DOCTOR OF TEACHING

Thesis

CHANGE YOUR WORLD. CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY

BEGINNING TEACHER MENTORING
IN ADULT & CONTINUING EDUCATION

By

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted for the degree of Doctor of Teaching of the Charles Darwin University, is the result of my own investigations, and that all references to the ideas and work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged. I hereby certify that the work embodied in the thesis has not been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

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(Monday 3rd September, 2007)

ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine key elements which contributed to an effective mentoring program for an adult distance learner residing in an area with limited available educational resources. The research was carried out over three months using a participatory action research methodology. The mentee was an adult distance learner living and working in Brunei Darussalam, and aspiring to become a vocational/technical adult trainer. The mentor was an adult educator experienced with mentoring distance learners and with a background in the hospitality industry. The study was carried out as part of the mentor's professional learning. The mentoring process involved formulating personal vision and action plans; preparations for the mentee's lessons; lesson observations; and lesson debriefings. The mentoring program culminated in a series of four lessons about pest control presented by the mentee to eight workers employed by a bakery.

Data was collected from written lesson observations, mentee journal entries and other writings, post-program questionnaires and discussions between the mentor and mentee during the program. Data analysis revealed four themes reflecting elements of the program which bore strongly on the program's effectiveness: (1) sensitivity to educational and cultural context; (2) focus on student learning strategies; (3) moving from a hierarchical to a more collaborative mentoring style; and (4) joint enthusiasm for the program. The study also examined how interiority and reflectivity on the part of the mentor, and emotional intelligence on the parts of both the mentor and the mentee played important roles in directing the mentoring process away from a hierarchical and towards a more collaborative relationship.

On the whole, the mentoring program was effective in helping the mentee to achieve his objectives of improving his teaching strategies and course preparation, enabling him to make progress toward an adult teaching qualification. However, several areas of improvement for the mentoring program were identified. The program designed and implemented in this study reflected most of the elements of educative mentoring, but how these elements were exemplified was affected by the unique context of the study. Implications for theory and practice included the importance of realising that adult education distance learners with limited available educational resources are a unique group for whom mentoring can be very valuable and that further research into mentoring programs for these individuals is needed.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In school systems around the world, mentoring is now regarded as one of the most effective solutions to the growing shortages of teachers (Mills, Moore, & Keane, 2001, p. 124). However, the concept and practice of mentoring needs to be adapted to a world in which teachers must cope with many changes: an explosion of information available on the Internet; greater diversity of the student population; and an increase in curriculum preparation and training requirements (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1999, p. 1, 3).

To rise to these challenges, a more collaborative approach to mentoring is beginning to replace the hierarchical structure in which mentors are viewed mainly as disseminators of information to their mentees. The idea here is that the age-old concept which treats mentors as older experts whose role is simply to transmit knowledge to mentees needs to be replaced by an interactive model of teacher collaboration. Such a mentoring relationship not only taps into the knowledge and experience of mentors, it also elicits novice teachers' knowledge of the latest teaching strategies and education research. By working together as a team, both mentors and student teachers can embark on an extraordinary journey of learning which will enhance their capacity to grow (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1999, p. 6).

Given its potential for improving mentoring practice, it is important that the collaborative approach to mentoring be further explored. One area in which additional inquiry is warranted is in adult education, and perhaps especially in regard to distance learning. Distance learners may find mentoring to be especially valuable due to their isolation from peers and others with whom they might share their experiences, thoughts and feelings about their educational efforts and from whom they might gain valuable feedback.

Among adult distance learners, mentoring may be most beneficial for those who reside in locales with limited local educational resources in the learner's area of interest. An English speaking adult education distance learner whose home institution is in Melbourne, and who resides in Auckland, may enjoy relatively abundant educational resources nearby. The same may not be the case if the learner resides in a non-

English speaking country in a locale with limited library resources. Mentoring for the latter individual may be an especially useful tool for furthering his or her educational progress.

Problem and Research Question

Given the valuable role which mentoring may play for distance learners in adult education who reside in locales with limited educational resources, it is important to understand what mentoring approach is most effective for those learners. A good deal has been written on the concept of mentoring, and considerable research has been conducted in the area. However, there is little if any research on the specific issue of which mentoring style or approach is most suitable for adult education distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources. These limitations may take the form of some or all of the following: (a) limited available local information in the learner's native language; (b) limited available local information in any language; or (c) limited local people with whom the learner may profitably converse about his or her areas of interest. Adult learners residing in such locales may have resided in the locale for a few weeks to many years, and they may or may not be fluent in the local language. However, they are alike in having to deal with limited available local educational resources in their area of interest.

Because mentoring can be so valuable for such learners, it is important to understand what mentoring approach is most effective for them. This was the problem which motivated this study. In particular, the study sought to answer the following research question:

> *What are the key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources in his or her area of interest?*

Methodology

The research took the form of an action research project. The project consisted of my design, implementation and evaluation of a program in which I mentored a new adult education teacher who was learning at a distance. The mentee, a male, was studying

through Northern Territory University (NTU), since renamed Charles Darwin University, to become a vocational/technical educator of adults. At that time he resided in Brunei Darussalam, and was thus a distance learner. In this locale, the mentee had limited local educational resources available in his area of interest. Furthermore, the assistance provided to new teachers is limited to induction in Brunei Darussalam (Stephens & Moskowitz, 1997, p. 5). The individual thus faced a situation in which mentoring might prove to be an especially valuable tool for his educational progress.

As I mentored the new teacher, I investigated the question which motivated this study: *What kind of mentoring approach is most effective for a distance learner residing in a locale with limited local available educational resources?* The following chapters report the results of the study. Included is an overview of the research in teacher mentoring, with an emphasis on the collaborative model applied to adult and continuing education. The major components of mentoring and various approaches to mentoring are some of the issues which will be highlighted and analysed in this study. The discussion of these topics will provide the theoretical framework for analysing the data. The results of the project provide an answer to the research question and help to demonstrate the connection between theory and practice. The ways in which data from the project were applied to my mentoring behaviours, enabling me to reflect upon them critically, is also reported.

