

## **Action Research: Developing strategies to diagnose, monitor and improve performance of Gifted and Talented students in Modern Foreign Languages.**

The focus of my action research was to develop strategies to diagnose, monitor and improve performance of Gifted and Talented students in Modern Foreign Languages, the primary task of which was to maximise achievement in Modern Foreign Languages within my department.

Within this project, I looked at effective ways of identifying Gifted and Talented students through teacher assessment, the use of the United Learning Trust and QCA descriptors and through testing. Once these pupils were successfully identified, I looked at ways of boosting the motivation and the attainment of these pupils by looking at a range of resources and teaching methods, as well as departmental policy.

Primarily, classroom based actions took place with my top set year 8 group although I used a wider range of MFL pupils for testing. Departmentally, all members of staff helped contribute. In order to evaluate my success against my Primary Task, I looked at departmental progress made in the provision for Gifted and Talented students. I monitored pupils' progress in regular continual assessment during the final 2 modules of the academic year (the summer term) to gauge the effectiveness of classroom interventions.

I have been able to disseminate aspects of my work in various ways, through departmental and whole school INSET, including producing a handout for all staff. I have spoken widely to external teachers about this action research project and have arranged for parts of my work to be published in a Gifted and Talented newsletter.

In terms of results, the greatest success was the departmental developments I was able to make, such as writing an effective G+T policy and for being able to share with my colleagues research I had read during this process and sharing techniques for the classroom. I feel I have enabled the most able pupils within my classroom make much better progress since commencing this project. Hopefully, thoughts disseminated during INSET have also helped members of staff across the school reflect upon their own provision for G+T pupils and raised the profile of G+T within the school.

Lambeth Academy is a 'local school for local children' and is a very popular choice with parents. The United Learning Trust, an educational charity, runs the academy. The academy has joint specialisms in Modern Foreign Languages, and Business and Enterprise. It opened in September 2004 when the first cohort of students was admitted into Year 7. The full age range of 11-19 was achieved in September 2008 with the opening of the Academy's Sixth form, although the school will reach full capacity in September 2008 when the original cohort enters year 11. The number of staff continues to grow as the number on roll rises, currently around 800. A new principal took over the leadership of the academy in September 2006.

The students' economic and social backgrounds are mixed but most live in areas that are considerably disadvantaged. Far more students are entitled to free school meals than in many other schools. The student community is ethnically diverse. Twenty-four different home languages are spoken. The largest groups are Black Afro-Caribbean

and White British. The academy specialises in provision for visually impaired students. A relatively high proportion of students have learning difficulties or disabilities, and more than usual have statements of special educational need. Standards on entry are well below average.

I am a teacher of Modern Foreign Languages and in my third year of teaching. Lambeth Academy is my second teaching post, which I started in September 2007. My previous post was in a voluntary aided secondary school in Dorset. During my two years there I worked on raising the achievement of Gifted and Talented pupils within the Modern Languages department with my focus on higher level reading to boost literacy and attainment. In my current post I am the department Gifted and Talented link and I am also part of a differentiation working party, as part of which I am looking at provision for Gifted and Talented pupils across the school.

In the 'Very Big Picture', Professor Michael Barber (2000) outlines the key focuses and goals for education as laid out by the, at the time, incoming Labour government of Tony Blair. One of the biggest promises was to improve the UK education system into a 'world class' system. Teacher development was key in this as was the need to address those pupils underachieving within our schools. Eight years on from Barber's report it is hard to relate to the unreserved optimism he bares for Labour's education policy but it is still relevant and describes the inception of much of what is taking place within our schools today. The need for continual professional development remains paramount as does the need to target pupils failing to reach their potential. Therefore my action research project looking at raising the performance of Gifted and Talented (G+T) pupils seems to fit well and offers a good starting point.

