TeachingEnglish

Partnered Remote Language Improvement (PRELIM) 2 project report

Rose Aylett and Martyn Clarke

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About the authors

Rose Aylett

Rose is a freelance teacher, trainer and CELTA main course tutor based in Liverpool, UK. She has an academic background in theology, philosophy and Islamic studies, and over 15 years teaching and training experience in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Rose currently runs CELTA courses for centres in Italy and the UK (face-to-face and online) and is a recent graduate of the NILE MA in Professional Development in Language Education. Her MA thesis, which investigated the impact of a short introductory teacher training course in critical pedagogy on teachers' critical literacy, was awarded a commendation in the 2020-2021 British Council Master's Dissertation Awards. She is the current Coordinator of the IATEFL Global Issues SIG (GISIG).

As an affiliate trainer for NILE, Rose tutors on the 'Challenging Perspectives in Language Teaching' and 'From Teacher to Trainer' courses. She worked alongside Martyn Clarke managing the PRELIM 2 project.

Martyn Clarke

Martyn Clarke has been an ELT professional for 30 years working in Europe, South and Central America, South East Asia and Africa.

As a consultant teacher trainer and advisor, he has experience in numerous education development projects around the world including both pre-service and in-service programmes. He has designed and taught on UK under- and post-graduate teacher development programmes for universities in the UK and teacher/management development seminars and workshops across Europe and the Middle East. He has written education development courses for numerous organisations including the British Council, Oxford University Press and EAQUALS.

Martyn has managed a number of overseas education projects at local and national levels and was the Director of Operations for a group of language schools in the UK and Ireland. He is a co-author of the EAQUALS Academic Management Competency Framework.

He is an affiliate trainer for the Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE) and the module leader for the MA course in Academic Management in Language Education. Together with Rose Aylett, he managed the PRELIM 2 project on behalf of NILE.

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Executive summary

The second Partnered Remote Language Improvement project (PRELIM 2) took place between October 2021 and April 2022 and supported the development of over 2500 English language teachers through 40 individual partnerships between United Kingdom Language Institutes (UKIs) and English Teacher Associations (ETAs) worldwide. It was managed by NILE and supported by English UK, the British Council, and the International Association Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).

Through collaborative planning, each partnership created a bespoke online learning course for a targeted group of teachers appropriate to their needs and delivered within the contextual limitations and opportunities of the country of the ETA.

The project courses were notable for the variety of their digital solutions, the creativity of their instructional design and the flexibility of their management and delivery in responding to the changing realities of the everyday experiences of the participants.

Monitoring and evaluation processes evidence the following key outcomes.

- Confidence-building for the course participants (CPs) in English language use, classroom practice and the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning.
- Awareness-raising for all partners in terms of global citizenship through cultural exchange.
- Sustainable network creation between UKI and ETA, within the CP communities, and among the UKIs (through the PRELIM Community of Practice support group).
- Capacity development within UKI staff in project approaches and digital instruction competence.

This report identifies the principal themes of the 40 partnership reports (available as separate reports) and takes a situational analysis and lessons learned approach to best support similar projects.

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Project overview

The Partnered Remote Language Improvement project (PRELIM) is an initiative supporting the development of over 2500 English language teachers across the world, supported by English UK, the British Council, and the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL). Following the successes of PRELIM 1 (October 2020 – April 2021), PRELIM 2 doubled in size. From October 2021 to April 2022, thirty-five UK Language Institutes (UKIs) worked in individual partnerships with forty English Teacher Associations (ETAs) to deliver bespoke online courses seeking to raise teachers' confidence in the English language classroom. Seventy-five per cent of the ETAs working in PRELIM 2 partnerships were from ODA*-eligible countries. A connectivity fund was created for those partnerships where the cost of internet data was prohibitive to participation. Twenty-two partnerships took advantage of this opportunity and the project was able to fund all bids received.
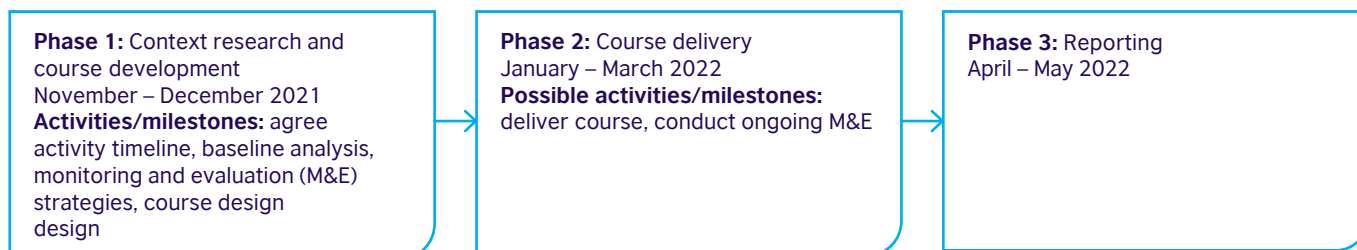
1.1 Project partners

Main project partners	British Council, English UK, International Association Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL)	
Project Management	Norwich Institute for Language Education (NILE)	
Region	**Country partners**	
South Asia	Bangladesh	Bangladesh English Language Teachers Association (BELTA) English Teachers' Association of Bangladesh (ETAB) Bell, UK (Bell)
	India	English Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) The English Language Centre, Brighton, UK (ELC)
Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola	Angolan English Language Teachers' Association (ANELTA) International House Bristol, UK (IH Bristol)
	Benin	Benin National Teachers of English Association (BNTEA) LSI Brighton, UK (LSI)
	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso English Teachers' Association (BETA) LILA*, Liverpool, UK (LILA*)
	Cameroon	Cameroon English Language and Literature Association (CamELTA) BEST in Bath, UK (BEST)
	Cote d'Ivoire	Cote d'Ivoire National English Language Teachers Association (CINELTA) Capital School of English, Bournemouth, UK (Capital)
	Guinea	Guinea English Teachers' Club (GETC) Bell, UK (Bell)
	Guinea Bissau	English Language Teaching Association – Guinea Bissau (ELTA-GB) CELT Centre for English Language Teaching, Cardiff, UK (CELT)
	Mali	Malian Association of Teachers of English (MATE) Eurospeak, UK (Eurospeak)
	Mozambique	Mozambique English Language Teachers Association (MELTA) St Clare's Oxford, UK (St Clare's)

