Centre research venture into the Border Farm School situation. This research identified isolation, lack of transport, resources and training as the fundamental problems of farm schools.

Ingrid then identified the areas where the farm schools were and established that there were 54 isolated farm schools in the region, ranging from Kei Mouth to Komga, from Kidds Beach to King William's Town. To break the isolation and



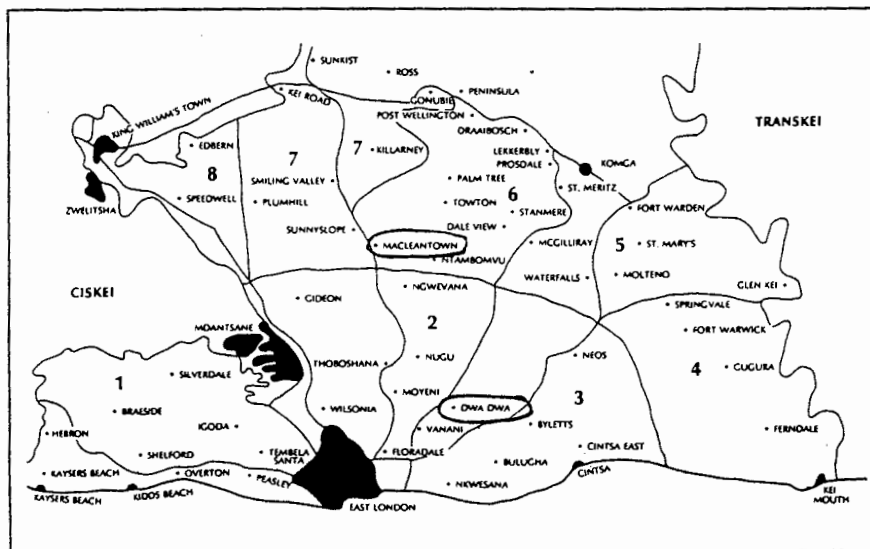
The inter-farm school drama festival is always a great highlight.

simplify the transport problems, our approach was to tackle the region by districts dividing it into 7 districts with approximately 8 schools per district.

Initial farmer suspicion, teacher apathy and transport hassles would have daunted a less determined person but Ingrid persevered and her constant liaison, outreach, nur-

ture and caring approach ensured the growth of community, parent and teacher support. With transport virtually non-existent it was impossible to expect the farm school teachers to travel to ITEC for enrichment workshops and so began the growth of the community and ITEC transport network which is now so effectively in place in 1992.

The steady growth of the ITEC farm school project is a direct result of that early reaction to the research document — i.e. to take the education to the people. Today in 6 of the 7 districts there are weekly workshops for which the teachers are collected at their schools and taken to their local district workshop venue at one central school. This immediately sorts out 3 of the identified problems, transport, isolation and lack of in-service training. Best of all, the small workshops of 8 - 10 teachers provide ideal workshop conditions for maximum results. Pop in any afternoon of the week at a workshop or visit an outlying farm school and see just what sort of individual growth and personal development is taking place in both



Farm schools served by ITEC.



Craft workshops for farm workers were held in four different districts.

teachers and students as their self confidence, self esteem and job satisfaction increase on a weekly basis.

Group work in classrooms, field trips, cross cultural drama festivals, Readathons, visits to ITEC Science fair, monthly craft workshops, fundraising functions, mothers sewing groups, literacy classes and building projects — these are just some of the many activities which have resulted from this 4 year old project under the able direction of project leader, Ingrid Daniel.

In 1992 the Farm School Project has built on the foundations laid in previous years which has resulted in expansion in both school-based and community-based programmes. The appointment of two full-time community workers and the involvement of other ITEC projects have made it possible to develop strong working relationships with Farm School communities and to see many exciting signs of progress.

**1992 Statistics:**

- 54 Farm Schools
- 7 Districts

- 50 Literacy workshops
- 21 Literacy Students
- 37 Community Meetings
- 823 Community Members attended Meetings

- 1 Sewing group
- 4 Drama Festivals
- 2 Fundraising functions attended by 750 community people
- 4 Craft workshops
- 320 Community members attended craft workshops
- 3 Building projects
- 122 Mobile Resource visits to farm schools
- 233 School visits
- 36660 Kms travelled by the 3 farm school project staff