In order to start my project, I needed a clear definition of action research which I could use and focus on to add structure to my thoughts and to my work. Christine O'Hanlon (2003) defines action research as 'overtly reconstructive', 'transformative', 'a form of self discovery' and also 'a risky undertaking'. I found this really useful. I'd imagined transforming my own and departmental practice however I had not considered the reconstructive nature of writing and addressing departmental G+T policy, in creating an INSET resource. The self discovery was something I really underestimated. Being self critical and reflective was a real challenge, especially when honestly assessing the success of a lesson or a test. As Humberman (1996, cited by Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1998) states, for a participant in research to evaluate themselves is 'excruciatingly difficult if not impossible'. I agree with Judyth Sachs (2003) that this is very dismissive however I do believe it holds a grain of truth and as Sachs quotes from Cohen-Smith and Lytle (1996) one 'must transcend the self in order to transform an emic perspective into a more widely shared idiom'.

Many different models of action research have been identified. Personally Marris and Rein (1967:22) express the struggle I had in working towards my primary task. They suggest that 'action can not 'foresee what questions to ask' where as research by nature 'perceives the present in the context of the final outcome'. I had a clear objective, situational to my teaching environment. My reading around the subject showed me what outcomes could be arrived at and what experiences I might have. However with each action I took, I uncovered more questions and more possibilities that rather than cause digression, focused me more fully on my primary aim. This made me go back to the research I had done, reflect on my planning and adapt in

order to most effectively proceed. I changed some of my original focus from the classroom to the department as a whole.

Having shifted my action research focus further towards departmental G+T issues it was easier to appreciate the effect of such action research in terms of whole school improvement. Stenhouse (1983) observes that teachers 'will change the world of education, by understanding it'. The more teachers who strive to understand and address the dynamics and needs within their classrooms, the closer we get to a fully inclusive education system, as backed up by O'Hanlon. To disseminate this newly acquired knowledge, Stenhouse had earlier stressed the need for results to be 'accessible' to other teachers. Travers (1972:19) discussed the ineffectiveness of action research which is not applicable in any environment except that of the original study. While my action research focused on the attainment of G+T students within my own subject area I am sure that many aspects could be translated into other MFL departments and across the school, which I aimed to do in a handout I contributed to for an INSET within school. Altrichter et al (1993) suggests this kind of collective knowledge will 'draw together' and create 'bonds' across the profession promoting collegiality within a school and within the education system as a whole.

Having established a knowledge bases from the Professional Learning in the Workplace document provided, my own reading on the topic of G+T pupils proved invaluable and enlightening. It was also enjoyable, which made it a lot easier.

Deborah Eyre, the director of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth stressed the importance of catering fully for our most able pupils when, in a speech in 2004, she said,

'Today's 'Gifted and Talented' pupils are tomorrow's social, intellectual, economic and cultural leaders and their development cannot be left to chance.'

I found this really inspirational and motivational for my primary task.

The notion of G+T really came to the forefront quite recently in educational terms. Whilst supporting the most able has always been a consideration within the classroom, the traditional secondary modern system almost did away with this. The Warnock report was at the helm of the idea of an inclusive education system, however this hinged on supporting pupils with special educational needs to access the curriculum. The term of Gifted and Talented was introduced to the public consciousness with the arrival of the Labour government and their 'third way' for education in the late nineties. As outlined by Barber's 'The Very Big Picture', the objectives of the Labour government's education ethos were individualized learning and success for all. Schools were tasked with providing their students with 'an environment in which to excel is not only acceptable but desirable'. This is linked to international research collected by the DfEE in relation to G+T students. It has been consistently found that focusing on the needs of the most able changes the teachers' perceptions of the needs of all their pupils and their follows a consequential rise in standards. This is echoed by the former director of Ofsted, Mike Tomlinson, who states,

‘if you are willing to deal effectively with the needs of able pupils you will raise the achievement of all pupils’.

The importance of such interventions is clear and I found this really rang true within my own classroom. In the series of lessons I delivered aimed at the most able pupils within a top set year eight class, all those within the classroom were exposed to higher order thinking skills and higher level work, whether directly or indirectly. When there was little differentiation of tasks within the lessons aimed at the G+T pupils those working at a lower attainment level strived to progress and work at a more comparable level. When the work was explicitly differentiated to stretch the G+T pupils, the remainder of the class again raised their aspirations and consistently tried to work at a higher level than they had previously. This really struck home to me that while there are many methods we can employ to boost attainment, the most effective was to raise one’s expectations and the expectations of one’s pupils.

The identification of G+T pupils was the aspect that I initially thought would be the most simple. It evolved into the most complex and thought provoking and has inspired me to hopefully continue my work on G+T.

In the education white paper, ‘Higher Standards, Better Schools for All’, published by the DfES (2005) it was proposed that by 2006 all secondary schools will be asked to identify their G+T pupils and record them within a G+T register. This was to be 5% of the school’s population. This 5% served as the guideline for my own identification and is reiterated by QCA, who offer the most used advised by teachers on the criteria to identify G+T pupils. ULT are not as strict on the 5% quota but for consistency, I remained with the original figure of 5% and to be entirely honest the low level of literacy of our cohort would suggest that we are unlikely to have a higher percentage of G+T children than the national average.

Similar to the QCA G+T criteria are the list of ‘Myths and Misconceptions’ devised by Richard Lange and Mark German. The list contains many attributes a G+T language learner may display that are at odds with the preconception that G+T pupils are hard working and motivated. Reflection on this exercise can focus a teacher on what constitutes a G+T pupil and how to more effectively and objectively use the QCA criteria. As George (1997) comments, use of such criteria and professional judgment often ‘outweigh’ any kind of ‘official looking test’. He does however highlight the disadvantages of such exercises as these subjective assessments may not be accurate as teachers ‘tend to rate most highly those pupils who are persevering, conforming, tidy and industrious’. Initially I thought this observation undermines the professionalism of teachers to distinguish between ability and determination. However, in MFL, it can be hard to make the distinction as the knowledge is not innate and progress can not always be made at a greatly accelerated rate without teacher input. The pupil is constrained tightly by what has been teacher taught.

Renzulli (1997) goes some way to clarify what actually should be considered when assessing if a pupil falls into the ‘Gifted and Talented’ category. Renzulli produced a diagram to express the ‘areas’ are needs to take into account when identifying the potential of the most able. He suggests high scores in IQ style testing are unreliable in predicting the ‘giftedness’ of a pupil as ‘task commitment’ and ‘creativity’. He says that when these two ‘clusters’ of traits are looked at in conjunction with high

intelligence we are able to see where 'truly gifted behaviour occurs'. Whilst I can see the importance of these traits, I find it hard to accept that 'task commitment' and 'creativity' are traits we can use to identify G+T pupils. They may be products of G+T pupils but as many teachers are aware, there are many talented yet disaffected pupils. They may have great aptitude for language learning but their 'task commitment' and 'creativity' are immeasurable because they often produce little of worth within class.

In my initial thinking about the idea of G+T identification I thought about looking at the learning styles of pupils. The theory of multiple intelligences and learning styles was laid out by Howard Gardner (1983/2003). Gardner suggests that there are 8 'intelligences' a learner can display and the intelligence they favour can suggest what learning style they prefer. The DfES published a document interpreting this for the MFL classroom. There does not seem to be any conclusive evidence however that there is one 'intelligence' mostly closely linked with the ability to learn languages. There is also no information to suggest language learners prefer a certain learning style. I feel Richard Riding (2002) offers a more workable interpretation of multiple intelligences. He makes the distinction between 'cognitive style', 'learning preferences' and 'learning strategies'. He is highlighting that the idea of just 8 intelligences is not comprehensive enough to explain the complexity of how one learns.

There does seem to be evidence to suggest there is something known as 'Language Learning Aptitude' however this seems to have eluded proper definition. There are identified criteria for what makes a 'Good Language Learner' (GLL), laid out by Lighbown and Spada (1993) and interpreted by Eyre and Lowe (2002). Criteria for a GLL include such things as 'learner belief' and 'learner strategies'. While these criteria are extremely useful in looking at what aspects one can expect from someone who can learn a language well it does not go quite far enough to be useful for the identification of a G+T MFL pupil.

In my conversations within my department, the idea of using the Cambridge Language aptitude test arose. A colleague had worked within a school where the test was used by way of setting students by the MFL department. The test involves the participant to an unknown language, in our test Swedish. The participant needs to be able to recognise structures in the language and to apply and synthesis these. I was familiar with such tests from my undergraduate linguistics studies, where it was used to show the processes of second language acquisition. I obtained a test to use in this study by emailing undergraduate linguistic professors from various universities as I was unable to find one online.

Eyre (1997) states 'schools become more effective in identifying able pupils as they get better at providing for them'. Although this may seem slightly contrary, I found myself agreeing with this as although I believe I used the information I gained to test successfully and achieve useful results, it was clear to see as each test was completed there was more to do. The tests informed me about the pupils but also drew my attention to more things I wanted to test and look for. I also became more aware that

there needs to be systemic changes in how G+T pupils are identified across the board so we can truly meet their needs.

In order to monitor the progress of G+T students, I planned to use the schools current reporting system, SIMs. In addition Assessment for Learning would form the basis of my monitoring strategy. AfL forms a large part of both the National Curriculum's 'Key Stage 3 Strategy' and their '14-19 Strategy'. It stresses the importance of using in-class assessment opportunities to boast the attainment of the pupils directly. Assessment criteria, usually linked to National Curriculum levels, are explicitly shared before testing. The testing is then marked by peer or self assessment against the original assessment criteria. This gives transparency to the testing process and allows the pupils to take ownership of their progress. Also, as the marking is undertaken by the pupils, this kind of testing reduces teacher workload meaning more regular testing can be carried out allowing a more robust monitoring profile can be compiled of pupil progress. The use of AfL ties in to the school improvement plan.

The main educational focuses when dealing with the issue of raising the attainment of G+T pupils within the MFL classroom are that of differentiation and enrichment. In A HMI document (1992) it is noted that,

'...judicious intervention of the teacher to urge pupils to a higher level of knowledge, skills, understanding and thinking was crucial'.

Leyden (1998) backs up this idea of the need for effective differentiation for those with 'exceptional abilities' and allowing them to reach their potential 'within the context of their regular classroom. He does mention the 'hard-pressed' teachers within our schools and understands the pressures teachers face in successfully differentiating. Eyre (1997) defines differentiation as the teacher's recognition of 'individual differences and trying to find institutional strategies which take account of them'. As Leyden suggests, Eyre thinks that differentiation is essentially unworkable 'for children all the time'. Crucially, Eyre expresses the view that 'true differentiation is an aspiration'. I think this is a realistic statement for teachers to hold on to.

Effective planning is the key to workable differentiation, allowing the teacher to deliver as an inclusive lesson as possible. Clark and Callow (2002) offer a good description of how a lesson incorporating G+T pupils should be planned and what pupils can expect from the lesson. As Eyre has stated, whilst differentiation isn't effective all the time and for all pupils, such outlines like those offered by Clark and Callow make the task of planning an effective lesson more accessible.

A key aspect of G+T differentiation omitted by Clark and Callow is the need for group work in order to promote higher achievement. Vygotsky (1978) argues that intelligence has a social origin and that a learner performs better when they have the benefit of external input. This input can be from anyone, such as a teacher or a peer. He named the difference between what a learner achieves individually and what a learner achieves when working collaboratively as the 'zone of proximal development'. Applying this idea in our classrooms means constructing opportunities for group work so pupils can share their ideas and also to verbalize their own thoughts to clarify them for themselves. Within a challenging teaching environment one can veer away from group work for behaviour management reasons. I know that I have

done this. After reflecting on Vygotsky's words I am reassessing how I include group work opportunities within my own classroom. Indeed, all the reading I have done for this action research project revolves around the themes of dissemination, peer reflection and collegiality. It would be remiss not to allow our own pupils such opportunities.

Finally, enrichment is often the name given to extra-curricular solutions to the challenge of successfully catering for our most able pupils. It can also be used to describe the 'enriching' of the curriculum to inspire creativity and independent learning in our G+T pupils. By way of clarification, Eyre and Majoram (1990, quoted in George 1997) say that enrichment is not 'perfunctory completion of routine tasks'. This hints at many teachers' idea of enrichment being simply adding additional paragraphs to work or more book based questions for G+T pupils to complete. Eyre and Majoram are saying that this is not sufficient. Enrichment should be about 'enlarging problems' for the G+T pupils to reflect on, not simply giving them more. They also say enrichment is about 'enhancing the quality of the life in the classroom and heightening sensitivity'.