* ODA: Official Development Assistance

	Nigeria	English Language Teachers Association of Nigeria (ELTAN) International House London, UK (IH London)
	South Africa	National Association of English Teachers in South Africa (NAETSA) English Language Teaching Centre, The University of Sheffield (Sheffield)
	Tanzania	Tanzanian English Language Teachers Association (TELTA) Centre of English Studies, UK (CES)
	Uganda	Uganda English Language Teachers' Association (UNELTA) International Teacher Training Centre, Bournemouth, UK (ITTC)
	Zambia	Language Teachers' Association of Zambia (LATAZ) York Associates, UK (YA)
Europe Wider Europe and Central Asia	Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan English Language Teachers' Association (AZETA) Professional Language Solutions, UK (PLS)
	Belarus	Belarussian Association of Teachers of English (BelNATE) Norwich Study Centre, UK (NSC)
	Italy	TESOL Italy (TESOL Italy) Lewis School of English, Southampton, UK (Lewis)
	Latvia	Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE) West London English School, UK (WLES)
	Lithuania	Lithuanian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (LAKMA) West London College, UK (WLC)
	Moldova	Moldovan English Teachers' Association (META) Elac Study Vacations, UK (Elac)
	Montenegro	English Language Teachers' Association of Montenegro (ELTAM) Speak Up London, UK (Speak Up)
	North Macedonia	English Language Teachers' Association of the Republic of North Macedonia (ELTAM MK) UK Language Courses Ltd, UK (UKLC)
	Russia	Saint Petersburg English Language Teachers' Association (SPELTA) Komi English Language Teachers' Association (KOMELTA) Anglia Ruskin University, UK (ARU)
	Turkey	English Language Teachers' Association in Turkey (INGED) LILA*, Liverpool, UK (LILA*)
East Asia	Indonesia	Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia (TEFLIN) St Giles Educational Trust, UK (St Giles)
	Laos	Lao TESOL (Lao TESOL) Oxford International Education Group, UK (OIEG)
	Mongolia	English Language Teachers' Association of Mongolia (ELTAM) International House London, UK (IH London)
	Thailand	Thailand TESOL (ThaiTESOL) Edinburgh College, UK (Edinburgh)
	Vietnam	Viet TESOL Association (VietTESOL) CELT Centre for English Language Teaching, Cardiff, UK (CELT)

Middle East and North Africa	Kuwait	TEFL Kuwait (TEFLK) Celtic English Academy, Cardiff, UK (CEA)
	Occupied Palestinian Territories	Palestinian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (PATEFL) Hilderstone College, Broadstairs, UK (Hilderstone)
Americas	Argentina	Asociación de Profesores de Inglés de la Zona Andina y Línea Sur (APIZALS) Asociación Pampeana de Profesores de Inglés (APPI) Asociación Jujeña de Profesores de Inglés (AJPI) Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés (FAAPI) Language Within, Glasgow, UK (LW)
	Bolivia	Bolivian English Teachers Association (BETA) inlingua Cheltenham, UK (inlingua)
	Brazil	BRAZ-TESOL Public School Special Interest Group (BRAZ-TESOL) Wimbledon School of English, London, UK (WSE)
	Cuba	English Language Teaching section of the Cuban Association of Pedagogues (APC-ELI) English Language Teaching Centre, The University of Sheffield (Sheffield)
	Ecuador	National University of Education, School of Pedagogy in National and Foreign Languages (UNAE-PINE) Peartree Languages, Cardiff, UK (Peartree)
	Honduras	Honduran English Language Teachers Association (HELTA TESOL) Glasgow School of English, UK (GSE)
	Peru	National English Teachers' Association Peru (NETAPERU-TEC) Association of University Students (Alumni) (ASCEI) Languages United Ltd, Bath, UK (LU)

1.2 Project timeline

Phase 1: Context research and course development
November – December 2021
Activities/milestones: agree activity timeline, baseline analysis, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies, course design design

Phase 2: Course delivery
January – March 2022
Possible activities/milestones:
deliver course, conduct ongoing M&E

Phase 3: Reporting
April – May 2022

1.3 Courses overview

Indicative content	English for the teacher, local syllabus topics, language and culture, ELT methodology, technological skills development
Delivery platforms	**Synchronous:** Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, Telegram **Asynchronous:** WhatsApp, Google Classroom/Google Suite, Edmodo, Edublogs (WordPress), Slack, Padlet, Facebook, Discord, Moodle, Teams **Communications:** WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Edmodo, LINE, Slack
Course structure	Single courses from four to 12 weeks Between one and four simultaneous cohorts
Course participants (CPs)	All sectors – from primary to tertiary Mainly English language teachers (some other subject teachers) Between 10 – 130 CPs on different country projects 2500 CPs across all projects (approximately) 65% female; 35% male (approximately)

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Project areas: findings

2.1 Working in partnership

The first phase of PRELIM 2 (November-December 2021) saw the formation of 40 individual partnerships between UKIs and ETAs. After two separate project initiation meetings on Zoom, bringing together UKIs and ETAs respectively, partners were introduced to one another and UKIs began the process of scoping and undertaking research into the (predominantly) unfamiliar teaching and learning context of their ETA. During this stage, partners worked together to identify a target group of CPs, develop and implement course recruitment strategies, as well as agreeing in principle their course structure, content, platforms, timelines, and monitoring and evaluation processes.

Thirty-five UK-based partners took part in PRELIM 2, and of these, 16 had previously participated in PRELIM 1. Thirteen of the 40 ETAs were also PRELIM 1 alumni. In the interests of building on learning from the first iteration of the project, it was determined from the outset that all UK-based partners would be working with a different ETA. For some existing partners, this meant that: 'Course aims were established very quickly … achieved chiefly by the fact that both the UKI and ETA had a clear understanding of the principles behind the overall project' (BRAZ-TESOL/WSE). On other partnerships, where one or both partners had participated in PRELIM 1, the experience increased expectations on both sides: 'Expectations were high from both partners about the design and delivery for the project as both had been part of PRELIM 1 and brought the learning from that in terms of course design and delivery (APC-ELI/Sheffield).

Although PRELIM 1 experience may have been advantageous, a strong vision for the prospective course was not unique to existing project partners: '[Lao TESOL's] clarity of focus on Google Classroom gave the project a clear direction from the very beginning' (Lao TESOL/OIEG); 'the shared clarity of vision and course outline meant that even without an official ELTAI presence, the course ran smoothly' (ELTAI/ELC Brighton).

As on PRELIM 1, working in partnership on PRELIM 2 often demanded an openness to new, unfamiliar ways of working, for both UKIs and ETAs alike. Building a close working relationship 'was essential throughout the course for the project to work' (LATE/WLES), however approaches to the project often differed from those each organisation was used to: 'We quickly had to adjust to a different approach which took into consideration the contextual features and working practices of the BNTEA' (BNTEA/LSI). Across the 40 partnerships, there is agreement that: 'adapting to circumstances as they arose was crucial' and that 'flexibility on the part of both the ETA and UKI partners is a key to success on this type of project' (TEFLK/CEA). Due to differing national or religious calendars, and working collaboratively across time zones, at times this meant 'out-of-hours calls were required depending on ETA board members' availability' (ELTAM/Speak Up London). Busy working schedules on both sides entailed careful planning: 'it is important to commit to a regular timetable of meetings and to create timelines for completing different tasks' (BelNATE/NSC).

The reports highlight the importance of establishing clear channels of communication between partners from the outset. Whilst some partners opted to correspond via more traditional methods, such as email, in many cases, messaging apps like WhatsApp or Telegram were favoured for their immediacy, low-data usage and prevalence as the primary means of communication in the ETA context. These apps were found to be 'swift and efficient and great for immediate problem-solving' (ELTAN/IH London) and 'helped us address any queries from the CPs, confirm deadlines or troubleshoot' (ELTAM/Speak Up London). Voice note functionality was particularly useful in contexts where there was 'a clear preference for spoken rather than written communication' (BNTEA/LSI). Partners recommended managing expectations around frequency of communication from the outset, e.g. 'establishing that instant responses are not expected (or necessarily required)' (CAMELTA/BEST).

Connectivity permitting, regular video calls were found to be highly constructive to establishing 'better levels of communication and a sense of community not achievable in written correspondence', to ensure 'decisions were made quickly and effectively' (SPELTA/KOMELTA/ARU) and to build 'a strong foundation for a collaborative partnership and the creation of shared goals' (ANELTA/IH Bristol). Several reports highlight the usefulness of summarising the outcomes of such meetings in writing 'to ensure all participants in meetings have understood the outcomes of decisions made' (SPELTA/KOMELTA/ARU).

Overall, the experience of working collaboratively on PRELIM 2 with a partner from a very different cultural background and teaching context was overwhelmingly positive: 'working closely in partnership in coordination and exchanging ideas to design the course was a highly rewarding experience, as was the opportunity to build on the lessons of PRELIM 1' (ANELTA/IH Bristol). Partners on both sides acknowledged the mutually beneficial nature of PRELIM partnership: 'Working with a partner provided an opportunity to learn from each other' (ELTAM/IH London); as well as the central role of partnership in achieving project outcomes: 'Both CELT and our ETA worked hard to understand each other as it was clear that strong partnership is key to PRELIM success' (VietTESOL/CELT).

2.2 Working within the CoP

For the duration of the project, one project manager (PM) from each UKI was invited to represent their partnership in the PRELIM 2 Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP was a remote professional learning community – providing and promoting peer-support amongst colleagues, and enabling both project-wide and partnership-specific information sharing. Its overall infrastructure remained unchanged from the first iteration of the project one year earlier. The primary platform for asynchronous interaction between individual partners was the project management and workplace communication tool Slack. An online 'library' of useful reference documents was stored and shared via Google Drive. During phases 1 and 2, live group meetings were held to coincide with critical project milestones on the video-conferencing platform Zoom. Throughout the project, the CoP was managed by NILE.

A defining characteristic of the CoP on both PRELIM 1 and 2, has been its strong sense of collegiality.

> *[We have] built stronger ties with a number of UK institutions thanks to the collaborative environment fostered by the CoP. It was great to see that all institutions involved understood that the success of PRELIM as a concept required a team effort. (CINELTA/Capital)*

> *The CoP served to create a strong collaborative mindset, with partners who might be framed as competitors in other contexts encouraged to share insights and experiences for the benefit of all stakeholders involved. (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh)*

Although partners' contexts varied enormously, the CoP provided an opportunity to seek out 'common ground in many of the shared challenges and solutions' (TESOL Italy/Lewis). This was particularly beneficial for those UKIs who joined the project on PRELIM 2, for whom the CoP 'contained a wealth of experience from institutions who had taken part in PRELIM 1' (CINELTA/Capital).

2.2.1 Slack
Over the six months of course preparation and delivery, the majority of PRELIM CoP interaction took place asynchronously on Slack. Communications were organised according to project channels, which were added to as the project progressed in response to members' emerging needs. A designated channel giving a weekly summary of key posts (#thesignpost) was also added this year, in response to a project manager's request. Collated by NILE, for some project managers this feed 'became the default way to ensure that no key information was missed' (Lao TESOL/OIEG).

Engagement on Slack noticeably differed from PRELIM 1 to 2, perhaps due to 'the range of experiences and previous involvement in PRELIM 1' (APC-ELI/Sheffield). With double the number of members, more than half of them new, the first phase of the project saw higher numbers of posts. At this stage, the various CoP channels were acknowledged to be 'really useful as a research tool to learn about other UKI's projects and experiences' (BNTEA/LSI) and 'an excellent springboard for ideas' (ELTAM/Speak Up). Nevertheless, the much larger audience was found to be less practical for some, a number of whom preferred to monitor existing interaction,

rather than post contributions themselves: 'At times it was a struggle to keep up with all the discussions and to actively contribute while managing the project and working on a full-time schedule – a feeling also shared by others within the CoP' (PATEFL/Hilderstone).

As PRELIM 2 courses began in January, interaction on Slack reduced in both quantity and frequency of posts. The observation that 'Slack felt like a large, and daunting space' (ELTAI/ELC) 'with less opportunity to build up a clear personal understanding of all of the different projects that people were engaged in' (TELTA/CES) suggests that the creation of a series of smaller CoPs might be more conducive to interaction. This recommendation is made in several of the reports: 'perhaps some form of grouping of the UK-based institutions would have led to more sharing and more personalised experience' (Lao TESOL/OIEG); 'The range of experiences and previous involvement in PRELIM 1 may have impacted on engagement and contributions to the Slack discussions … It might be useful to create sub-groups for the CoP based on some shared context themes (number of CPs, approach, platform for examples) after the needs analysis phase of the project' (APC-ELI/Sheffield).

In some cases, reduced interaction between the wider community of Slack members was replaced or supplemented by PMs seeking out support directly from the NILE project managers and individual colleagues within the group. The latter led to strong relationships being forged between several different UK institutions, evidenced by a number of collaborative, inter-institutional initiatives. These include:

• **Staff training:** 'Further to sharing advice, methods and concerns with the PRELIM project, LILA* invited staff members from CELT to an internal workshop on using Google Classroom' (INGED/LILA*).

• **Mutual webinar 'guesting' on PRELIM 2 courses:** 'An opportunity to work more closely on a good-will basis with one other UK-based organisation was a very fruitful extension to the "partnered" element of the project as it provided a deeper dive into another project's course design and CP learning outcomes' (UNAE-PINE/Peartree).

• **Extra-PRELIM advice and support:** 'further collaborations have taken place with the DoS of CELT assisting in some aspects of course content beyond PRELIM' (INGED/LILA*).

2.2.2 Zoom

In addition to the asynchronous interaction on Slack, PMs from all PRELIM partnerships were invited to attend a number of synchronous meetings, hosted on the platform Zoom. These were scheduled with regularity throughout phases 1 and 2, to provide additional support to CoP members, at points of need: 'The meetings were well-timed, ahead of upcoming deadlines and tasks, which was particularly useful for those of us who hadn't participated in PRELIM 1' (LAKMA/WLC). At each meeting, attendees were provided with a 'menu' of different themes to choose from, as impetus for discussion in smaller break-out rooms, a structure that 'made it possible for UK partners to focus on areas most relevant to them.' (BelNATE/NSC). In response to the significant increase in the number of PRELIM 2 CoP members, and competing demands on PMs' time, where possible meetings were scheduled flexibly according to members' availability: 'Some meetings had two potential time slots, which was much appreciated as during several periods my workload increased significantly' (LAKMA/WLC).

These live gatherings provided UKI PMs with a window into other partnerships: 'it was useful to see how other schools were progressing' (LATE/WLES), as well as the opportunity to share emerging concerns and uncover possible solutions: 'The live meetings … were a great source of mutual support, particularly mid-way through the programme, when we were struggling with participation and numbers' (ELTAN/IH London). Conversing in real-time with other members also 'helped to embed a genuine sense of community' (SPELTA/KOMELTA/ARU) and to create 'a sense of being part of something bigger' (ELTAI/ELC).

2.3 Working with the course participants (CPs)

Over the course of PRELIM 2, the strong relationships built between UKI tutors and course participants is singled out by many as a project highlight.

In terms of the working relationship between the CES Training Team and the TELTA CPs, I can't be positive enough. It was an incredibly valuable learning experience for the CES team to be able to build and deliver this course to such an engaged and motivated group of teachers. (TELTA/CES)

Delivering a concentrated programme of synchronous input allowed for teachers and CPs to form a close connection. (NETAPERU-TEC/ASCEI/LU)

Working with the Honduran teachers during PRELIM 2 left a strong impression on me. The CPs showed a lot of perseverance in attending class despite a range of issues, including illness, difficulties in accessing the internet, needing to work on the days we studied together. They showed passion for and interest in learning English so that they could then pass along their knowledge to their students. (HELTA TESOL/GSE)

Without doubt, interaction with CPs was the highlight of the course from the perspective of the UK partner. (ELTA-GB/CELT)

The individual partnership reports identify a number of ways in which the experience of working with CPs was enhanced.

2.3.1 Managing CP expectations

For many CPs the experience of attending a remote English course was a new one: 'CPs had not previously had an opportunity to receive professional development in this context before … and this kind of training was not familiar to many' (LATE/WLES). Consequently, participants had a range of expectations about their PRELIM 2 courses (related to scheduling, workload, methodology, content and participation), which at times did not match up to the realities of their design and delivery. Managing CPs' expectations from the outset was identified as a priority by the majority of partnerships: 'Clarifying what the scope of the course is or can be at commencement allows flexibility but avoids unrealistic expectations' (SPELTA/KOMELTA/ARU). For some partners, effective expectation management was considered 'essential to the success of the programme' (MATE/Eurospeak). In pursuit of this end, many partnerships implemented some form of pre-course agreement/ learner contract. Referring to this document was found to be 'useful where participant behaviour didn't match to the expectations of the course' (ELTAI/ELC Brighton).

2.3.2 Learner training

Across many PRELIM 2 partnerships, pre-course training on new or unfamiliar learning platforms was built into course design 'to train users how to navigate [the] workspace and make the most of it' (CINELTA/Capital) and 'to ensure that CPs would be able to participate successfully' (MATE/Eurospeak). Such initiatives ranged from a single introductory training session, covering basic platform functionality and learner etiquette, such as 'muting their microphones, using the raised hand icon and not using L1 in breakout rooms' (ELTAM/IH London) to week-long inductions, enabling greater experimentation with course platforms and activities designed to build rapport among the group: 'A "Week 0" induction … allowed [us] to form a strong initial bond with the CPs and gain deeper insights into [their] cultural contexts' (CINELTA/Capital).

2.3.4 Encouraging participation

PRELIM 2 course participants were practising teachers, student-teachers, or academic managers, for whom the realities of daily life impacted upon course participation. Although participant numbers tended to be high in the earlier stages of course delivery, many partnerships witnessed a degree of drop-off in attendance as the course progressed. Possible causes include: 'Busy work and personal lives, lower prioritisation of "free" (to user) courses and the relative value/enjoyment expected from online vs. face-to-face learning' (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh), as well as inconsistent/limited internet connectivity, and lack of familiarity with mobile applications, or their specific use for educational purposes.

Where courses involved synchronous components, scheduling these at a time best-suited to the CPs had a positive impact on engagement: 'it was vital to ascertain a time that not only fitted in with a busy working day, but also one that considered many had busy family lives following a day's work' (INGED/LILA*). Where in-person attendance was not possible, some projects ensured live sessions were recorded and the accompanying materials shared in the Cloud, ensuring that: 'all participants could at least watch them later or revisit them while completing the weekly assignments' (ELTAM MK/UKLC).

Discussions with ETA partners during phase 1 of the project helped to highlight potential issues relating to CP participation, enabling partners to address these issues pre-emptively in course design. This included establishing clear, simple and transparent systems of CP-tutor communication: 'it was decided that additional social media channels would be an unnecessary information overload' (UNAE-PINE/Peartree) and accessing direct support from ETA partners (and other stakeholders): 'ThaiTESOL and British Council Thailand maintained strong lines of communication with the CPs and their schools to support attendance monitoring and follow-up with CPs who missed sessions throughout the course' (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh). A number of partnerships also used local facilitators effectively to promote participation, a strategy more widely-adopted on this second iteration of the PRELIM project: 'The addition of ETA-recommended facilitators at both primary and secondary levels cemented this collaborative approach and paid huge dividends' (CELT/VietTESOL).

Establishing a sense of community amongst CPs, and between CPs and course tutors, had a positive impact on CP engagement: 'Groups were formed by mixing CPs across regions and or their academic teaching context to broaden the range of their experience on the course' (FAAPI/APPI/AJPI/ APIZALS/ LW).

At times, CP sub-communities were self-forming, and were used as examples of good learning practice, to positive effect: 'it transpired that they were working on the tasks in groups … [We] encouraged them to create mini-communities of practice and complete the tasks in pairs or groups. The submission rate then improved' (Lao TESOL/ OIEG).

2.4 Designing and delivering the course

2.4.1 Recruitment and diagnostics

The initial identification and recruitment of potential CPs was the stage of the project at which ETA involvement was probably at its highest. UKI partners benefited both from access to teachers through their ETA partner's professional networks, as well as the ETA's expert knowledge of the target context. Early on, honest discussions between partners were critical in order to identify any mistaken assumptions and to 'work together to identify the gaps in each other's understandings' (LATAZ/York).

APC-ELI appointed experienced Cuban teacher trainers as facilitators and this helped closely monitor and progress the delivery of the course, not only in the outskirts of Havana but also in remote areas of some provinces which are quite far from the capital city. (APC-ELI/Sheffield)

'Current, local insights are key to understanding the appetite, needs and priorities of CPs when determining course content' (TESOL Italy/Lewis).

Recruitment strategies were wide-ranging, and included (but were not limited to) UKI-made video introductions, flyers, posters and info-sheets which outlined the course, provided tutor mini-bios and were shared via a range of social media, ETA mailing lists and by word-of-mouth. Approaches to needs analyses and/or diagnostic assessment were similarly diverse. For practical reasons, some partners opted for the simplicity of an online survey tool that could be accessed easily from a mobile device, or short voice note recordings to assess spoken English. Other partnerships adopted a more complex, multi-stage approach, consisting of, for example, expression of interest forms, needs analysis questionnaires, short level testing interviews and/or written samples. Reports highlight the benefits of a multi-staged approach (context-permitting): 'a two-step process helped narrow down the number of participants and manage their expectations' (ELTAM/ Speak Up London). Input from partner ETAs on this issue was appreciated: 'ETAs have a broader understanding of local context, so can make a valuable contribution to the development of tools for needs analysis and level testing' (BelNATE/NSC).

The PRELIM 1 project report summary highlights a shift from language testing towards the diagnostic profiling of CPs across many partnerships, and a continuation of this general trend can be observed on PRELIM 2. In some cases, the potential for level testing to result in loss of face (either upon receipt of a low level test score, or CPs being placed in a class where their level was self-evidently low), was understood to have a negative impact on CP confidence, begging the question of whether language testing should be conducted for courses specifically aiming to increase confidence (over language level improvement). Instead, several PRELIM 2 partnerships opted to allow for CP self-identification of linguistic level and/or linguistic confidence. Where possible, data was also gathered on CPs' teaching context(s) (levels and ages taught, class sizes, classroom facilities), career progression to date (teaching experience, involvement in CPD activities), access to technology (hardware and/or connectivity; associated data costs), digital literacy (familiarity with different platforms for online teaching and learning) and their expectations for the course (levels of commitment; availability for synchronous/asynchronous coursework).

2.4.2 Selection of platforms

The choice of platform for course delivery rested with each individual partnership and was informed by a number of factors, such as CP familiarity, prevalence/usage in the target context, intuitiveness, range of functionalities, data usage and privacy. For synchronous sessions Zoom was overwhelmingly the platform of choice, with a small number of partnerships opting for video-conferencing alternatives, e.g. Google Hangouts or Teams. Where CPs accessed courses via mobile phones, tutors were challenged 'to adapt a low-resource approach and to consider other ways of engaging the CPs' (CINELTA/Capital). For many partners, the benefits of adopting a video conferencing application were felt to outweigh any perceived drawbacks, such as loss of connectivity/ delays: 'the decision was taken to persevere with Zoom due to the benefits of real-time aural and visual communication' (CAMELTA/BEST).

Messaging apps were a popular means of communicating with CPs, both synchronously and asynchronously. For some partnerships, the choice of this type of app was highly context-specific, and based on ETA partner's recommendation/CP familiarity, e.g. LINE (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh), whilst on others, CPs were introduced to a new messaging platform altogether: 'Telegram was a new app to many of the CPs but they quickly became adept at using it on the range of devices that they had access to' (HELTA TESOL/GSE). As with UKI-ETA communication, the voice note feature enabled quick, 'friendlier' communication, as well as being 'an excellent way to give personalised feedback on speaking and pronunciation' (ANELTA/IH Bristol).

Messaging apps were also used to support delivery with 'timely reminders, interventions and follow-up comment, as well as for sharing ideas and materials' (CAMELTA/BEST). Where connectivity was an issue, these applications provided a data-light alternative communication channel, alongside the primary video platform, to enable CPs to participate actively: 'This combination of using WhatsApp with live video conference sessions is something we now encourage across all online delivery' (BETA/ inlingua).

When selecting platforms for remote delivery, reports highlight the need to consider both the number and choice of platforms carefully, during the project planning phase: 'Before asking CPs to sign up to multiple platforms, it is important to consider whether the platform has real benefits' (BelNATE/NSC); 'Having only one platform that met all the contextual requirements delivering accessibility, inclusivity and sustainability whilst giving best in class performance would have been ideal' (AzETA/PLS). In the event that a change of platform be required, alternatives might be considered in advance: 'Although the specific challenges of the political context were unusual, future iterations may benefit from partners developing contingency plans in terms of platforms' (SPELTA/KOMELTA/ARU). In contexts where the majority of CPs will access the course via mobile phones, it is recommended that tools be selected and the course designed 'on a 'mobile first' basis' (ELTAI/ELC Brighton).

2.4.3 Course structure and organisation

A flexible approach to course design was characteristic of all PRELIM 2 partnerships. Building on learning from PRELIM 1, many UKI partners adopted a more flexible approach, allowing for the evolution of course design during delivery: 'While the core structure and themes were decided prior to the course commencing, flexibility was also built in and modifications to content and delivery were incorporated as the course progressed, in light of feedback' (BNTEA/LSI); 'Course tutors adopted a flexible approach throughout the course, allowing for adaptations to both content and approach, based on their growing understanding of CPs' needs' (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh College).

In order to meet differing ETA partner and CP needs, the project demanded creativity and diversity of approach in terms of course structure.

- **Ratio of synchronous: asynchronous delivery:** The majority of PRELIM 2 courses included both synchronous and asynchronous components. Asynchronous delivery was found to be both practical (in cases where CPs could not attend live sessions/connectivity was unreliable) and pedagogically effective, allowing 'more time for reflection and analysis on how [CPs] could adapt the materials to the context and what issues they may have' [ELTAM/IH London]. On many courses 'live' sessions complemented asynchronous work, and were found to have a largely positive impact on CP engagement and confidence. These synchronous sessions were 'a chance to practise some of [the concepts/tools] in a safe environment … without the pressure of teaching a class to students at the same time' (Lao TESOL/OIEG).

- **Length/cohorts:** PRELIM 2 courses ranged from four weeks to 12 weeks in length. Whilst the majority of courses were delivered to a single cohort (typically divided into several classes), a small number of partnerships opted to deliver a series of shorter courses, repeated multiple times: 'Not only did this allow for a greater number of participants, but it also ensured that the quality of the course was at a higher standard, as we were able to go into much more depth in each session' (LATE/WLES).

- **CP grouping:** CPs were grouped on different courses according to a range of factors, including their availability for synchronous sessions, level of spoken English and/or self-professed linguistic confidence, age-group taught (primary/secondary/tertiary), geographical location or academic leadership responsibilities. However, as with the overall course structure, on several courses, some adaptation was necessary: 'the groups were initially divided by level and confidence. However, due to poor attendance of low level competence students, the groups were then merged and the sessions were adapted to suit the different levels and needs' (BETA/LILA*).

- **Course breaks:** Embedded opportunities for CPs to apply learning and to catch-up on work missed were found to be useful, giving participants: 'the time and space to try out the things they had learned and report back on them, which helped maintain a sense of learning, achievement and engagement' (GETC/Bell).

- **Tutorials weeks:** Regular check-ins with course tutors provided opportunities to pause and adapt the course to better meet CPs' needs: 'to gain initial feedback on early impressions of the course … and also to look at possible amendments to the themes for the final few sessions' (LAKMA/WLC); 'The tutorial week was a welcome break for the CPs and tutors as the course was generally considered intensive' (ELTAM/Speak Up London).

2.4.4 Course content

Course content was a key point of negotiation between partners, both during planning and delivery of the PRELIM 2 courses. Prior to course commencement, UKI partners looked to a range of sources to inform schemes of work: 'We used a combination of our own initial ideas, input from our partner ETA, and comments from the applicants in the pre-course questionnaire, to create the course outline in terms of content' (LAKMA/WLC). During delivery, an organic, responsive approach to course content was found to be useful, taking into account input from CPs, collected informally during live sessions: 'From each initial webinar content, we were able to "see how things worked", refine the content and choose the most appropriate follow up. This responsive style of course design and delivery was a very positive experience that we can build on in future projects' (LATAZ/York); 'Trainers realised that the course syllabus necessarily needed to be organic and ever-evolving' (ELTAN/IH London). Input was also collected via brief, regularly implemented informal feedback surveys: 'Tutors were able to manage the synchronous aspects of the course well, responding to emergent needs and tailoring the content of the lessons as necessary' (ANELTA/IH Bristol).

As on PRELIM 1, course content included both linguistic and methodological input. Where possible, tutors sought to establish clear links between theory and classroom practice, something that 'allowed participants to use what they learned immediately and they could see the relevance of the new language' (GETC/Bell). Reflection tasks after modelling lessons/activities during synchronous sessions were a common feature: 'Demo lessons were hugely beneficial as CPs were able to put themselves in the position of the learner, while increasing their own language level; the post-lesson analysis allowed for understanding of a framework which CPs could transfer to their own teaching context' (LATE/WLES).

In addition to the courses' language and pedagogical content foci, PRELIM 2 courses also included a stronger emphasis on building CPs' digital skills. This was manifest both in course outcomes, some of which directly refer to building CPs' confidence in using specific technological tools: 'With many teachers recently being required to transition to online teaching as a result of the pandemic, a secondary aim of the course was to introduce CPs to strategies and online tools that would help them to do this more confidently', as well as the integration of initiatives such as a 'Digital Tool of the Week' (TESOL Italy/Lewis).

Where CPs had specific individual requests concerning course content, efforts were made to accommodate these through discursive workshops or via the introduction of dedicated live sessions and 'Special Interest Weeks': 'Giving the CPs the freedom to attend the sessions they wanted (minimum one session) gave them a sense of autonomy' (ELTAM/Speak Up London).

2.4.5 Course methodology

Overall, PRELIM 2 courses sought to adopt a broadly communicative approach, characteristic of the pedagogy and methods typically implemented within UK-based private language schools. Courses were designed to be participant-centred, interactive, and to provide opportunities for meaningful language practice where possible. However, in some cases, the initial stages of course delivery revealed a discrepancy between CPs' own teaching context, and that of course tutors: 'Through a continuous dialogue over the weeks, I ascertained that the way that we have come to deliver our language courses differed to that in Nigeria' (course tutor – ELTAN/IH London); 'As a result, some of the teaching principles or approaches seemed too abstract or theoretical to be applied to the classrooms of the CPs' (CINELTA/Capital). Where trainer and CP methodologies were not clearly aligned, creative adjustments were made: 'This led to a "context adaptation" stage being added to the synchronous sessions where CPs could consider how the methodologies or approaches could be implemented into large classes or with young learners. Course tutors also used asynchronous assignments as a chance to learn more about the CPs' teaching context before delivering sessions' (CINELTA/Capital). On future projects, it is recommended that: 'pre-course needs analyses should investigate the current teaching methodology in the partner country' (ELTAN/IH London).

2.4.6 Course materials

During Phase 1 of the project, ETA and UKI partner discussions informed the selection and development of course materials. For some partners, these initial scoping conversations highlighted a disconnect between materials designed for the global ELT market, and the context-specific needs of their CP group: 'Delivering this course required us to select and create course materials that aligned well with the needs of the CPs, rather than using published materials' (MATE/Eurospeak). The reports also highlight the usefulness of ETAs sharing CPs' teaching materials with their UKI partner, where possible. Doing so not only provided course tutors with an expanded understanding of CPs' local syllabi, but also enabled them to demonstrate adaptations to these contextualized materials: 'Each session utilised a lesson from a Belarusian coursebook, making the sessions relevant to CPs' teaching practice. Reflection tasks also allowed CPs to reflect on their own coursebooks in light of each of the synchronous sessions' (BelNATE/NSC).

2.5   Course outcomes

2.5.1 Outcomes for course participants

(a) Linguistic confidence

The primary aim of the PRELIM project is to increase teachers' levels of confidence. As highlighted in the PRELIM 1 report summary, the relatively short duration of PRELIM courses means that expectations of significant language improvement would likely be misplaced. Due to the subjective nature of measuring self-professed feelings of confidence, the reports evidence confidence-building in a number of different ways. A useful suggestion for consideration in future projects might be: 'to ask CPs "what confidence looks like" to them as part of the pre-registration process. This will give further insights into how, specifically, they can be helped to improve their confidence levels' (Italy TESOL/Lewis).