• **School-based Programmes:**

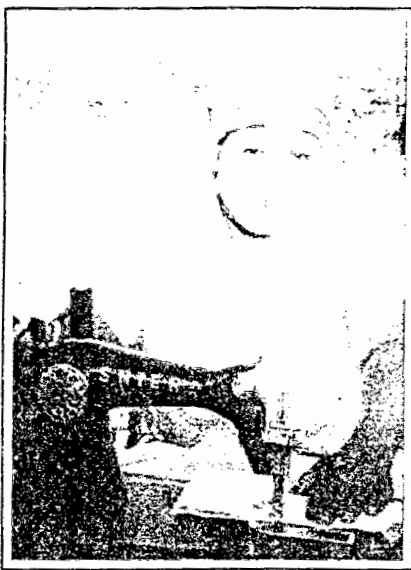
Weekly **Lower Primary workshops** provided the framework for support to the Farm Schools. The team spirit which has developed within the workshop groups encourages innovative and creative teaching and enables teachers to share ideas with one another. Farmers wives have also become involved in the workshops; in two instances running the workshop and in other instances assisting with transport which is contributing to better relationships between farmers and teachers.

Sub A workshops were started in the



Left: Farm school community worker and literacy trainer Lancaster Bottoman, and Mr Von Platen, right with two local residents in front of their newly built training room.

Kei Road and Springvale (near Komga) districts this year. The Kei Road district received a donation of books from the King William's Town Rotary Club and these books are being circulated between 8 schools. Teachers who attended workshops last year continued with Sub B workshops this year. The extent to which the Lower Primary workshops are meeting the needs of teachers can be seen by the transformation of Lower Primary classrooms in most Farm Schools.



Local parents were taught sewing skills.

The **Science Project** assisted teachers from 4 schools to implement ideas learned at quarterly workshops. Practical difficulties, such as lack of storage and display space, often prevent teachers from doing experiments. Therefore classroom visits have helped teachers overcome problems particular to their situation. Pupils from four schools were taken on environmentally-based trips by the science fieldworker. Unfortunately the concept of the environmental trail which was piloted in 1991 had to be dropped in June 1992 because of lack of funds, manpower and because 3 new private trails opened in the East London area.

The **Mobile Resource Unit** was introduced in the East Coast District this year. Library book boxes rotated once a month which supplemented



Rhodes University drama students enthrall farm school children with this field production.

existing school libraries and gave pupils access to relevant books. Teachers submitted a plan of the resources they would need for the term which were then selected from the ITEC Resource Library and lent to the schools for a two week period.

Farm Schools do not have electricity so the acquisition of a generator, television and video for the Mobile Resource Unit made it possible for teachers to show videos to enrich the subject matter they were teaching.

The successful **Drama Festival** last year, which culminated with four West Coast schools presenting their plays at Clarendon Primary School (an urban, CPA school), was repeated this year. At the end of the second term, Clarendon Std 5's visited the four Farm Schools, which was an eye-opener for many of the Clarendon pupils. A role-play workshop held in the second term gave teachers ideas to use in the preparation of their plays for the festival in the Third Term. The effort



Intense concentration as the pupils are entranced in the wildlife story presented by Rhodes University Drama Students.

both teachers and pupils put into preparing their plays was clear through the high standard of the work presented locally and at Clarendon.

Our approach is to encourage teachers to take full responsibility for the planning and organisation of events and to share with one another solutions to problems that arise. The annual report back meeting where principals reported on activities in their district inspired others to implement ideas which have been successful elsewhere.



Grounds development at Byletts farm school.

• **Community-based Programmes:** We are working towards viable, empowered rural communities which call for a reconstruction of rural areas. The lack of services and opportunities which have hampered the schools over the years have also had a debilitating effect on the adult population. Every effort is needed to overcome the problems created by historical, political, economic and social circumstances.

**Parent Committees:**

Lancaster Bottoman and Nosizwe Njeza, ITEC's community workers, worked directly with parent communities through the school committee, thereby encouraging teachers to become more involved in community affairs.

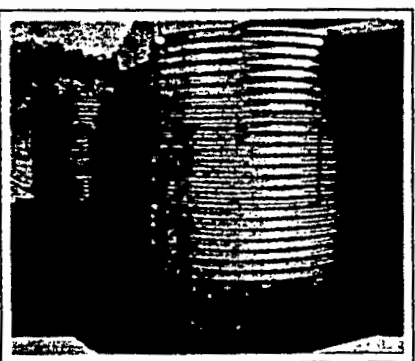
The focus of their activities has been



Developing a tidy garden to enhance the feeling of pride in one's school.

iteracy classes, building projects, skills development and crisis management. The range of activities they have been involved in, in response to the needs of the parents, has run the full gamut of emotions, from laughter and joy to sorrow and pain as they have helped evicted communities, provided funeral transport, liaised with government officials, taught brickmaking skills, helped with dispute resolutions and shared in the joy of writing and posting new literates first letters.