Personal Motivation for the Research

I undertook this research because the concept and efficacy of mentoring are of special interest to me, given my background in adult education. After going to only year ten in high school, I worked for over fifteen years in the hospitality industry. I then started an adult teaching Diploma, whilst teaching part-time. Joining as a mature age student, I found my mind opening up and enjoyed the academic experience so much that I continued with my studies into a Bachelor of Education (Adult Education) and then onto a Master of Educational Studies and finally the Northern Territory, Australia, Doctor of Teaching. Within all of these courses, I studied a variety of subjects, mainly in educational management, teaching strategies and related subjects.

Since the Diploma, I have studied via the distance mode, as I needed to keep working as well. While working overseas in Brunei, I did not have the opportunity to

study in the local Brunei University at that time, as they did not allow foreign students to enrol in courses. In Brunei, at the time of this study, only local students were allowed to attend schools, colleges and universities. This also created a problem for resources: Firstly, as the university library was only for enrolled students, hence non-locals were not able to borrow study materials. Also at that time, there were no computers in the university or internet. As a result of knowing how difficult it was for both myself and others to study in a location where materials are not easy to obtain or use, for many years I also mentored others who studied by distance education. As one who has mentored others by distance, I have become aware of how lonely and difficult distance learning can be at times for a new teacher, and I believe, based on my own experience, that such difficulties are faced by virtually all new teachers to some extent. Mentoring, in both distance and more traditional environments (non-distance), is one of the most potentially useful strategies for alleviating these difficulties by providing feedback, ideas, positive reinforcement and a concerned human face to new teachers. Therefore, it was natural for me to want to develop and evaluate a mentoring program which might help others, while improving my own methods. This is what I sought to do in this research.

Significance of the Study

As nations all over the world grapple with the need to improve the academic performance of students of all ages, teacher mentoring has emerged as an increasingly important solution. The potentialities of mentoring have only recently begun to be understood. For example, beyond providing instructional aid and psychological support for novice teachers, mentors can also perform an important function by cultivating their mentees' professional development through use of innovative educational principles, such as reflective thinking (Mutchler, 2000, pp. 3-4). Such innovative educational ideas need to be explored and promoted even though they challenge the traditional practices of teaching. Furthermore, instead of training beginning teachers to maintain the status quo, mentors can and should encourage them to become change agents who will improve their schools (Kajs et al., 2001).

The topic of mentoring thus has tremendous ramifications for the future of adult education. The evolution of the mentoring process, with the development of new concepts such as group mentoring and telementoring, holds one key to the

transformation of the education system, as mentors collaborate and cooperate with their mentees to create an education system which is founded on innovation and creativity.

However, there remain many aspects of effective mentoring which are not yet well understood. It is possible, for example, that different mentoring approaches may have varying degrees of effectiveness for different sorts of mentees. Therefore, it is important that research on the effectiveness of mentoring approaches for different groups be conducted.

The significance of the present study lies in the value of understanding the most effective mentoring style for a unique group of adult distance learners. Adult distance learners typically face difficulties which other learners do not. These include being unable to attend classes or to meet one-on-one with instructors. Unless there are other learners in his or her field residing nearby, the learner may also lack the opportunity to discuss what is being learned with other classmates over a cup of coffee or tea. If the adult distance learner also resides in an area with limited available educational resources, the difficulty of distance learning is compounded.

Entering into a face-to-face mentoring relationship can help to alleviate these problems, but for this to happen it is crucial for the mentor-mentee relationship to proceed as effectively as possible. Research about which mentoring style is most effective for adult distance learners residing in areas with limited educational resources can help clarify for mentors how best to work with such learners. As a result, the mentor will be better able to help the distance learner to overcome the unique difficulties which he or she faces.

Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into four chapters following this introduction. Chapter 2, *Literature Review,* provides a comprehensive overview of the topic of teacher mentoring and establishes a theoretical framework for analysing the research data. The individual sections presented are:

- Concepts of mentoring;
- Key components of mentoring;

- Approaches to mentoring;
- Behaviours which facilitate or hinder the mentoring process;
- Research Studies; and
- Telementoring.

Chapter 3, *Research Methodology*, describes the data collection and analysis procedures for the study. The design and implementation of an action research project for identifying effective characteristics of a mentoring program and mentors is presented in detail.

Chapter 4 presents the *Results* of the study. The chapter evaluates the mentoring program and the performances of the mentor based on the theoretical framework erected in Chapter Two. The data is compared with the theoretical concepts discussed in the literature review, such as the concepts of reflective practice and supervision.

Chapter 5, *Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations,* summarises the study and draws conclusions. Recommendations for future research and for creating an ideal mentoring program for mentors and mentees are also offered.

Summary of the Chapter

This introductory chapter provided an overview of the study. Following a brief background, the chapter identified the study problem and the research question, and it then outlined the study methodology. The personal motivation for the research was then discussed, and the significance of the study was explained. Finally, an overview of the study was provided.

The next chapter will review literature relevant to the research. This will provide a theoretical context for analysing the study results in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the theoretical background for analysing the data collected during the implementation of the action research project. The chapter is divided into six main sections following this overview. In the first section, multiple definitions of the concept of mentoring are explored in order to illustrate the multi-faceted nature of the concept. Because different individuals and institutions have varying perceptions of the purpose and function of mentoring, it is important to identify these various definitions of mentoring at the outset of the literature review.

The second main section identifies and examines the fundamental components involved in mentoring teachers. The section is divided into six main parts which focus on: (1) the relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher; (2) the knowledge and skills required of mentors; (3) the value of reflective practice for mentoring; (4) teacher supervision; (5) developing a mentor training program; and (6) establishing a system of accountability.

The third section examines the assumptions, practices and outcomes of various common approaches to mentoring. Traditionally, the orientation and instructional development models have been employed to initiate beginning teachers into the teaching environment and provide them with standardised teaching techniques. However, in recent years, the literature has highlighted the rise of novel approaches to mentoring such as educative mentoring and professional development. These topics are discussed in the section, along with orientation, instructional training and transformative mentoring relationships.

The fourth section of the literature review highlights the behaviours which can facilitate or undermine the mentoring process. The analysis of these behaviours is based on the criteria for assessing the personal qualities and skills of effective mentors.

The fifth section focuses on research studies analysing the factors which contribute to the effectiveness of mentoring programs. These research findings offer additional insight into the discussion of this topic.

The sixth section discusses telementoring, or online mentoring. Though telementoring was not employed in the present study, it is a topic of particular interest to adult distance learners and perhaps especially distance learners who reside in locales with limited local educational resources. The section explores how advances in computer technologies can facilitate or undermine the objectives of the mentoring process.

This study is not about studying via distance in Brunei, even thought the study was conducted here. It is aimed at highlighting the problems faced by a distance learner in a situation where resources and facilities are limited. To date, there have been no studies conducted in Brunei in this research area.

Concepts of Mentoring

The idea of mentoring stems from ancient Greece, where Odysseus asked his friend Mentor to look after and guide his son Telemarchus while Odysseus was away at the Trojan War. From that origin, the concept of mentor has generally been considered to apply to a more experienced person who guides and assists a less experienced person in his or her professional development (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001). However, the term "mentor" is not precise, and one of the challenges of implementing mentoring programs stems from the fact that mentoring remains a multi-faceted concept which has not been clearly defined within the education community. According to Mott (n. d.) , many terms such as "guide, role model and sponsor" have been used interchangeably to refer to the concept of mentor. Within the professional context, Ragins (1997) defined mentors as individuals who not only possess specialised skills and knowledge, but also dedicate their time and effort to advancing the career of their mentees. Sands, Parson and Duane (1992) emphasised that mentors assist their mentees in their career development by nurturing them in various ways. According to them, a mentor is "a professional guide who nurtures and promotes the learning and success of his or her mentee" (p. 124).

From the perspective of Kram and Isabella (1985), it is important to distinguish between the terms used to define mentors in order to clarify the expectations of the parties involved. To Kram and Isabella (1985), a mentor who serves as a role model or a sponsor does not establish a personal relationship with the mentee. Focused on cultivating the professional development of the mentee, the mentor is not at all concerned with the psychosocial development of the mentee. On the other hand, it is

evident that in the cultivation of novice teachers who are emotionally overwhelmed by their teaching burdens, mentors cannot ignore the psychosocial development and concerns of the novice teachers.

Therefore, Kram and Isabella (1985) highlighted two fundamental functions of mentoring: career and psychosocial development of the mentee. With the component of career development, mentors enhance the career prospects of their mentees by teaching them knowledge and skills and introducing them to established social networks. In contrast, mentors providing psychosocial guidance cultivate an intimate and trusting relationship based on mutual respect, friendship, concern and emotional support. Although it is not generally perceived as an important aspect of the development of mentees, the recognition of the psychosocial well-being of the mentee lies at the heart of the success of effective mentoring relationships. As Daloz (1986) explained, mentors who show respect and concern for the unique perspectives of their mentees and offer them praise and encouragement on a periodic basis will be better able to cultivate a positive relationship with their mentees in the long term. Instead of enforcing the unequitable nature of the relationship, these mentors are able to acknowledge the potential contributions of their mentees and establish a relationship which can cultivate the development of both the mentors and the mentees.

Although the mentoring process was initially perceived as a one-way transmission of information from the mentor to the mentee, Cohen (1995) noted that it has since evolved to become a more sophisticated and collaborative activity which focuses on the nature of the relationship between the mentor and the mentee. In the most recent conception, mentors and mentees exchange information with one another, reflect critically on their teaching practices and challenge one another to develop novel instructional approaches which can improve the quality of learning experiences. For the mentors, their responsibility is to create an ideal environment for the mentees to assert their independence and confidence in trying out their own ideas, to learn from their mistakes and to grow from the experience. Kochan and Trimble (2000) emphasise the importance of a trusting atmosphere in such reflective collaborative mentoring relationships.

Bennetts (2002) pointed out that mentoring relationships may engender a certain amount of psychological and emotional intimacy. She investigated mentoring in the arts and noted that mentor relationships can engage both the intellect and the

emotions of both mentor and mentee. This may be especially true for collaborative relationships in which there is substantial feedback in both directions.

Considering the different approaches, it is apparent that mentoring programs and practices in different educational institutions occupy various points of a spectrum which ranges from the traditional and conservative to the liberal and radical concept of mentoring. While mentees are mentored primarily to conform to the status quo of the educational institutions in the conservative model, their counterparts will be encouraged to explore new teaching strategies and question existing teaching practices in a liberal or radical model. Yet other institutions will adopt a middle stance by combining various philosophies of mentoring (Hansman, Mott, Ellinger, & Guy, 2002). These diverse conceptions of mentoring will be explored in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Key Components of Mentoring

Various educators have provided their own distinctive perspectives of what they consider to be the key components of mentoring. Kajs and his colleagues (2001) mention three components which should be considered in the mentoring process:

1) The relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher;
2) The extent of knowledge and skills of mentors; and
3) An established system which will hold both parties responsible for their effort (p. 2).

Along with these, Kajs et al (2001) also maintain that several other key components of mentoring should also be mentioned:

4) Reflection, which is an aspect of mentoring skill, is crucial to the development of both the mentor and the mentoring relationship.
5) Teacher supervision is a key area in which mentoring practice is evolving.
6) Development of an effective mentor training program is another key feature which helps to determine mentoring success.

