

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF LITERACY AND BASIC EDUCATION

State of the art in England

Estera Mozina

Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

The following report has been compiled as part of the TRAIN “Professionalization of Literacy and Basic Education – Basic Modules for Teacher Training”, an EU Socrates Grundtvig funded project, in collaboration with partners from Germany, Cyprus, France and Slovenia.

The report details the background to adult literacy policy and national strategy in England and the current structures in place for the professionalization of adult literacy teachers including the different types of qualifications available and the national strategy for teacher education within the adult literacy and basic skills sector.

The information contained in the report has been compiled from a number of government publications, publications from stakeholders in the adult literacy and basic skills sector and readings and texts from academic researchers in the field.

Information gathering for this report took place over a period from January 2007 to the end of June 2007 and involved primarily internet-based research and study of the available relevant literature on the adult literacy and adult basic education.

2. Development of Literacy and Basic Education in England

2.1 Overview of development, national policy, strategies and action plans

England has national adult literacy strategy known widely as Skills for Life Strategy since 2001¹, integral part of it has been Skills for life teacher² education strategy. Skills for Life is the Government’s strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills of the population. It was expected that the comprehensive strategy for adult literacy and numeracy would deliver radical improvements in standards and achievements. High investments were devoted especially to a high quality training and support for teachers and in the tools they need to do their job – consistent national standards, a common core curriculum, relevant materials and new National Tests as benchmarks for all literacy and numeracy achievement.

The strategy was created as a top government plan on the basis of the national report on adult literacy from 1997, carried out as a part of International Adult literacy Survey (IALS). The report stated that 22% of population of working age in Great Britain performed at a level 1 on the prose scale, 30% at a level 2, 31% at a level 3 and 17% at level 4/5. Roughly 20% of population at a level 1 represent around 7 million people with poor literacy and numeracy skills, including around half a million or more who struggle with English because it is not their first language (Carey et al. 1997, p 8). Those seven million is estimated to have more or less severe problems with what is generally called ‘functional literacy’ and ‘functional numeracy’: “the ability to read, write and speak in English, and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and society in general” (Moser Report, 1999, p 2).

However, for many people adult literacy education in England (and Wales) began in 1974 with the Adult Literacy Campaign known in its most public manifestation as the television program, “On the Move”, and at the same time resources were allocated to establish projects and public resources, at the same time Adult Literacy Resource Agency (ALRA). The

¹ Skills for Life Strategy: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/bank.cfm?section=211>

² Various terms are used to represent the work of those who teach in the sector. The word teacher is used throughout this document as a generic term to represent teachers, tutors, trainers, facilitators, instructors, lecturers, practitioners.

majority of tutors who were trained to respond to the people coming forward for tuition were volunteers and they thought in local community centres, schools and homes. The curriculum was negotiated with the learner and related to their, need to know' as well as to their interests and hobbies. There were no standards, no qualification framework for the skills, knowledge and understanding developed. By the end of the 1970s literacy has broadened to include numeracy and the term 'basic education' evolved. At the same time unemployment in the industrialized world escalated and the manpower Services Commission (MSC) began funding preparatory courses in basic skills. A divide began to emerge between the "... liberal curriculum, a philosophy of informal, student-centred teaching and assessment..." (Hamilton, 1996, p 154), which is still so present in adult literacy research and practice as well as in adult literacy tuition in England. During 1980s a number of Governments sponsored programmes focused on unemployed people and appeared to adopt a philosophy which suggested that they were responsible for their unemployment and therefore should gain the skills needed for a new economy. Most programmes included basic skills tuition and success was measured in employment outcomes. A different attitude seemed to influence the student-centred approach, which tried to remove the blame from the learners to external factors and emphasize new opportunities for learning in a different environment using methods unlike their previous experiences (Charnley and Witnhall, 1989). During the 1980s ESOL provision was added to the brief of the newly-formed Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU). The need to consider different approaches to providing basic skills tuition for them, geared to their particular interests and requirements, was established. Albsu indicated that a wide range of skills and abilities in speaking, listening, reading and writing English was dependent upon previous education opportunities.

Accreditation for work in basic skills was developed for both staff and learners at this time. Volunteer tutors were a feature of the adult literacy campaign and continue to be an important part of the provision. Training for them and paid tutors was accredited by City and Guilds, as was the introduction of Wordpower and Numberpower as accreditation routes for learners. The links to national Vocational Qualifications were evident in these developments and thus, this could be welcomed for staff, questions were raised about vocationalisation of the curriculum for the learners. The focus on learning basic skills for employment and economic purposes appeared to be endorsed. Similarly the later Moser Report of 1999 seemed to emphasize the economic drivers for adult basic education in the light of global competitiveness and national productivity (Moser Report 1999). This emphasis appeared to ignore the concept that literacy, language and numeracy are about social practices, exchanges between people, cultural activities and sense-making (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič, 2000). Many tutors preferred to use the accreditation routes offered by the Open College Network (OCN). These provided a wide range of unitized opportunities and the possibility of negotiating and creating accredited programmes based on learner's interests and requirements.

Until the introduction of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, most provision of basic skills tuition had been made through Local Education Authorities (LEAs). This was usually due to the commitment of elected members and LEA officers and to the passions of tutors and managers in the FE institutions, rather than a systematic commitment to this area of work through a national policy framework. The Act enabled further education colleges to attract funding for basic skills activities in the same way as other curriculum areas. The mainstream status was welcomed and its previous marginalization acknowledged (Moser, 1999). However this also led to a further focus on qualifications or accredited learning routes in the implementation of the funding methodology and the requirements of the Management Information System, in order to optimize funding for institutions.

The results of a international adult literacy survey in 1998, provided profiles on literacy, language and numeracy in Britain and compared them with other nations, indication the necessity for countries to be skilled for competition in a global economy. The data informed the Moser report (1999) which recommended the introduction of new standards and a new basic skills curriculum as well as national test. The drive for improved quality provision was charac-

terized by the introduction of revised Quality Mark (BSA), a staff development program known as the Basic Skills Quality Initiative (2000), and Skills for Life Strategy announced by the new Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit (DfEE 2001). Goals were set which included "...helping 750 000 people improve basic skills by 2004". This figure has been later revised to 1,5 million people by the year 2007. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) published standards for adult literacy (QCA, 2000) and the core curriculum was published in 2001 (BSA, 2001).

Whilst the movement of literacy education in England from the campaign of the 1970s to the centre stage in 2000 was to be welcomed, a number of tensions and questions arose for providers, practitioners and learners of basic skills.

Structure of Literacy and Basic Education in England

As stated in the introduction prior to launch of the national strategy adult literacy tuition and support was delivered by the local authorities, Further Education Colleges and Community and voluntary organizations throughout England. Since the launch of the national skills for life strategy in 2001 there has been a significant increase in funding into adult literacy and numeracy services. This increased level of support and funding has brought some changes in the structures around which provision is delivered. The Government has been supporting this expansion of training provision and improvements in quality with significant additional funding. In 2000-01, £241million is being spent on literacy and numeracy by the Department for Education and Employment. The funding available will increase by 27% in 2001-02, by a further 14% in 2002-03 and by at least a further 7% 2003-04. This means that by 2003-04 there was an increase of funding over 55%. In addition, the Government's Welfare to Work budget was supporting literacy and numeracy learning for unemployed people with significant funds. On top of this and money from sources such as the Adult and Community Learning Fund, and the significant European funding which is available, millions more each year have been invested in adult literacy and numeracy by other government and community programmes aimed at economic and social regeneration. For example, direct expenditure on prison education and library provision.