**Literacy:**  
Literacy classes were held at Fort Warwick and Springvale throughout the year, with 45% of the people remaining throughout and becoming literate. Many people were for-



The provision of water is a vital component

ced to drop out as a result of evictions, working long hours and jealous husbands! Learners at Springvale have recently built a hut at Mvusi which is to be used for adult education. Literacy classes have recently been started at the Ducats community, a recently evicted community which had to relocate completely.

**Buildings:**  
The opening of the first two farm high schools in the area has encouraged schools with Std 4 as the highest standard, to now offer Std 5, with a possibility of entrance to a high school later. Lancaster has assisted Sunny Slope to build a classroom with bricks provided by the farmers. Parents and children at Nugu were taught how to make mud-blocks to be used for building a pre-school.



The development of Income generating skills became a reality for Mr Mtutu who has initiated a successful shoe making business.

**Income Generating Skills:**  
Individuals were assisted with income-generating skills. Parents from Bulugha have been taught to sew and are now selling some basic products to a local craft shop. We have assisted a farm worker with the necessary business skills to establish a small shoe-making business.

**Networking:**  
Brent (Border Rural Education Networking Team) which was formed last year has been very active this year. Organisations brought representatives from self-help groups they were working with, to a craft workshop to demonstrate their skills and to inspire others. Craft workshops were held in four districts which united parents, teachers



Project leader, Ingrid Daniel, assisting students making a windbreak from fertiliser bags for the cultural festival.

and farmers wives in learning new self-sufficiency skills.

**District Associations:**  
In the Komga districts, farmers and teachers have used the committee they formed last year to establish a sports league, a bursary fund and a rotating building fund which has assisted three schools to build new classrooms. The committee also organised a meeting to discuss the implications of a decision about the medium of instruction.

The insecurity of Farm Schools and farm workers under the present legislation has dominated much of this year's activity with three schools being forced to move. At Nugu we have worked closely with parents



Cooking facilities are limited.

and teachers to find a new site for their houses and for the school. CPA provided land for the families who had to move and ITEC fieldworkers have assisted the community to establish community structures, and pre-school and adult education. DET have given permission for the school to move to the empty Thorn

Park Farm School. This community have really triumphed over their hardship and in doing so have developed the confidence to tackle any new problem that may arise.

• **New Adult Training Centre:**

When all visitors were banned from Springvale it became clear that the school would have to move. Neighbouring farmers donated a piece of land to establish an education centre for pre-school, primary and adult classes. An educational trust has been established to oversee the development of the centre.

• **The drive towards Empowerment:**

The developmental approach we adopt makes the empowerment of individuals our goal. Our role, therefore, is to develop relationships with people to assist them to acquire the skills they need to overcome whatever obstacles they face. Rural life, and farm life in particular, presents many hardships whose solutions lie in working against the dominant forces of our economy



Workshopping interaction.

and society. There are no instant solutions, but we have been inspired and encouraged by the response of farm workers and teachers to any opportunity for growth and

change. It is the people who utilise outside support to overcome problems specific to their community who are laying the foundations for viable rural life.



Blockmaking Project at Nugu Farm school.



**CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**

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Address correspondence to:

23 July 1992

I am sending you video cassette 3.1 - Using storybooks in the classroom. Please try to watch this video as soon as possible.

The video is divided into three sections:

Section 1: Reading to the class	15 mins
Section 2: Teaching story reading	35 mins
Section 3: Individualised reading	32 mins

Total viewing time: 1hr 22 mins

This makes it a fairly long video, but you can watch it in three parts and think about each one separately if you like.

I am anxious to know what you think of it, so please complete the evaluation form and post it back to me in the envelope supplied. I think you will find it very helpful because this is what you asked for when we got together to listen to the audio tape.

I will be visiting you on 10 August, and will be staying for that week. I think this will be my last visit for the year, so if you need anything else, please let me know before then. I will be bringing some more story books, the new ones are in English as well.