Having read much about my primary task I was to undertake, it became clear that while there were many discreet things a teacher could do to affect change within their classroom, in order to make real change there needs to be systemic change. A School G+T policy must be successfully implemented including the many aspects a teacher should be endeavoring to do to support the most able. Departmentally, there needs to be commitment to undertake subject specific intervention to ensure the needs of G+T pupils are being met. As Barber ([www.teachingexpertise.com](http://www.teachingexpertise.com)) states, 'As a general rule, if the G+T policy is not having this degree of impact, it is not working'. I realised I would need to address this if I was going to achieve something with a lasting effect.

The success criteria I initially chose was to look at pupil progression during the course of the project against their National Curriculum assessment levels as recorded on the school reporting system SIMS at the end of each module. I dismissed this initially as I soon realised that the classroom based aspect of my action research were only one part of the change that needed to take place in order to meet the objectives of my primary task. It was also unfeasible as there was no fixed timetable of when assessment data would be entered and to which level of accuracy. With module 5 being extremely short due and disrupted by many cross-curricular events, data from this module would not have been solid.

I felt that I would have been successful in my primary task if by the end of the action research I had been able to show evidence of progress and development within the MFL department in regards of providing for our G+T pupils. Whilst I appreciated that this was not the most scientific and objective success criteria, it is expressing my aim in my undertakings, which is to produce points of reference as to how to identify G+T pupils within MFL successfully, how to monitor their progress and how to support their needs in class which can be used by all teachers within my department.

Ethically, I didn't really feel I had to take much into consideration. As the top sets were the only sets to be tested, I felt telling them the purpose of the test was just and would not affect their performance. Pupils were informed of their marks during the lessons but not informed as to whether they were G+T or not. This was not down to ethical considerations, although I am sure it would have provoked some. It was purely down to the time taken by some teachers to so the tests and return them to me. Once I had all the tests and had compiled a list of G+T pupils based on the results, the USB drive holding the results was stolen. By the time I had redone the list, we were nearing the end of term and we decided, as a department to inform those identified as G+T after we'd been able to discuss and reflect on the results.

As for informing the staff within my department of my study and its implications, again there was no real dilemma. As a close department, they were all aware of what I was doing. I feel the way in which I worked allowed me to see clearly when they were giving me what they perceived as the correct answers and when I had acquired the truth. When it came to the G+T identification I took to original G+T register for MFL completed purely on teacher opinion. As a department, we then looked at the QCA and the ULT G+T criteria and this was used to modify and amend the register. I then sent the staff within the department a sample of the 'Myths and Misconceptions' compiled by Richard Lange and Mark German interspersed with G+T criteria from the QCA, reworded slightly. In this exercise teachers did give what they perceived as the correct and 'text-book' answers. However when I compared the teacher selected G+T pupils on the G+T register with the pupils identified by the Cambridge Language Aptitude test, it was clear that while the teachers knew what criteria should be for a G+T pupil, they still included in the register some pupils who showed high industry rather than high ability and dismissed those who may not meet classroom behaviour expectations despite possessing innate aptitude or languages.

I chose my research methods as my action research evolved. I have to admit that I purposely stirred away from numerical tests and collecting lots of statistics. I believe the changes needed were in methodology and policy. It was clear from previous data compiled within school that there was an issue of G+T students not reaching their potential, indeed the lack of G+T departmental policy and a comprehensive G+T register was proof enough that change was needed.

My actions to interview my department, to conduct pupil interviews and inter departmental discussions were all defined by my role as the G+T link for the MFL department and my part of the differentiation working party within school, working on G+T.

I feel that, within the constraints imposed on me by timing, I carried out my planned actions successfully. I planned and executed a series of lessons designed to cater effectively for the G+T pupils within my selected class. I tested all top set pupils in MFL in years eight to ten using the Cambridge Language Aptitude test. I did not test year seven as our classes for that year group are mixed ability. Logistically, we were not able to test everyone at this time. I was able to disseminate aspects of my work in departmental meetings, in G+T meetings, during taking part in a differentiation working party and in whole school INSET. I have also discussed the possibility of publishing some of my reflections on my work in a G+T magazine, to whom I have already submitted a review I completed on a book which I used in my research.

I am pleased with the progress made by pupils during the series of lessons I delivered aimed at differentiating successfully to meet the needs of G+T pupils. I believe the techniques can be easily used by other members of staff within my department, such as developing pupil's creativity and raising pupils' expectations for their own success, which was fundamental in boosting pupils' levels.

On reflection there are a few aspects of my action research that I am not happy with. There were logistical constraints which meant that we only tested top set pupils using the Cambridge Language Aptitude test. Research clearly shows that it is not always those who are excelling who are what we could describe as 'Good Language Learners' (GLL). Although at Lambeth Academy we set by ability, based on statistical indicators rather than actual output I feel that we are missing a key demographic by only focusing on the top sets. I do feel that the length of the test we used did make the test time consuming. In future I would like to adapt the test so it can be easily carried out by MFL staff for all students.

I was also disappointed yet unsurprised to see that many tests were copied or changed. This showed that a few of the teachers did not follow the instructions that I had given them and they had not explained to the pupils what was expected of them. I was guess that although well meaning the status of the teacher leader award is not well established within the school and perhaps my colleagues did not understand that I needed to collect useful results. Due to such discrepancies, while I did not discount the year ten's results from the Cambridge Language aptitude test I decided that in order to compile a list of G+T students for our register, I would also use the statistical data from our reporting system SIMS which includes Fisher Family Trust data, CATs and progress levels. I used this data to identify the top 5% of the year group along with the test.

Finally, it was disappointing to see that while some pupils were capable of getting within the top 10%, even the top 5% of all marks recorded, they were unable to write their names on their test paper. Although they had displayed strong language aptitude, I am loathe to believe that anyone who can't write their own name is G+T. I did not chase up the authors of these tests.

I analysed the Cambridge Language Aptitude results by marking all papers and recording all the marks, from years 8 and 9 as the year 10 results were discounted due to the high amount of copying. I then worked out that the top 5% of marks were. Inline with QCA guidelines, this top 5% were highlighted as G+T. Those within the top 10% were highlighted as able in line with QCA and ULT guidelines. I then compared the pupils identified by this test to the ones identified more subjectively by teachers using the QCA and ULT criteria for G+T pupils. This showed that whilst teachers are good at highlighting pupils with aptitude to language learning there is still a tendency to overlook the pupils that could be labeled as 'disrupted' or 'lazy'. Teachers did comment on their surprise at how well certain pupils did in the testing as they do so little in class.

My analysis of the progress made by the G+T pupils within my year 8 top set showed to me, as I have previously mentioned, that the atmosphere and expectations within the classroom were more important in many cases than the actual work set. It also showed me that, as stated by many educational researchers and commentators, that

targeting G+T pupils raises the attainment of all within the class. Whilst the national curriculum KS3 attainment levels of all G+T raised significantly during the lessons, so did those of the rest of the class. I found that just by expressing to the class clearly that to attain a level 6 certain things had to be done, criteria met and most importantly that it was achievable that the class rose to this challenge and in many cases succeeded. Level 6 is the level that G+T and the most able pupils should reach by the end of year 8. Using Assessment for Learning to make achievement seem attainable and accessible we are supporting our G+T pupils just as we are our SEN pupils. As a teacher, sometimes perhaps we can be guilty of making our subjects appear over academic. This can be particularly true in MFL. G+T pupils want to achieve and to be challenged but fear failure like all children. Implying a task is difficult raises the chance of pupil failure and puts them off. Making higher level work accessible is not hard and has a massive impact.