This section discusses each of these six fundamental aspects of mentoring. By doing so, it helps provide a better understanding of the variety of factors on which effective mentoring depends.

Relationship between Mentor and Novice Teacher

Covey (1997) pointed out that a strong relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher holds the key to the ultimate success of the mentoring experience. Essentially, Cline and Necochea (1997) believed that both the mentor and the novice teacher should be compatible with one another in order to facilitate personal and professional interactions and establish a caring and trusting relationship.

One of the first steps in forging a positive mentor-mentee relationship is to clarify the roles and expectations of both parties. As Nelson and Quick (1997) observed, mentors and mentees often have different expectations of their roles. While the mentors' perceptions are governed by their previous experiences with other novice teachers, the mentees' feelings are shaped by their inexperience with the mentoring process. Without establishing these roles and expectations clearly, mentors and mentees can have a stressful and frustrating relationship.

Much of the problem stems from the diverse conceptions of mentoring. Mentors are often regarded merely as teachers or preceptors. Preceptorship implies command and authority rather than the collaboration of mentoring. As Hargreaves and Fullan (1999) pointed out, this perception of mentors as precept teachers who simply transmit their learning to students should be revised. Mills and others (2001) stressed their belief that, ideally, mentors should play a variety of roles. Apart from offering feedback, advice and information about teaching techniques, mentors should act as facilitators in helping their mentees to achieve their objectives and improve their teaching. Furthermore, they should also be sensitive to the emotional needs of their mentees, who are going through a challenging period of transition. The emphasis is on the establishment of strong and trusting relationships so that mentors and mentees can share ideas and feelings about teaching without fear and inhibition (p. 124).

Because it is so important for mentors and their mentees to get along with one another, Kajs and others (2001) suggested that the principal and/or selection committee should gather specific information from prospective mentors and mentees regarding the mentoring process. Once the mentors and the mentees are matched together, they should be given opportunities to share their experiences and opinions about mentoring. These interactions will offer further information about the compatibility between the two parties (p. 2).

In a report by Robin Fox (2003) from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Junior Professorial Faculty Mentoring Program, it was stated that the mentor should not be in a supervisory role to the mentee. It should be a collaborative and fostering relationship. The "match" between the mentor and mentee is critically important to facilitate the development of a beneficial relationship.

It is the opinion of the writer that mentors and mentees need to be provided with the opportunity to self select. However in some cases where this does not or cannot work, a coordinator could carefully and diplomatically suggest partnerships. A follow up process to ensure mentors and mentees have the opportunity to modify their matched relationships is desirable. There are many reasons for a relationship to be unacceptable. These may include obvious reasons such as: conflict of interest (commercial incompatibility); personal or family reasons (they may be related); process or procedural issues (incompatible work schedules); operational or technical issues (incompatible areas of interest): or personal dislike.

Knowledge and Skills of Mentors

In order to best fulfil their mentoring function, prospective mentors should not only be good teachers. More significantly, mentors need to adapt to the changes in the development of their mentees over time. In his work, Berliner (1988) revealed that teachers go through five stages of development: "Novice, advanced beginner, competent teacher, proficient teacher, and expert" (in Kajs et al., 2001, p. 3). Essentially, Crewson and Fisher (1997) stated that mentors have to adjust their guidance and assistance to the needs of their mentees. Concomitantly, the fluctuations in the emotions of their mentees also need to be addressed, especially during the initial period (Spuhler & Zetler, 1994). This may be a stressful and/or uneasy time for new teachers and they may go through a variety of emotions, such as nervousness, anxiety, apprehension or even over-enthusiasm. In which case the mentor should be aware of the mentees emotions and approach each problem or situation as needed.

It is important that mentors have strong interpersonal skills so that they can relate to the emotional needs of their mentees. According to Cordeira and Smith-Sloan (1995), mentors devote most of their energies to providing emotional support and guidance to their mentees by listening, counselling and encouraging them to overcome their fears

(in Kajs et al., 2001, p. 3). To best do this, mentors themselves should have high emotional intelligence, where this may be defined as having characteristics such as being able to regulate moods, control impulses, persist in the face of frustrations, motivate oneself and empathise with others (Goleman, 1995). Bennetts (2002) found that in traditional mentoring relationships among creative people, mentors were thought to rank highly in such qualities.

At the same time, Hawkey (1997) also believed that mentors can play an important role in motivating their mentees to improve the school environment, instead of holding on to obsolete school practices which should be altered. Certainly, mentors need to be well versed in adult education principles. The mentor's knowledge in this area is particularly important for adult and further education. Weise (1992) highlighted the fact that adults require learning experiences with these characteristics: "self-directed, problem-centred, experiential and role-related" (p. 22 in Kajs et al., 2001, p. 4). Beyond helping adult students to acquire problem-solving skills, teachers also need to be able to teach them how to discover problems. Mentors have to play a significant role in guiding mentees in the process of reflective thinking so that the latter can provide their students with challenging and stimulating learning experiences (Kajs et al., 2001, p. 4).

In this study, the in-depth understanding of the instructional guidance provided by mentors to mentees will be further explored, with the analysis of two associated concepts: reflective practice and supervision. Both of these concepts are inextricably interwoven with the roles played by mentors and their mentees with regards to classroom instruction.

Reflective Practice and Critical Reflection

Reflection is one of the most important components of effective mentoring. After providing an overview of reflection, the following sections discuss main aspects of reflective practice and critical reflection, and how reflective practice and critical reflection relate to mentoring.