I hope things are going well and that your children are reading more and more.

regards

---

**JOHANNESBURG:**  
66 Nelson Road, Booysens 2091  
P O Box 2083, Southdale 2135  
  
Tel: (011) 433-1888/9  
433-1896/7  
Fax: (011) 680-1680

**BETHLEHEM:**  
P O Box 430  
Bethlehem 9700  
  
Tel: (01431) 34050

**CAPE TOWN:**  
Grimley Building  
14 Tuin Plein,  
Cape Town 8001  
Tel: (021) 461-8223  
461-8235

## USING STORY BOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM

### SECTION 1 - READING TO THE CLASS

Why you should read to the class

- listening pleasure
- talking and thinking about stories and life
- children become familiar with a range of language
- learn about the conventions of storying
- learn prediction skills
- more relaxed, essentially for enjoyment

Types of Books that are suitable:

- range of different books
- books you enjoy
- books your pupils enjoy
- long stories and short stories
- books that the children can't read themselves

Examples of books which you can use:-

- talk through the books

Teacher you are about to see is reading a short story to her class so she finishes it one lesson

<Nomvuyo>

The next teacher is reading a long story to his class, so he treats it like a serial and reads it over a few lessons.

<Ray>

Teachers who have realised how valuable this experience is for the children do it every day, even if it is just for 15 minutes. Children who do listen to stories every day are conscious of the variety of ways in which language is used and the affective and emotional life experience of ...

### Section 2 - Teaching stories to the class

Introduction

- why shouldn't children continue to learn basic vocab? What is the value of reading these stories as a group?
- reading for meaning, what does that mean? refer script

Why we do this

- for children to become competent readers they must read extended text, not just isolated words and sentences
- also need to do this as quickly as possible so that they can apply what they are learning about reading

# Appendix K

PREP Brochure - 1992

## THE PREP RESOURCE PACK

- \* is a distance learning Pack.
- \* nurtures self-directed learning.
- \* brings good teachers and good teaching to other teachers.
- \* encourages teachers to make decisions based on their own particular constraints.
- \* enhances collaborative learning.
- \* aims at primary school teachers across the spectrum from farm schools through to urban schools.
- \* takes into account the prevailing differences in schooling conditions such as big classes, combined classes and poorly resourced classrooms.
- \* covers both mother tongue literacy and second/foreign language literacy.
- \* is shaped by the questions, problems, wishes, requests and intentions of a vast number of primary school teachers.
- \* is a bottom-up approach to curriculum innovation.
- \* has an assessment procedure for certification purposes.

If you or your Institution is innovating in the curriculum for teacher education and feel this course can be used for your teachers and students, we would like to hear from you.

### ENQUIRIES:

Dr Wendy Finagan  
Director: Primary Education Project  
School of Education  
University of Cape Town  
Rondebosch  
7700

Phone: (021) 650 2767

Sponsored by Anglo-American Chairman's Fund and  
Rockefeller Brothers Fund (USA).

Teaching  
Reading and  
Writing  
- a distance learning  
Resource Pack

## Introduction

After six years of sustained and rigorous research the Primary Education Project (PREP) has developed a Resource Pack for the professional development of teachers. It is a course in the theory and practice of reading and writing instruction. Colleges of Education and Universities can use the Resource Pack in distance learning courses or in on-campus didactic/methodology and language courses.

The Resource Pack is powerful and complete enough to be used for the certification of teachers. It has a course book, video cassettes, audio cassettes, some curriculum materials (as examples), and a suggested cumulative assessment procedure for examining teachers who complete the course.

The video cassettes show children and teachers in action, the audio cassettes discuss classroom issues at a conversational/tutorial level, and the book contains the theory and further illustrations of curriculum practice.

The Pack serves as a model for the possibilities of effective and efficient training of teachers. The Pack can be used by a single teacher, a school, a group of schools or a region. It is anticipated that the course will take three school terms to complete. Teachers (or student teachers) are expected to innovate in their lessons as they work through the Pack. The Pack, therefore, is not suitable for rote learning. The Pack has an open approach to teaching and learning recognising that teachers work under different constraints. The emphasis of the Pack is on the understanding of the theory and practice of the reading process. In this way teachers can make informed decisions and gain some control over their work. We note that when conditions allow for self-control and self-learning, change in classroom practice is more remarkable and more potent.

The PREP Resource Pack has been tested in a pilot study in rural and farm schools nationally, and in urban and peri-urban schools. Teachers in the pilot study have shown that a Resource Pack of this nature can improve classroom practice markedly.

## Minimum requirements

Each school or group of schools would require access to an audio recorder for local and sustained use.

Each area would require a centre to which teachers could go, as often as required, to view the videos. This centre could be a school, a Training Centre (eg a sugar mill), a church, a community centre, a learning centre (eg a resource centre or adult learning centre), a teachers' centre, an education department office/facility. Teachers in farm schools would require transport to this centre. These visits could take the form of a 'summer', 'autumn' and 'winter' etc school.