Both qualitative and quantitative feedback gathered by partners mid- and post-course indicate that the PRELIM 2 courses had a positive impact on participating teachers' linguistic confidence overall. For example, one CP commented that: 'This course helped me to become a better teacher in pronunciation, grammar, listening and vocabulary because we discovered new things which can help us to be better teachers in English' (MATE/Eurospeak). Several partnerships also witnessed increases in CPs' use of English as the course progressed: 'evidenced through fewer exchanges in their L1 and CPs maximising opportunities to recycle the TL from earlier modules in their weekly tasks' in addition to 'a growing amount of support for and interest in each other, with more frequent non-course related exchanges taking place in English over WhatsApp' (TESOL Italy/Lewis). Establishing a supportive and collaborative online classroom atmosphere was felt to be critical in achieving this: 'it became apparent that they had the knowledge but were lacking confidence. By creating a safe space, CPs were able to open up about their concerns which led to an increase in confidence in a non-judgmental environment' (TEFLK/CEA).

Various partnership reports also attest to an increase in teachers' use of English in their own classrooms. For example, data collection among Angolan CPs demonstrated: 'a measurable improvement in both confidence and percentage of English used in the classroom between the pre-course and end-of-course surveys' (ANELTA/IH Bristol). A focus on fluency and meaningful communication over more traditional, accuracy-focused approaches is highlighted as one possible cause: 'Another factor positively affecting teachers we believe was our encouragement to use whatever English the teachers have, without worrying too much about accuracy' (GETC/Bell); 'The Nigerian teachers were very concerned about accuracy, particularly with regards to pronunciation … It was a relief to them to understand that intelligibility is the key thing, that an idea of perfection is limiting and ultimately flawed' (ELTAN/IH London). In some cases, evidence suggests that increased CPs' confidence in their own spoken English had a direct impact on that of their students: 'CP1 mentioned a specific student who rarely spoke in class because they were embarrassed of their accent, but after being exposed to different accents in the same way she had been, and understanding there was not one English accent, they started participating in class' (META/ELAC).

(b) Methodological confidence

PRELIM 2 courses had an effect on CPs' professional confidence, in addition to their language abilities. Some CPs reported changes in their teaching style and/or approach 'to incorporate more student-centred and communicative activities' (ANELTA/IH Bristol). Other reports similarly highlight the adoption of 'tools and techniques that were useful to implement in the classroom' (HELTA TESOL/GSE). As many CPs were actively teaching whilst attending their PRELIM courses, the immediate impact of their learning on everyday classroom practice was noted: 'After each session it was very difficult for me to continue my old teaching approach and practices. I discovered new, amazing things that could make my teaching more vivid and active' (CINELTA/Capital), as well as the benefits experienced by their students: '[The course] taught me a lot about English, but the best thing about the course was the teaching of teaching. Now my students learn better. We don't even want the course to finish' (MATE/Eurospeak).

Another common theme across many of the reports is CPs' perceived confidence in lesson planning and adaptation of lesson materials: 'The course has made me more aware about the new approaches in the teaching of foreign languages … the course has strengthened my confidence as a teacher. I think more about the tasks in the text books. I am not afraid of changing them for my needs' (LATE/WLES).

In some cases, course tutors witnessed development through the course activities: 'Their progress was also observable in the final weeks when I asked them to create productive tasks and I could see how they were beginning to incorporate a more communicative approach to their planning' (ELTAM/IH London); whereas other reports describe CPs' willingness to experiment with new activities and course materials in their own classrooms: 'I used last night's idea today in class and the students loved it!' (CAMELTA/BEST).

As with all aspects of PRELIM course design, support with lesson planning that took local, contextual factors into account was highlighted as best practice: 'Of particular value to CPs were the sessions about lesson planning, using existing or no resources, and activities and techniques appropriate to their context' (BNTEA/LSI).

(c) Digital confidence

As previously mentioned, PRELIM 2 courses featured a more prominent focus on the development of teachers' technological skills. At times, use of specific online tools/platform functions in support of learning were found to contribute to teachers' overall sense of confidence: '[chat and Google Jamboard] were exploited very naturally as they served as a good coping mechanism for those with lower confidence' (Lao TESOL/OIEG). Other reports highlight a more explicit self-belief in the implementation of digital tools in classroom learning: 'I feel more confident speaking English language and I am freer and braver to use a variety of incredible classroom and technology tools the programme gave me' (CP – LAKMA/WLC). As teachers return to their classrooms post-pandemic, provision of ongoing support with the application of digital learning to the face-to-face classroom should perhaps now be considered a priority in teacher education: 'Towards the end of the course some [CPs] were seeking guidance on how to apply the affordances of online learning tools acquired on the PRELIM course to the low-tech, or no-tech physical learning environment … the mastering of this reversal for many teachers will be an area of continuing CPD' (UNAE-PINE/Peartree).

(d) Sustainable networks

One of the most frequently-cited positive outcomes by CPs involved in PRELIM 2 was the opportunity to connect and collaborate with colleagues from across their respective countries. It is hoped that these unique professional support networks will continue to sustain teachers beyond the project.

Throughout the PRELIM training programme you have formed a family without noticing it. When we talk about family, we think about constant exchange between the members … We need to finish what we started and keep the community active. (CP – CINELTA/Capital)

One of the things we noticed was how much the CPs enjoyed sharing their experiences and teaching tips with each other. Many of them had never done this before so they found it extremely valuable. (FAAPI/APPI/AJPI/APIZALS/LW)

2.5.2 Outcomes for English Teacher Associations

The project had positive outcomes for the participating ETAs, which we feel are best described in the words of the partners themselves:

(a) Access to membership

The ETAs having a presence, and even participating, in the classes was critical in providing them with an opportunity to meet and support their members, and in some sense, reconnecting with their members. (FAAPI/APPI/AJPI/APIZALS/LW)

(b) Membership activity/engagement

I want to create a community of teachers with the hope of sharing ideas and more with the dream that it will go worldwide. (CP – ELTAN/IH London)

One participant said in the end-of-course tutorial that the experience had encouraged him to start a local ELTAI chapter which is an excellent result in terms of developing the awareness of ELTAI's activities and network development. (ELTAI/ELC Brighton)

(c) Collaboration/enhanced networking

TEFLK reported that working on this type of project encouraged the organisation to work more collaboratively in the long-term. (TEFLK/CEA)

Through this partnership we made new connections and therefore expanded relationships that we had before … It seems all ETAs have the same concerns and challenges, so together we can be strong and can successfully overcome obstacles and solve problems. In addition, we can share success and achievements. Building strong networks with other ETAs is the main standout point. It will greatly support the capacity building within ETA as well. (ELTAM/IH London)