The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit has been co-ordinating the campaign nationally, working closely with the Learning and Skills Council and other organisations which have a central interest in driving forward the strategy and contributing to national targets. The Unit has been providing advice and materials, including case studies, for partners' campaigns while ensuring that the overall targeting, branding and messages remain consistent across the country.

These resources represented a substantial investment, and gave training providers the confidence to recruit new learners, secure in the knowledge that funding was available. Providers were also guaranteed funding to help them assess the learning needs of literacy and numeracy students. Providers of literacy and numeracy training also received an extra 10% on their funding from the Learning and Skills Council for all learners on basic skills provision. In addition, from 2002-03 all providers, including community and voluntary organisations, private training providers and employers can be funded directly by the Learning and Skills Council as well as through existing partnership and contracting arrangements with colleges and other adult institutions.

All literacy and numeracy skills education has been provided free of charge to the learner, no matter who provides it, where it is provided, or in what form. In practice, however, learners often face additional costs such as registration fees, certification charges, charges for library membership or for the use of materials or equipment, which can act as a deterrent. Some learners also face incidental costs or inconveniences such as travel or childcare, which can be a major obstacle to participation, particularly among those on low incomes. All literacy and numeracy students were eligible for Individual Learning Accounts which covered the costs of books, examination fees and similar costs. Simple guides are provided, for all literacy and

numeracy skills learners, on the financial and other support they are entitled to, such as Individual Learning Accounts or money from access funds.

Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit, based in the Department for Education and Employment and supported by a regional field force has been coordinating the planning and delivery of literacy and numeracy skills provision is co-ordinated between the different arms of government and is coherent across all national and local policies and provision. A crucial role has also Learning and Skills Council, which plan and fund the great majority of literacy and numeracy provision. The Council monitor progress against the national targets and establish its own basic skills targets on which reports directly to ministers. At national level, the Council builds on the best of existing provision and develop new, attractive and flexible learning opportunities that draw in people unused to learning. At local level, the Council set and monitors local targets, and ensures that they are met by funding and co-ordinating high-quality provision to meet local skills needs and by removing obstacles to participation in literacy and numeracy skills education.

Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate leads the inspection of all literacy and numeracy skills provision, producing an agreed handbook on the specific arrangements and quality criteria required for continued funding. Both inspectorates report annually to ministers on the quality of literacy and numeracy skills provision.

The Basic Skills Agency, with its remit to innovate, develop and disseminate best practice, has been also at the centre of literacy and numeracy strategy. In addition to its work with schools, the Agency strives to raise standards among adult learners by ensuring that all those who work in the provision of literacy, language and numeracy are given high-quality support and professional advice.

But many other national and local agencies also have a critical input. Local authorities, The Employment Service, the Connexions Service, employers, unions, further education colleges, adult learning centres, learndirect, voluntary bodies and private training providers all have a central role to play in delivery and support. Other organisations such as the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, the Learning and Skills Development Agency and Regional Development Agencies also have a critical role to play in supporting implementation of the strategy.

As important are those parts of government which do not have education and training as part of their core business. For example: the Prison Service, the National Health Service, the Benefits Agency, the Probation Service, Public Libraries, the Police, the Courts, local authority services and even the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency, all come into contact with people who need to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Others who receive funds from government – from sports clubs to residents' associations – are also in daily contact with people who find reading, writing or calculating difficult. So too are those on the high street, including supermarkets and shopping centres, as well as smaller retailers and small traders. A crucial part of our strategy is to make sure that all those who work with the public are able to support and encourage people with poor literacy and numeracy skills back into learning.

Finally other organizations such as the National Research Centre for Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) in the UK and the Quality Assurance Agency in the UK form key stakeholders in the English national strategy.