Each teacher would require a personal copy of the course book.

## List of resources in the PREP Resource Pack

A A course book: *Teaching reading and writing in junior primary classrooms*.

### Contents:

- 1 Introduction.
- 2 What is reading?
- 3 Two popular approaches to the teaching of reading.
- 4 Developing a concept of print.
- 5 Teaching reading for a concept of print.
- 6 Teaching reading for reading competency: using the class reader.
- 7 Teaching for reading competency: using story books in the classroom.
- 8 Classroom management.
- 9 Reading assessment.
- 10 Developing written language.
- 11 Teaching for language competency.
- 12 Teachers tell their stories.
- 13 Language as THE medium of instruction.

B Video cassettes to complement the course book.

- 1 Introduction.
- 2 What is reading?
- 3 Two popular approaches to teaching reading in schools.
- 4 Developing a concept of print.
- 5 The language experience approach.
- 6 Using story books in the classroom.
- 7 Children writing.
- 8 Theme teaching.

C Audio cassettes to supplement the course book.

- 1 How did I learn to read?
- 2 What do you mean 'behaviourist' and 'psycholinguistic'?
- 3 Teaching the concepts of 'concept of print'.
- 4 Teachers acting authoritatively.
- 5 Debating assessment.
- 6 The writing process.
- 7 What is curriculum anyway?
- 8 The interdependence of language and thought.

D Curriculum materials.

- 1 Twenty little story books graded approximately in four levels of difficulty - in English and indigenous languages.
- 2 Eight stories graded approximately into four levels of difficulty. Each story is presented as a series of charts for teaching story reading to the class.

E Cumulative assignments and examination papers for assessment.

Note: While the PREP Resource Pack keeps the most disadvantaged children and teachers as its central focus in terms of accessibility and possibility, it does NOT discriminate. In other words the Resource Pack could be used with all teachers and student teachers wishing to learn about the reading and writing process. Indeed it draws its material from the spectrum of South African schools and teachers where good practice was and is located.

- books which have a picture for each event or sequence of the story
- I find that 16 pages is the max.
- egs What a Tale & Hungry Giant, why do they work?
- Hungry Cat - straightforward one to one
- Hot Hippo -

Books that are not suitable:

- too much text eg Mrs Goat
- Too many things happening on the page eg Owl at School
- Text is less interesting than the pictures eg Teacher went Bananas
- No sequence of events eg <one word one picture>

### Section 3 - Individualised Reading

Introduction

- define individualised
- types of books
- egs and explanation

Children's Behaviour

- choose books themselves
- can read silently by themselves, to the teacher, to a partner, to an older pupil, to a parent or child carer
- for pleasure and enjoyment

Insert video extracts with comments like; doesn't this look good? etc

<footage of reading room>

<footage of Nzukie's classroom>

Teacher's Behaviour

<Stella in reading room>

<Nombuyiselo in her classroom>

- include information from Article 4
- refer to the article AT THE END OF THE TAPE!!!!

One way which you can teach the extended text right from sub A and right through JP is to teach the story to the whole class at the same time.

In order to do this the pictures and the text have to be big enough for all the children to see them

Big or enlarged stories can be done in different ways

- some publishers make big books eg Big Toe
- can enlarge books on a photocopier eg Herbert and Harry
- you can copy pictures from a book and make your own big book eg Tusk Tusk
- Most teachers make charts of each page of the story eg Hungry Giant with the text on the page, What a Tale with the text on separate strips.

You can use crayons or kokis or paints as long as the pictures are clear enough for children to use from a distance. Some teachers use older children and talented children to draw for them.

Watch how some teachers use these stories

Sub A and B combined

First year of English, first time seen story

First step in Mother tongue sub A, First year of English

<Cranburn> - Wendy

Step by step with voice over

Once children can recognise and match different sections of print you challenge them in other ways

For example in mother tongue:

<Winifred>

step by step with voice

Wendy saying that its a weeks lessons

And for example in English

<Gertrude>

step by step with voice

Because it is good to have a whole language approach, the stories are used for other language activities eg Oral, close procedure

These teachers do this because they believe that :

- to teach rhythmes of language
- to teach children to read fluently and with speed
- to teach them to read sensibly and with understanding
- to show children how to read a story
- to teach children to use picture cues to help them to read for meaning
- it is an enjoyable shared experience for children in which all children, weak and good readers, can participate.

Types of story that are suitable: