

## THE EPILOGUE

### THE EXPERIENCES OF THE BASELINE STUDY TEAM

Having presented the Baseline Study the editors would finally like to give the perspectives of the members of the Baseline Study Team. This information comes from conversations, reports, semi-formal evaluations conducted at the end of each of the three workshops and correspondence between the members of the Baseline Study Team.

#### The Baseline Team Members

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#### The Reasons for Joining the Baseline Study Team

Members joined the Baseline Study Team for varying reasons. Having been invited, they were either curious as to what the study entailed or they thought it would help their

personal or professional development, especially in working with and benefiting from their language assistant.

Furthermore, some members felt that in this way they could contribute to the improvement of the Scheme. In addition, the participants joined in the hope of formal exchange of information on the performance of assistants, as well as for concrete ideas for future work with the assistants.

### **Positive Experiences**

The Team enjoyed working with experts, meeting new people and facing challenges, such as data interpretation and report writing. One member stated: *'We have made new friends and involvement in the research work means personal and professional growth for me.'*

The participants appreciated the working and extremely productive atmosphere in the group and the fact that the work was their own, as expressed by one team member: *'It was important for the participants that they could participate in decisions, which gave them a feeling of confidence and responsibility. They actually felt they had to do it well because it was their project, their study.'*

Members of the team said that they had profited personally by learning to work in a team, to be more tolerant and open-minded to other peoples' views, and at the same time to be more self-confident to confront other peoples' views.

Professionally, they had gained research skills, such as planning research in phases, being flexible in dealing with problems and working carefully and clearly to obtain results, which are both accurate and understandable. They also added the importance of comparing their work with the assistant to that of the other members of the team, in order to reflect on their teaching methods and the general practices and to get an insight into situations at other schools, as well as to be able to provide useful suggestions for improvement.

### **Negative Experiences**

On the whole, there were surprisingly few negative experiences. However, some members did complain about the time constraints, and the long, tiring workshops. One person said, *'We had to spend a lot of time in a place working from morning to evening.'* Lack of research skills on the part of the members, especially in instrument design and analysing the data was expressed. Weak points of the research process were thought to be the size of the sample and the lack of piloting due to limited time.

### **Future Suggestions**

Team members suggested that the results of the Baseline Study should be used to improve the ways of working with the assistant on the part of the whole school staff in schools all over the country. They would like the Report to be widely disseminated in Slovenia and abroad. Also they realise that the goal will only be achieved if the Baseline Study reaches those who can put a stop to negative practices. One of the participants summed up the feeling of many by saying: *'I would definitely like to be involved in a similar project in the future.'*