Reflection can be defined as *"the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences"* (Daudelin, 1996, p. 39). Reflection is an aspect of a person's interiority, which includes feelings, thoughts, spiritual experiences and sense of connection to

others (Tischler, 2005). Interiority is roughly the same as subjectivity and can be contrasted with objective physical aspects of the person such as the body and voice. Tischler (2005) noted that over the past several hundred years, Western and highly developed societies have emphasised exteriority, while interiority has been relegated to an inferior position. However, as reflection's value for education is increasingly understood, interiority/subjectivity is being placed more in the forefront.

A main goal of reflection is to learn from experience so as to improve the quality of one's interactions with others in the future (Nagata, 2004). This is one of its primary values for educators. In reflective practice, the educator goes further than simple reflection by creating a habit, a structure or a routine directed toward reflection (Amulya, n.d.). Such reflection is a necessary aspect of learning because experience alone does not result in learning. For learning to occur, the individual must engage in structured reflection about that experience (Boud et al., 1985).

Reflective practice is a valuable tool for novice teachers and experienced teachers as they continue their development as dedicated educators. According to Reiman (1999), the process of reflective thinking challenges teachers to revise their perspective about their roles as teachers. Instead of clinging onto their teaching routines, these teachers will be willing to embrace uncertainty, tolerate differences of perspectives and acknowledge their students' contribution to the learning experience. This takes effort. Reflection does not appear to be a spontaneous activity in our daily lives or professions (Gelter, 2003). As a result, conscious, intentional reflection on experience can be difficult (Boud et al., 1985). Atherton (2005) suggested that successful reflective practice for the beginning professional may require a mentor or a professional supervisor who can ask the beginner questions to help direct his or her reflections toward useful insights instead of toward less effective results such as self-justification.

Reflective thinking is something which can be done not only after the fact, but during an experience or while a lesson is being taught. Schön (1987a) explained how immediate reflective thinking can enable teachers to be "surprised" by their students and adjust their teaching strategies on the spot, or improvise. In this way, they transform routine or rote teaching into "a form of reflection-in-action" (p. 5). Instead of clinging to their previous knowledge and training, these teachers pay attention to the needs and interests of their students, thus bridging the gap between their perceptions and those of their students. Moreover, through their improvisation, these teachers can

invent innovative methods (pp. 5-6). According to Imel (1992), this aspect of reflective practice is particularly important in adult education programs. In these settings, students and educators confront issues and courses which display a tremendous amount of "ambiguity, complexity, variety and conflicting values" (p. 2). Thus, teachers need to be able to deviate from the courses in order to address their students' queries.

According to Schön (1987a), a secondary aspect of reflective practice, "reflection-on-action," involves "Reflection on-reflection-in-action" (p. 6). Kottkamp (1990) further elaborated on this concept by explaining that reflection-on-action occurs after the classroom situation. The teachers are able to analyse the events from a critical distance and obtain the perspectives of fellow educators and mentors.

Brookfield (1988, 1995) has spent considerable effort defining and explaining the concept of critical reflection, which he argues is an indispensable tool for the improvement of education. There are four key aspects of critical reflection:

- Assumption analysis to uncover unconscious assumptions that the teacher may have about teaching;

- Contextual awareness to become aware of how assumptions are related to the overall social and political educational context.

- Imaginative speculation to devise new ways in which the teacher can view his or her teaching efforts.

- Reflective scepticism in which the teacher continues to question his or her views

(Brookfield, 1988).

By going through this process of critical reflection, many teachers are able to understand not only hidden assumptions they make about their profession and their role as teachers, but also how those assumptions may affect their teaching practice. This understanding can enable them to formulate more rational principles to govern their practice.

Critical reflection about teaching is not something that the teacher does entirely alone, according to Brookfield (1995). Rather, there are four perspectives which can assist the teacher to discover the conscious or unconscious assumptions which underlie his or her practice. The first of these is self-reflection about the teacher's own personal history, which can help the teacher discover his assumptions and prejudices about teaching overall, and about his or her own teaching. The second is

student feedback about the way the teacher's students perceive their classes, their assignments and the teacher's efforts. The third is feedback from colleagues, or in other words, *collaborative construction* or how best to use the "*wisdom of the crowd*", which can provide valuable feedback if non-threatening and positive ways to gain that feedback can be devised. The fourth is educational theory, through which the teacher can gain a more critical perspective on teaching and examine his or her practice in the light of various theories.

Critical reflection which results in a teacher's questioning of assumptions can help undermine the political and social power structures which shape education and hinder educational excellence (Brookfield, 1995). Assumption analysis and contextual awareness help the teacher to understand the ways powerful influences distort educational processes for their own purposes. Some common educational assumptions which seem desirable at first may not actually be so. They are supported by powerful interests not for the sake of good education but in order to protect and further their interests. Uncovering these assumptions through critical reflection enables the teacher to re-imagine what excellence in the classroom involves. In this way, if critical reflection were widely practiced, it could help lead to the transformation of the educational system (Brookfield, 1995).

Unfortunately, it can be difficult for a teacher to engage fellow teachers in critical reflection. Colleagues may feel threatened when difficult and challenging questions about assumptions are posed. Some may be afraid that such discussions could ultimately harm their careers or make teaching more difficult. As a result, the teacher who engages in critical thinking runs the risk of alienating fellow teachers and of becoming marginalised (Brookfield, 1995).

Reflective practice and critical reflection are valuable not only for the classroom teacher; they should also be an integral part of mentoring in several ways. First, reflection can be used to enhance the mentoring process. Effective mentoring requires the mentor to reflect on his or her own behaviours toward the mentee and their effectiveness in achieving the desired goals. The mentor should pay close attention to clues which the mentee may provide about the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship as the mentoring process unfolds. The evaluation of possible threats to effectiveness includes the mentor examining his or her own attitudes, assumptions and behaviours in order to determine whether changes are in order (Brookfield, 1995). Atherton (2005), states that:

"The cultivation of the capacity to reflect in action (while doing something) and on action (after you have done it) has become an important feature of professional training programmes in many disciplines, and its encouragement is seen as a particularly important aspect of the role of the mentor of the beginning professional. Indeed, it can be argued that "real" reflective practice needs another person as mentor or professional supervisor, who can ask appropriate questions to ensure that the reflection goes somewhere, and does not get bogged down in self-justification, self-indulgence or self-pity!'