3. Concept of Teaching Literacy and Basic Education

The history of adult literacy and numeracy education in England in the past 30 years has seen a gradual move away from the philosophy of the literacy campaign in the 1970s which ,challenged the boundaries of adult education by insisting on outreach and a diversity of settings (and drew on the practices and resources of voluntary organizations...' (Hamilton 1996). The move has been away from the more liberal and radical traditions in adult educa-

tion towards 'new realism', or vocationalism, which has shifted the focus away from any sense of social purpose in adult education to an image conceived in 'primarily institutional and functional terms' (Benn 1997). Nowadays, literacy, numeracy and ESOL are highly charged in political, economical and cultural terms, and very different models of literacy and numeracy are constructed and employed in research policy and practice context today in England. Improving the literacy levels of workers is seen as an essential aspect of economic advancement. Literacy as a commodity becomes a central to a political agenda that links literacy with economic success. The Skills for life strategy can be regarded as a managerial response to that. Outside this symbiotic and straightforward relationship of literacy and economic success, groups of researchers and practitioners have been effectively developing a powerful and influential new body of knowledge on adult literacy as a social practice. Similarly than in Scotland and Wales, prior to 2001, given the diversity of provision of adult literacy support, adult literacy tutors came from a wide range of backgrounds including traditional second level teaching backgrounds, adult basic education and community education. There were no standards for appointment to a position that involved adult literacy support and qualifications required depended on the type of organization that was involved in the delivery of adult literacy tuition and support and their general standards for appointment to full time and part time positions.

3.1 National Strategy for literacy teacher training

As a result of Skills for Life strategy from 2000 all teachers in the post-16 sector have been required to gain teaching qualifications, with minimum standards of literacy and numeracy, whilst specialist teachers of literacy and numeracy are required to achieve subject specific teaching qualifications. New qualifications were introduced in England from September 2002 for teachers of adult literacy and numeracy. These programmes are at what was then referred to as Level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)* and were based on the subject specifications for teachers of adult literacy and numeracy developed by the DfES, working with the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO). A third subject specification for teachers of ESOL was introduced from 2003. For ITE, these were offered jointly with a teaching certificate, based on the generic FENTO Standards for teaching and supporting learning in further education (FE). These programmes were the object of an NRDC study (Lucas et al. 2004) which set out to investigate their implementation. The report concluded that 'the main problem experienced by the course developers was bringing the two types of knowledge (subject knowledge and pedagogic knowledge) together'. The study showed that institutions were adopting a variety of approaches to this, along a continuum from complete integration, through partial integration of the two types of knowledge, to teaching both types of knowledge separately. There was also some concern that the focus on subject knowledge was at the expense of teaching how to teach. Some trainees, especially those with less teaching experience, showed concern about what they saw as a lack of connection between theory and practice.

But the face of Skills for Life teacher education, and of teacher education for the UK learning and skills sector as a whole, continues to change. Recent developments and reforms have focused on upskilling and professionalizing the existing teaching workforce and ensuring adequate and continuing supply of competent literacy, numeracy and ESOL teachers. In 2004 DfES introduced a wider reform of teachers education 'Equipping our teachers for the future: Reforming Initial Teacher Training for the Learning and Skills Sector', with a simultaneous review of teaching standards and subject specification. From September 2007, all new entrants to teaching in the sector will be required to complete a new award which will prepare them to teach. This is a small introductory course which will give a threshold status to teach. It will be mandatory for any new teacher who teaches publicly funded provision. Those for whom teaching/ tutoring/ training is their major role, will be required to progress to a further qualification appropriate to role. New qualifications have been developed based on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) model i.e. credit based with core and optional units at

different levels, so that qualifications can be built flexibly and in a way that can meet the range of needs in the sector. The teaching qualifications which have been developed are:

The Level Three / Four Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (formerly known as the 'Passport'), has been tested and trialled since September 2006 in England. This award has been designed to provide either pre-service or in service (induction) training, with a minimum of 30 hours of guided learning and an additional 30 of self directed study.

The Level Three / Four Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector is a new qualification to represent the **associate teacher role**, that is a teaching role with fewer responsibilities, as described in the interim guidance for awarding institutions, qualification will also be tested and trialled both as a general qualification and contextualised e.g. for Centrex police training.