(d) Support for local government CPD initiatives

Our government adopted a new national program on supporting English education. This project significantly contributed to the implementation of that program. We were asked to enroll and train more teachers. If we continue the project a lot of teachers can benefit from it. (ELTAM/IH London)

2.5.3 Outcomes for UK institutions

(a) Course tutors

Although course tutors working on PRELIM 2 were experienced ELT practitioners, involvement in the project afforded insights into new, unfamiliar teaching and learning contexts. As such, the reports highlight a number of positive development outcomes for UKI teaching staff, highlighted in partners' own words, below:

(i) Reflection on teaching methodologies

Teaching on this course allowed them to learn the best ways to deliver lessons, respond to CPs' needs, and use teaching materials in this unfamiliar teaching context. As a result, they felt that their participation in PRELIM 2 helped them develop their expertise in language teaching. (MATE/Eurospeak)

Course tutors also learnt from CPs; this was not something we had considered, but at the end of each session when everyone shared ideas, tutors also gained knowledge of new apps, activities, and ways to practise L2. (META/ELAC)

The need to work with local contexts showed us how context-driven course development and delivery is key to success. One size does not fit all. (CELT/VietTESOL)

(ii) Professional awareness

It has helped me to appreciate some of the challenges that non-native English teachers deal with such as pronunciation issues and understanding the grammar sufficiently to teach higher levels. (BETA/inlingua)

We as first language English teaching professionals in English-speaking countries need to be more aware of the challenges our overseas colleagues often face in their own contexts, particularly in relation to being able to practise using the language in natural day-to-day contexts, accessing suitable and realistic materials and, at times, persuading their learners of the potential need for being able to become a competent user of English. (BRAZ-TESOL/Wimbledon)

I am really grateful for this experience as it was really fulfilling to see how the course empowered a bunch of fellow teachers from disadvantaged areas. In my opinion this initiative is the quintessential of what education should stand for; caring and sharing for others! (Lao TESOL/OIEG)

(iii) Digital skills

They also liked being able to increase their skills in teaching online, particularly getting used to using Zoom. At first, some found teaching groups online difficult, but have now gained confidence with the platform. This has been a vital area for development for inlingua teachers as we are currently increasing the remote learning services we offer. (BETA/inlingua)

I am now confident about teaching via Google Meet/Classroom. It has given me a more well-rounded skillset and knowledge when it comes to online teaching platforms. I am also better able to deliver lessons which combine language teaching, teacher training and technology training. (Lao TESOL/OIEG)

The Lewis School teachers also found the experience to be a great learning opportunity, as they discovered new online tools themselves. (TESOL Italy/Lewis)

(iv) Course design/materials development

A key learning point from PRELIM 1 was that the project afforded an excellent CPD opportunity for teachers at CEA to become involved in the creation of resources and materials. This was built upon for PRELIM 2 with two teachers from CEA being given overall responsibility for all aspects of course design and delivery including initial needs assessment, lesson content and materials, monitoring, feedback and evaluation. The teachers involved reported that they found this sense of ownership to be motivating. (TEFLK/CEA)

The PRELIM 2 project gave me an excellent opportunity to work collaboratively on course design, something I had never done before. (BelNATE/NSC)

(v) Academic management/leadership skills

PRELIM 2 allowed LB to take more of a leadership role and manage most the project setup, from recycling, revising, amending materials and content to assigning roles with the teaching staff at LILA* and supplying training to staff and colleagues from other schools. This personal progress has served to reaffirm that a role in academic management would be well-suited to her skills and preferences. (INGED/LILA*)

(b) Organisational/project management

Several reports highlight unexpected, emergent outcomes that reflect shifts in organisational approaches, particularly in terms of collaborative working. For some UKIs, PRELIM 2 necessitated new ways of working within, and between, existing organisational teams:

The PRELIM 2 project provided an opportunity for NSC academic and administrative staff to work closely on a project, through to its completion. As well as adding value to NSC staff and their roles, this experience gave participating staff an insight into the challenges faced by their colleagues, and consequently had a unifying effect which has continued beyond the life of the project. (BelNATE/ NSC)

Whilst for others:

The project has highlighted the need for collaborative working outside of one's own school as a way to ensure good quality and inspire business development. (BETA/inlingua)

The benefits of working in partnership, integral to the project, are acknowledged across the many individual partnership reports:

PRELIM has elucidated the benefits of working in an open, transparent partnership, both with overseas partners, but also engaging in a CoP with other UKIs. Edinburgh College's internal processes for needs analysis, monitoring and evaluation, inductions, and report writing have benefited from the insight derived from participation in the PRELIM project. (ThaiTESOL/Edinburgh College)

Furthermore, it is not only course participants' confidence that was positively impacted – but also organisational confidence.

[PRELIM 2 improved] our confidence as an institution able to provide an intensive, online programme on a large scale. (CINELTA/Capital)

2.5.4 Outcomes for NILE

(a) CoP interaction
The sense of solidarity, community and mutual support afforded by the CoP was once again found to be an important aspect of the PRELIM project experience. However, the increased size of the PRELIM 2 CoP (double the original number of UKI constituent members) undoubtedly had a significant impact on both the nature and quantity of member-to-member interaction on the Slack platform. Future iterations of the project may therefore benefit from the formation of sub-groups, or a series of smaller, separate CoPs, a suggestion made by several UKI partners in the reports.

(b) Consultant roles
A further by-product of the increase in CoP size was a noticeable shift in the role of NILE's two project consultants, from that of (predominantly) facilitators of the wider CoP, towards partnership coaching at an individual level. This dynamic has its benefits, but if combined with a greater interaction across all the CoP members, then the sharing of and access to a wider pool of experience would bring added value. A future PRELIM project would see a fostering of the latter, possibly through the measures proposed above.

(c) Decentralised approach(es)
The individual PRELIM 2 reports serve to confirm the decentralised approach to context scoping adopted on both iterations of the project thus far. The approach of using prescribed, project-wide frameworks and universal templates for diagnostic assessment/needs analysis might be useful time-saving devices, however, evidence from both PRELIM 1 and 2 suggests that negotiation of these processes is an integral aspect of partnership building during Phase 1 of the project.

(d) Approach and experience
In terms of course outcomes and the quality of partnerships formed, no discernible difference can be observed between those UKI or ETA partners that took part in PRELIM 1, and those that joined the project on PRELIM 2. This suggests that, though evidently valuable, any previous experience gained through participation in the first round of the project, is less significant than a partner's overall approach and attitude toward project learning.

Once again, the NILE project management team found the experience significantly developmental. Working with a range of highly effective professional ELT organisations and individuals brought many valuable insights into effective working practices. We remain confident in the commitment to quality shared by the practitioners within the international ELT sector of which we are a part.