Schön (1983) also suggested that the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning was one of the defining characteristics of professional practice.

Reflective practice which enhances the mentoring process also extends to the mentor and mentee reflecting together. Kochan and Trimble (2000) held that in collaborative mentoring relationships, both mentor and mentee may profitably reflect together on the status of the relationship and whether it should be continued, altered in certain ways or even dissolved. They pointed out the importance of mentor and mentee discussing, on a regular basis, and in an atmosphere of trust, the status of the relationship. The benefits of these regular discussions could include discussing areas of concern, questions, ideas, philosophies, or reflections, for example. Reflections could be on something that came up in the classroom or workplace, or from something that was read. The main areas in which regular discussion would be most beneficial would be for reflection and planning. The benefits of these regular discussions could include discussing areas of concern, questions, ideas, philosophies, or reflections, for example. Reflections could be on something that came up in the classroom or workplace, or from something that was read. The main areas in which regular discussion would be most beneficial would be for reflection and planning.

A second main way in which reflective practice is important to mentoring is through the mentor's cultivating the development of spontaneous reflection as a habit in their mentees (Reiman, 1999). Lasley (1989) noted that mentors who possess substantial knowledge of rules and techniques of teaching can enhance their mentees' reflection process by ensuring that the latter do not repeat their mistakes. At the same time, the mentors' profound awareness of their teaching role will also challenge their mentees to reflect beyond the accurate application of teaching techniques.

One method which mentors can use to help their mentees develop their abilities to reflect is described by Peters (1991). This method, called DATA, has four steps: *Describe, Analyse, Theorise and Act.* First, the mentor and the mentee identify and describe a problematic area of practice which needs to be altered. Second, the assumptions and the theoretical approach underlying the original teaching technique (the one which needs to be replaced) are examined. Essentially, the mentor and the mentee want to tap into the underlying reasons which motivated the mentee to utilise the original method in the first place. Third, the mentor and the mentee explore alternative ways of changing the original technique and formulate new approaches based on endorsed theories. The final step of DATA involves the appropriate implementation of the selected approach (pp. 91-5).

A third way in which reflection can be an important part of mentoring is through the use of critical reflection as defined by Brookfield (1988, 1995). The mentor can employ the critical reflection process to uncover any hidden assumptions he or she may have about the mentoring role and process. This includes being sensitive to the political and social context which may underlie any assumptions. Mentors can be persistent in asking what the ingredients of effective mentoring are, and whether a sponsoring institution or some aspect of the social or political context is supporting assumptions which are somehow hindering effective mentoring. At the same time, the mentor can help his or her mentee to understand the purpose and importance of critical reflection.

This critical reflection can then improve feedback techniques utilised by the mentor, who is then able to constantly improve their methods of feedback. One method used in this research study was the four-step action research project model developed by Professor Richard Donato, in the feedback sessions with the mentee. This enabled the mentor to frame her thinking and shape the design of the mentoring program. The 4-part model Professor Donato developed for organising the projects was drawn from the literature on action research and involved a cycle of *thinking, acting, reflecting, and rethinking* (Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, 1988; Mills, 2003; Stringer, 1996; Wallace, 2000; Burnaford, Fischer, & Hobson, 2001; Hopkins, 1993; Hartman, 1998; Freeman, 1988; Burns, 1999; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), is as follows:

1) **Thinking**: What issue do you want to describe, document, and investigate? Why is this issue important to you? What research questions will help you investigate this issue to understand it better?

2) **Acting**: What is your plan for carrying out your project? What information will you need to collect to answer your research question and assess your project? How much time will you allot for your action plan?

3) **Reflecting**: After you've collected your data, how will you organize and review it to help you answer your research question? How will you display the data so as to clearly reveal your results, both for your reference and so that you can share it with others?

4) **Rethinking**: How will you rethink your teaching practice based on your research data?

(Donato, Professor R, 2003)

Teacher Supervision

The changing perception of teacher supervision is closely interwoven with the evolving nature of the mentoring process. According to Dollansky (1998), the original conception of teacher supervision as a top-down hierarchical relationship has been radically transformed by a collaborative approach. In their work, Hoy and Forsyth (1986) encapsulated the contemporary concept of teacher supervision: "[Supervision] is the set of activities designed to improve the teaching process. The purpose of supervision is not to control teachers, but to work cooperatively with them" (p. 3). Thus, supervisors are no longer perceived as repositories of perfect knowledge and authority. Rather, supervisors and teachers collaborate with one another to improve the quality of teaching in the classroom and school performance as a whole (p. 4).

Similarly, many educators are also challenging the age-old concept of mentors as wise guardians. Hargreaves and Fullan (1999) called for the replacement of the traditional hierarchical relationship between mentor and mentee with the collaborative relationship. In their opinion, both parties can contribute to this symbiotic relationship by sharing knowledge and experiences. Through this teamwork, mentors and mentees can embrace challenges posed by the changes in the teaching profession (p. 6).

Glatthorn's (1990) concept of "differentiated supervision" has been widely adopted by schools in recent years, because it acknowledges the diverse needs and dispositions of teachers. This approach provides teachers with four supervisory options, thus empowering them to have some control over their supervisory process:

- Intensive development or Clinical supervision: Intensive development refers to the intensive interaction between supervisors and teachers using the "conference/observation/conference" cycle. The purpose of this approach is for supervisors to improve the effectiveness of the teachers' instructional

performance, not to rate the performance.

- Cooperative development: With this option, classroom teachers collaborate with one another by providing mutual feedback and support.