The Level Five / Six / Seven Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector is the equivalent qualification to the Certificate of Education/ Professional or Post Graduate Certificate of Education. The qualification representing **the full teacher role**, gained at level five and above, will lead to QTLS status – Qualified Teacher, Learning and Skills. To gain QTLS status, new teachers will provide evidence of effective professional practice, and maintain 'good standing' through recorded continuing professional development (CPD).

Research has identified that there are a number of teacher related roles within the sector. Consultation will be continuing during 2007 with stakeholders, so that these roles can be clarified and accurately represented by appropriate qualifications, which might take the form of mini-awards to recognise specific roles e.g. Assessor, or be made up of a combination of credits gained within the teacher qualification framework and credits from other related frameworks e.g. Management and Leadership, Supporting Learning, to form customised qualifications which reflect the role undertaken. There will be a system in place to recognise existing teacher qualifications, to eradicate the need for people to repeat work already completed, and to identify gaps where they occur.

The document *Equipping our Teachers for the Future: Reforming Initial Teacher Training for the Learning and Skills Sector* set out proposals to contribute to the professionalism of teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector, through the development of new standards and qualifications to reflect teacher roles. These will replace the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO). As part of this same reform, LLUK was commissioned by the DfES to review the FENTO subject specifications for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL at levels 3 and 4 *(level Four equates to the first year of a Foundation Degree or the first year of a 2 year part time Cert Ed. Level 5 roughly equates to the full Cert Ed. Level 6/7 equates to the PGCE) of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). As subject learning and teaching was to be included, the approach taken was to produce two documents detailing the application of the professional standards for teachers of English (literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (numeracy). The new professional standards and their application for teachers of English (literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (numeracy) underpin the new qualifications developed for specialist teachers.

The development of the new professional standards represents a vital first step in the development of a new framework of qualifications for teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England. Although they can be used generally as a measure of performance of teachers, they have been written as overarching standards and do not define any requirement with regard to initial training or continuing professional development of teachers. Neither do they identify any level deemed appropriate for particular teaching roles or stages of a teacher's career. Any such requirement is detailed within legislation, LLUK guidance, and qualifications developed for particular teaching roles.

As part of the reform, LLUK has also developed applications of the professional standards to support the development of new subject specific initial teaching qualifications for teachers of English (Literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (Numeracy).

- Application of the professional standards for teachers of English (Literacy and ESOL)

- Application of the professional standards for teachers of Mathematics (Numeracy)

These documents replace the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) Subject Specifications for Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL at level 42. Awarding institutions will use them to develop qualifications for these teachers. They detail the knowledge, understanding and professional practice to be demonstrated by teachers in relation to English (Literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (Numeracy).

LLUK is introducing an entry requirement to join programmes leading to qualifications for teachers of English (Literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (Numeracy). Potential teacher trainees will need to evidence level 3 personal skills in English or Mathematics as appropriate. This entry requirement will apply to all diploma qualifications for teachers of English (Literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (Numeracy) detailed in this document. Entry criteria will be made available to awarding institutions in April 2007. Awarding institutions will be supported by a guidance document on evidencing the requirement.

Teachers of English (Literacy and ESOL) and Mathematics (Numeracy) will need to gain an appropriate qualification(s) for teaching their subject specialism. Detailed below are three routes to achieving the required qualification(s):

1. The initial route subject specific: Designed for teachers, also new entrants, in the workforce who are unqualified, they have neither a recognised generic teaching qualification nor a recognised subject qualification).

2. The additional route: Designed for teachers in the workforce who are part qualified. They have a recognised generic teaching qualification but no recognised subject qualification in literacy, numeracy or ESOL, new to the profession who are unable to find an initial subject specific route available (as detailed above), new to the profession who are unable to find a concurrent route available (as detailed below), those holding a Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector that is not contextualised to one of the specialisms within Skills for Life, those holding a recognised subject specific teaching qualification who wish to teach an additional Skills for Life subject the title.

