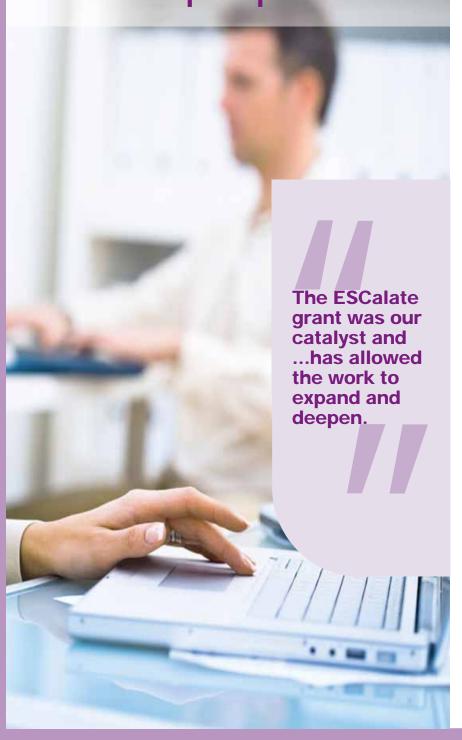# Elisabeth Lazarus

explains how an ESCalate grant was the catalyst for her research into the potential use of videopapers with PGCE students. ▶

Videopapers and Teacher

> **The ESCalate grant was our catalyst and ...has allowed the work to expand and deepen.**

In September 2004 I returned to the PGCE programme at the University of Bristol after having spent three years as Head of Faculty and an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) in a local school to keep myself updated and grounded in the rapidly changing secondary school developments. One of the first events at the Graduate School of Education at Bristol University was a 'show-and-tell' session looking at potentials of new technologies for teaching and learning. My colleague Federica Olivero was demonstrating a new piece of software called 'Videopapers Builder' she was using for creating videopapers for disseminating research by teachers (see Olivero et al., 2004). Watching her I was really struck by the potential videopapers could have for my field of initial teacher education.

Videopapers are multimedia documents that integrate and synchronise video, images and text in one non-linear cohesive document. They can easily be created via the free software Video Paper Builder 3[1] and were developed as part of the 'Bridging Research and Practice' project at TERC in Boston, MA to create an

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alternative genre for the production, use and dissemination of educational research.

The idea of trialling videopapers and researching their potential for ITE took hold but it was only a Small Grant from ESCalate in spring 2005 which meant that we could start the project in earnest. We began piloting by working with small trial groups of Modern Foreign Language (MFL) PGCE students who replaced one of their assignments with a videopaper. In their videopaper they were able to select sequences and moments in their lessons (video clips), link these to children's work (slides), personal analysis and reflection (text), underpinned by research (text) and hyperlinked to resources and lesson plans – all in one place and one environment thereby creating a potentially powerful digital product (Lazarus and Olivero, 2009).

There were of course teething problems as with all technology and being able to tap into Federica's expertise as both researcher and technical advisor on the project, through the Small Grant, was invaluable to me. We collected data on areas such as:

■ The process of creating and reading a videopaper

■ The relationships between creating a videopaper and writing an essay and assessment
■ Student teachers' perceptions of videopapers as tools to support self-reflection
■ The structure and content of videopapers and comparisons of videopapers by different groups.

After positive experiences with a range of different MFL groups we have shared our findings through workshops and conferences both nationally and internationally. Meanwhile the network of teacher educators using videopapers in their work expanded within the University of Bristol and beyond to Sweden and Norway. In 2007 colleagues from Bergen, Boston and Bristol, for example, held a joint symposium on videopapers at EARLi (Olivero and Lazarus, 2007).

The ESCalate grant was our catalyst and together with funding from the Graduate School of Education at the University of Bristol has allowed the work to expand and deepen. It has also meant that this year all PGCE MFL students reflected on and demonstrated their practice and knowledge through a videopaper.

1 http://vpb.concord.org

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