- Self-directed development: Teachers are given tremendous autonomy in formulating their own program of professional growth. They are expected to establish their goals, find resources and take the steps towards accomplishing their tasks.

- Administrative monitoring: In this scenario, supervisors visit the teachers' classrooms unannounced and observe the teachers in order to determine whether they are performing their teaching responsibilities.

With the new conception of teacher supervision which places the emphasis on the improvement of the teachers' instructional skills, rather than evaluation, Wood and McQuarrie (1999) argued that teacher supervision is more closely related to peer coaching and mentoring. In this process, the supervising teacher and the teacher under observation meet before the actual observation to discuss the supervision. After the observation of the teacher's teaching sessions, the supervising teacher provides feedback to the teacher under observation. The post-observation meeting is more a collaborative discussion to identify ways of improving classroom instruction, matching curriculum content to the learning experiences of the students and instructional planning than a critical assessment of the teacher's teaching skills. The integration of the mentoring aspect into teacher supervision thus creates an ideal environment for interaction between teachers and their supervising teachers. With this nurturing experience, all the teachers involved in the process will learn how to provide and receive constructive feedback which is built on trust and respect, rather than fear and resentment.

Based on the discussion of the characteristics of effective mentors and the challenges of the mentoring process, it is evident that mentors' attitudes and behaviour play a large part in the success of the mentoring process. Nonetheless, it is important to recognise that despite their knowledge and experience, many highly qualified teacher-mentors may not possess all the necessary skills to be an effective mentor. Therefore, Kajs, Willman and Alaniz (1998) recommended a training program for mentors to prepare them for mentoring responsibilities. Such a training program is described in the next subsection.

Developing a Mentor Training Program

Ganser, Freiberg and Zbikowski (1994) cited four fundamental phases in the establishment of a mentoring training program: 1) Mentor selection and training; 2) Pairing of mentors and mentees; 3) Establishment of program objectives; and 4) Creation of a mentoring program. The discussion of the four phases of the mentoring program will also be supplemented by additional information from articles prepared by Mentoring Australia (2000) and Cristol (2002):

1) Mentor selection and training: In order to select individuals who possess the personality characteristics and the knowledge to be mentors, Stupiansky and Wolfe (1992) suggested the use of questionnaires to gather information about the applicants. Using this information, staff developers with the responsibility of selecting mentors will be able to construct an accurate profile of the potential mentor teachers. Other research instruments, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator used to assess the personality and teaching instruments used to evaluate the skills and knowledge of potential mentors, can be extremely helpful in providing the necessary information.

    Mentoring Australia (2000), a national association for mentors and mentoring programs in Australia, established benchmarks for the formulation of a mentor training program. For the screening of potential mentors, it suggested the evaluation of the suitability of mentors based on the following procedures: 1) Application process; 2) Assessment of the mentor with regard to the program goals and objectives as well as the needs of the mentees; 3) Face-to-face interview with applicants; 4) Thorough screening of the mentors such as references and criminal records; and 5) Determination of mentors' desire to participate in the training process.

    At the same time, Gray and Gray (1985) argued that teachers can be trained to develop mentoring skills and behaviour. For instance, orientation programs are necessary to inform potential mentors about the objectives and the key features of the mentoring program. Mentoring Australia (2000) also provided a comprehensive agenda for the orientation program, which consists of: 1) Program overview; 2) Explanation of the responsibilities of participants; 3) Presentation of the criteria for mentor eligibility; 4) Description of the expected level of participation; 5) Discussion of the expectations of the mentoring relationship and the extent of involvement with mentees; and 6) Presentation of

the procedures and guidelines of the program.

Wolfe (1992) and Thies-Sprinthall (1986) also emphasised that ongoing courses to help mentors hone their skills in communication (both talking and listening), cultivating nurturing relationships, teaching skills, role modelling, supervision and resolving problems are also necessary to ensure the success of the mentoring program. Besides these components, Mentoring Australia (2000) incorporated the acknowledgement of the socio-cultural differences which may exist between mentors and mentees. In addition, mentors should be informed about the support features of the mentoring program so that they can access help from program developers.

Staff developers role in today's society, according to Killion & Harrison (1997), emphasise developing learning organisations and learning communities. This role involves all stakeholders in the educational process and capitalises on the strengths of all for improving the school community. Staff developers can either be mentors or assist them in developing their role. The use of staff developers for the selection and training process will shape the boundaries of the mentoring program with regard to its specific objectives. According to Janas (1996), the staff developers can continue to serve as coaches to provide assistance to mentors even after the completion of the training process. The constant presence of staff developers is vital in the provision of needed support for mentors after their first year of training.

Cristol (2002) provided an example of an outstanding and comprehensive mentor training program. Taught by seven faculty members from Old Dominion University, the Pathwise Series was a year-long research-based mentor training program. Its purpose was to help educators develop the ability to: 1) Help novice teachers make decisions about curriculum preparation and planning; 2) Evaluate the novice teachers' performance by learning observation strategies and the ability to analyse students' work; 3) Ensure that teaching strategies comply with the standards; and 4) Provide useful feedback and model coaching techniques.

Through the training program, participants from the university and the school system established a community of teacher-learners and mentors, thus cultivating strong collaborative relationships with one another, which did not

exist previously. What was even more significant was that the traditional one-on-one mentoring relationship was extended to include multiple mentor-educators and the contributions of peers. The ongoing exploration of how new theoretical concepts raised in the literature review could be applied to the practical world of the classroom was highly effective in cultivating the interest of all the participants involved. Certainly, this training program established the foundation for the recent development of group mentoring strategies, in lieu of the traditional mentor-mentee dyad. In fact, many of the participants in this program built upon their relationships established during the training course and extended them to their teaching sites (Cristol, 2002). The group mentoring approach will be discussed in greater detail in the section of "Various Approaches to Mentoring."