3. The concurrent route: Designed to the profession who are unable to find an initial subject specific route available (as detailed above), teachers in the workforce who are unqualified. They have neither a recognised generic teaching qualification nor a recognised subject qualification.

4. Review of Literacy Teachers Competences

As stated in the previous section, from September 2007, new qualifications will be introduced for the initial training of teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England. Teachers of English - Literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Mathematics (Numeracy) will continue to be required to gain subject specific teaching qualifications. Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) is supporting the development of a range of flexible routes to achieving these qualifications.

In Equipping our teachers for the future the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) outlined proposals for the reform of initial teacher education in the lifelong learning sector in England. As part of this reform, a new teaching qualifications framework has been developed by LLUK. LLUK has developed new overarching professional standards for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector. These professional standards will underpin all professional development for teachers, including these initial qualifications. The new professional standards for teachers describe consistent performance in terms of teachers' knowledge, understanding and professional practice. As the new professional standards are 'over-

arching' and apply to all teachers, it was considered appropriate to produce an application of these standards for teachers of Literacy and ESOL. The new professional standards detail the knowledge, understanding and professional practice for all teachers in any role. LLUK is developing a similar application document for specialist 'Learning for living and work' teachers. The professional standards detail the values, knowledge, understanding and professional practice expected of all teachers in the lifelong learning sector in England. This information is detailed in domains. The domains reflect the functions of the teacher's roles. There are six domains:

Domain A	Professional values and practice
Domain B	Learning and teaching
Domain C	Specialist learning and teaching
Domain D	Planning for learning
Domain E	Assessment for learning
Domain F	Access and progression.

An attempt was made to detail subject the values, knowledge, understanding and professional practice expected by those specialist teachers.

Professional values and practice:

English (Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector value:

- All learners, their progress and development, their learning goals and aspirations and the experience they bring to their learning,
- Learning, its potential to benefit people emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically, and its contribution to community sustainability,
- Equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce, and the community,
- Reflection and evaluation of their own practice and their continuing professional development as teachers,
- Collaboration with other individuals, groups and/or organisations with a legitimate interest in the progress and development of learners.

English (Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- The application of agreed codes of practice and the maintenance of a safe environment,
- Improving the quality of their practice English.

Learning and teaching:

(Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- Maintaining an inclusive, equitable and motivating learning environment,
- Applying and developing own professional skills to enable learners to achieve their goals.
- Communicating effectively and appropriately with learners to enhance learning,
- Collaboration with colleagues to support the needs of learners,
- Using a range of learning resources to support learners.

Specialist learning and teaching:

English (Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- Understanding and keeping up to date with current knowledge in respect of own specialist area.
- Enthusing and motivating learners in own specialist area,
- Fulfilling the statutory responsibilities associated with own specialist area of teaching,
- Developing good practice in teaching own specialist area.

Planning for learning:

Teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- Planning to promote equality, support diversity and to meet the aims and learning needs of learners,
- Learner participation in the planning of learning,
- Evaluation of own effectiveness in planning learning.

Assessment for learning:

English (Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- Designing and using assessment as a tool for learning and progression,
- Assessing the work of learners in a fair and equitable manner.
- Learner involvement and shared responsibility in the assessment process,
- Using feedback as a tool for learning and progression,
- Working within the systems and quality requirements of the organisation in relation to assessment and monitoring of learner progress.

Access and progression:

English (Literacy and ESOL) teachers in the lifelong learning sector are committed to:

- Encouraging learners to seek initial and further learning opportunities and to use services within the organisation,
- Providing support for learners within the boundaries of the teacher role,
- Maintaining own professional knowledge in order to provide information on opportunities for
- progression in own specialist area,
- A multi-agency approach to supporting development and progression opportunities, language and literacy assessment process.