Following the two pupil interviews and discussions with other G+T departmental co-ordinators, it was evident that much of the G+T extension was done by way of extra activities and not through explicit differentiation in task during the main part of the lesson. I planned a lesson in which G+T pupils were working on the same text as the rest of the class but had a separate task and support materials. They responded well to this and liked that they had different work rather than additional work. Their attainment in this task also showed its benefits. I did feel however, essentially I was letting these pupils down in the lesson as although I had differentiated for their needs I could not offer them the in lesson support they needed to really excel. The rest of the set needed support and due to the wide range of abilities within the 'top set' and the very challenging behaviour of two pupils within the class I could not spend much time with the G+T pupils. I believe explicit differentiation for G+T pupils is really important but I would need to work further on workable ways of including it within my lessons in order to be able to meet the needs of all within the classroom.

The biggest negative impact on my action research was time. With my year 8 class as well as many lessons being lost to INSET and bank holidays along with extra-curriculum events, many of my class were in productions and shows almost consistently within the school. These rehearsals and music lessons always seem to take place at the same time as my lesson and with very little, if any notice. The series of lessons I planned for the year 8 class were quite seriously affected by these interruptions and missed lessons and ultimately I had to abandon my plan of doing more lessons as I was never sure when I would see the class and who would be in the class.

Such disruptions were a key factor in me deciding to look at policy within the department as I did not have to struggle to find time to meet with other staff or pupils.

My intended outcome was to raise the achievement of G+T pupils in MFL. Within my own classroom I believe my planning and reflection has made me much more effective in providing for G+T pupils. By sharing my experiences with my colleagues within my department hopefully I have helped them to reflect upon their own G+T differentiation and offered suggestions on how to improve. The use of teacher selection and testing allowed us to produce a workable and useful G+T register for MFL. This is an area where I know a lot more work needs to be done in order to ensure we identify all pupils who show a language learning aptitude. I do think we are

well on our way to achieving this. Through creating a solid policy in MFL for our G+T provision we will be more effective at monitoring our G+T pupils progression and the consistent use of AFL will allow more insightful assessment data.

The biggest thing I learned through this project was how to be reflective on my own work. It is difficult to admit that you could be doing so much better for certain pupils. I learned that in order to improve significantly ones performance is to truly see ones faults. I also learned so much professionally through the interactions I had with other members of staff. It is easy to become isolated within ones own classroom so I learnt the importance of even the most informal chat to ones thought processes.

The most significant thing I will change is to 'aspire' to be as comprehensive in my differentiation as possible. As a teacher we some time lose way with our differentiation due to the very day pressures of our job and classroom management issues. Now I have refocused on the benefits of differentiation I will strive to make my lessons as comprehensive and inclusive as possible to meet the needs of all those in my classroom, in particular the G+T pupils.

I have previously mentioned many of the ways in which I have disseminated information from this project. Along with the various actions I took to share the information within the differentiation working party and through INSET, my Head of Department and Director of Specialism allowed me to use departmental meetings to share ideas and get feedback. The ULT course I attended for previous participants in the Teacher Leader course afforded me an opportunity to discuss what I was doing. I also arranged meeting with senior figures within my school to share my experiences and raise the profile of the action research being undertaken within the school and within other ULT schools. To continue this dissemination I have arranged to write about my project for a G+T magazine for schools. I will be placing this study on ULT's Learning Objects so it is accessible to all staff within ULT/UCST schools. I hope to be able to continue with more action research and work towards a Masters in Education Research.

The main support was from my department. My Head of Department was very supportive and was a useful sounding board for ideas and allowed me to use of conversations to order my thoughts. She offered advice on both the theory and the practice involved in my action research. The Director of Specialism for MFL offered support and encouragement throughout and was extremely helpful when it came to looking for opportunities to disseminate my work. The G+T coordinator was helpful to my work as we worked together due to my role as G+T link for the MFL department and as part of the differentiation working party. It was really useful that her worked coincided with mine and gave my planning structure.

Apart from those mentioned, I did not have much more additional support. It would have been great to work with other undertaking a similar project or with similar interests but this did not happen. In the future work I undertake, I will aim to get more staff involved to aid my work and to raise the profile of the action research process.