4.1 Good practice in the field of teacher training

UK has foreseen one of the major development in the area of basic skill which influenced development in other parts of Europe. For example the adult literacy research and development work in other EU countries has been inspired by the developments in UK, especially in the area of targeted provision and teacher training. It is worth to mention three aspects:

First, following the release of the Skills for life strategy in 2001 and the government commitment to a national coherent framework in the field of adult literacy, a new emphasis was put on the training and professional development of adult literacy teachers in England. It was reinforced by the introduction core curriculum, standards, national tests, targets, graduate teacher training standards and qualification, materials development, and research and development programmes. This was the breakthrough of the adult literacy from the margins to the central political and economical arena.

At the same time National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) was founded in 2002 as a cornerstone of the Government's Skills for life strategy in England. Its remit is to provide underpinning evidence and practical guidance for teacher educators, teachers and other professionals. It consist of consortium of partners and brings together the best researchers in the field, experienced practitioners and professionals. On the basis of research it enables informed political decisions in the area of adult basic skills.

One of the positive recent developments in the area of enhancing the skills of teachers is also new Skills for Life Improvement Programme. It builds on previous initiatives, making best use of people, systems and materials to help deliver Skills for Life strategy. It is designed to help staff at all levels, in all learning settings, gain professional qualifications and

continues to develop innovative thinking, skills and practice and to improve quality of literacy tuition.

4.2 Prevailing problems and challenges

It is worth to mention some of the challenges which underpin the English national literacy strategy from the very beginning and has impact on literacy teaching. There are suggestions that if it will be dealt with spelling, punctuation and grammar, then literacy and language will be improved. This specific skills seem divorced from the complexity of literacy and language inextricably woven into home, cultural and work activities. There seem to be tensions between the Government's policies which acknowledge the wider benefits of learning to the individual, a civilized society and spiritual fulfillment, on the one hand, and concerns to grow economy, on the other. There is a danger that, as in 1980s, individuals are blamed for their disadvantage and are given responsibility to tackle it. It can be argued that developing literacy can empower people to become involved and engaged in a range of activities which question systems and inequalities and challenge injustice. Opposing view states that improving technical language and literacy skills will improve the economy and push England up to international competitiveness.

Some of the researchers and practitioners in England who favor literacy as a social practice, pointed out , "that there is a power dynamic at play at all levels within this field; in the cultural construction and valuation of certain forms of literacy, in the policy initiatives, in the classroom, and in research practices themselves. Literacy educators have to recognize this if they are to make sensible decisions about sharing and exercising power and thence to achieve the necessary mutuality with students." (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič, 2000 p 8).

Implications and emerging issues for the professional development of teachers of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL of the current policy and practice are:

- The programmes for teachers of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL, while taking account of trainees' previous experience, should also immerse them in ideas that can provide bases for critical reflection on that experience.
- The programmes should develop trainees' awareness of various perspectives on teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL to adults, and importantly, develop their ability to articulate their own perspectives.
- The programmes should take a wide view of pedagogy which goes beyond a concern for classroom techniques, and involves trainees in reflection on the wider social, policy and institutional contexts they work in, as well as on the content and processes of the education/training transaction itself.
- The programmes should reflect what is known about how adults learn in terms of self-directed learning and reflection on experience, but should take care not to 'over-individualise' these processes by failing to provide access to sustained social critique.
- The programmes should reflect the key idea that learning is a social process in which learners achieve greater involvement in 'communities of practice'.
- The programmes should not only take into account what trainees should know and do, but should use pedagogical practices designed to develop the educator's self, strengthening them as subjects who can effect purposive change on their environments.

A key issue in the training of teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL to adults is the integration of subject matter knowledge with classroom pedagogy. In its report on initial teacher training in FE, Ofsted found that: 'The quality of the trainees' teaching is affected adversely by their limited knowledge of how to teach their subject' (Ofsted 2003). The NRDC exploratory study concluded that the main problem faced by course developers was 'bringing the two types of knowledge (subject knowledge and pedagogic knowledge) together' (Lucas et

al. 2004). The DfES consultative paper on the future of teacher education for the learning and skills sector put it succinctly: Teachers in our sector need two sets of skills – to be expert in their subject, and to be trained to teach it. (DfES 2003). However, it may be precisely in this conceptualisation of teachers' knowledge as 'two sets of skills' which are somehow integrated when the teacher 'delivers' instruction in the classroom that the problem lies. This vision of integrating two types of knowledge or skill may reveal a tendency towards a 'training' model in which 'the university provides the theory, methods and skills; the schools provide the setting in which the knowledge is practised; and the beginning teacher provides the individual effort to apply such knowledge.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

England has a more than 30 years tradition in adult basic skills education. Similarly as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, implemented a national strategy for adult literacy in 2001 (Skills for Life Strategy) and this has been supported by significant increases in funding to increase opportunities for adult literacy learners, to ensure a high quality service is delivered to learners and to provide for professional development for those working in the sector. The national strategy in England was direct response to the high number of adults (roughly 7 million) with low performance in the international adult literacy survey in 1998.

Professional qualifications have been developed for adult literacy support workers and a teacher qualification for adult literacy teachers is under developed and expected during 2007.

There are several important issues to be addressed in regards to recent development in teacher qualification framework in England (Morton and al, 2006), as follows:

Teacher education programmes for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL need to provide opportunities for teachers to explore their own beliefs and values relating to what and how they teach. Such reflection will be more fruitful if the teachers are immersed in practice.

However, reflection on a teacher's own beliefs and practice is not enough. Teachers need to have access to conceptual frameworks which will allow them to articulate their own perspectives on learning and teaching, and to reflect critically on the wider institutional, policy, social and cultural issues that enable or constrain their practice.

Teacher education programmes for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL need to be based on what is known about how adults learn, both in terms of the pedagogies that participants will use with their own learners, and in terms of their own lifelong learning as adult educators.

Teacher education programmes for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL should move away from an 'application of scientific knowledge' approach. They need to take into account the strong influence of context on learning, and should avoid assuming that knowledge is first 'learned' in one context before being used in another.

Gaining expertise in teaching is a process, and teachers have to pass through various stages. Teachers need to engage in developing personal practical knowledge and become involved in the 'protracted conversation' of learning to teach. Teacher learning should be seen as a career-long process, and licensing of newly qualified teachers granted after an extended period of structured education and development following initial training. Teaching portfolios may be suitable for this purpose.

While recognising that teachers of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL, like all teachers, need to have rich, flexible networks of subject matter knowledge, teacher education programmes should not assume that raising the level of subject matter in syllabuses on its own will have an effect on practice.

Teachers should 'be taught as they are expected to teach' by taking part in practical professional development activities which not only support their acquisition of relevant subject matter knowledge, but help them to 'see' the subject from their learners' point of view.

Teacher education programmes for teachers of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL should be wary of assumptions that the knowledge bases of the respective subjects are such disciplines as applied linguistics, sociolinguistics or mathematics. Rather, they need to take cognisance of the process-orientated and holistic nature of teachers' knowledge, and should exploit this by using data-based case-study methods which portray to trainee teachers the richness of expert teachers' cognitions underlying their practices.

Teacher education programmes for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL should expose teachers to a wide range of types of professional development activity. However, it should be noted that the type of professional development activity may be less important than features of the activity such as length of time, possibility of collaboration and whether or not staff from the same teaching programme are attending.

As with all teacher education, initial and continuing teacher education programmes for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL have to meet the challenge of developing adequate measures of the impact of training and professional development, particularly impact on learner outcomes. Early drafts of the content of this review were used to inform not only the process of teacher education reform being led by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), but also the implications for the wider workforce reforms.

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