2) Pairing of mentors and mentees: The process of matching mentors and mentees can be extremely challenging. Mentoring Australia (2000) highlighted the fact that pre-established criteria which cohere with the program objectives should be used as tools for the matching process. Janas (1996) suggested that several factors should be incorporated in this process. First, mentors and mentees should be located geographically close to one another and share similar professional responsibilities. Therefore, inconvenience and the difficulties in logistics should not constitute reasons for the failure of the mentoring relationship.

Second, the call for volunteer mentors, instead of imposing the responsibility on unwilling veteran teachers, should be considered (Janas, 1996). According to Gehrke (1988), studies have indicated that mentoring relationships are successful when both parties are willing participants in the process. Apart from this aspect, staff developers also need to address the basic questions of whether the mentor and mentee are compatible in this personal and professional relationship.

Finally, Janas (1996) recommended that socio-cultural factors such as gender and ethnicity should also be incorporated into the overall process of matching mentees and mentors. According to Collins (1983) and Freedman (1993), gender and ethnicity barriers can be significant reasons for undermining the successful development of a trusting relationship between mentors and their mentees.

Mentoring Australia (2000) suggested additional strategies to enhance the matching process. Staff developers can request a statement which illustrates their understanding of the nature of the mentoring relationship and responsibilities from potential mentors. Furthermore, the use of social events which bring the group of mentors and mentees together can enable staff developers and the participants to assess their compatibility.

3) Establishment of program objectives: Considering the diverse conceptions of the role of mentoring due to the multiple definitions (Sullivan, 1992), Janas (1996) emphasised that staff developers must play a critical role in helping mentors and mentees in developing a set of specific goals. As mentors of the mentoring teachers, staff developers can model the process by working with their mentees – the mentoring teachers – to determine the latter's specific objectives. For instance, Mager (1992) explained that mentoring could be used to help novice teachers survive their probationary period, as in the case of induction mentoring. Thies-Sprinthall (1996) offered another example of mentoring in which teachers in need are paired with specialised teachers to help the former develop instructional skills. The teachers in both of these cases thus have different objectives which need to be set out at the beginning of the mentoring process.

According to Mentoring Australia (2000), the objectives of the mentoring program should contain specific information in the following areas: 1) Information about the activities and profiles of the participants; 2) Explanation of the purpose of the mentoring program; and 3) Description of the objectives of the program, along with a timeline for the accomplishments of various tasks set out in the program.

In order to ensure the fulfilment of the program objectives, the staff developers should closely observe the development of the relationship between the mentors and the mentees at different phases of the mentoring process. Based on Mendler's (1994) article, ten phases typically occur in a mentoring relationship: "1) Attraction, 2) Cliché exchange, 3) Recounting, 4) Personal disclosure, 5) Bonding, 6) Fear of infringement, 7) Revisiting framework, 8) Peak mentoring, 9) Reciprocity, and 10) Closure" (cited in Janas, 1996, p. 3). As Janas (1996) discussed, staff developers play an important role in the first five phases of the mentoring relationship in their effort to consolidate the relationship

between mentors and mentees. However, the most critical phase is phase six, which requires the staff developer to scrutinise the mentoring relationship closely in order to defuse conflicts and create the environment for mentors and mentees to re-examine their relationship in an objective light. Once phase seven is achieved, the staff developer will be able to maintain a low profile as the mentors and mentees will have succeeded in establishing close and strong relationships.

4) Creation of the mentoring program: The long-term effectiveness of the mentoring program needs to be incorporated into the planning process. Janas (1996) identified three steps which should be implemented to establish a solid mentoring program. First, the staff developers need to provide an ideal physical environment and eliminate logistics problems to establish a strong foundation for the mentoring relationship. Freedman and Jaffe (1993), as well as Sparks (1991), noted that mentors and mentees should be given the opportunities to interact with one another in formal and informal face-to-face meetings. A meeting involving different mentor-mentee dyads in a group setting can also be ideal for the initiation of the mentoring program.

Second, considering the fact that staff developers are the individuals responsible for the smooth running of the mentoring programs, their ongoing professional development is also crucial to the success of the program. Janas (1996) suggested that staff developers receive ongoing training to hone their counselling and mediation skills and update their knowledge in related areas of their work. Furthermore, these training workshops will also provide them with the opportunities to meet with one another, express their personal perceptions about their responsibilities and receive guidance from their peers. Janus (1996) also states that staff developers, as mentors of other mentors, are guides on a journey of discovery. Janus goes on to emphasise that it is quite possible that mentors who are mentored by staff developers may reach even higher levels of development than they otherwise would have reached (1996).

The final step of the development of the mentoring program is discussed in the next section of the paper: a system of accountability.

An Established System of Accountability

In order to ensure that mentors are working well with their mentees, an accountability system should be established. According to Kajs and others (2001), mentors and their mentees should submit periodic reports to a designated individual such as the principal. Furthermore, portfolios containing information and documentation on the teachers' growth over time also provide evidence of the mentees' development (p. 4).

Janas (1996) pointed out that the purpose of the accountability system is to provide an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the mentoring program. With this constant supervision, mentors in need of support and further assistance will be able to receive timely intervention before the mentoring relationship is adversely affected. Staff developers can facilitate the process by establishing designed checkpoints via different ways of communication (face-to-face meetings, phone calls or e-mails) to enable mentors to communicate their concerns.

The role of staff developers, according to Killion & Harrison (1997), has changed considerably over the past 40 years, going from a primarily training role in the 1970's to an organisation development, school improvement and systemic change role in the 1980's, then to their more current roles as developing learning organisations and learning communities. Staff developers main role now being to involve all stakeholders in the educational process to enhance and improve the whole education community. Mentors can be trained, coached and monitored by staff developers (Killion & Harrison, 1997).

Various Approaches to Mentoring

Different educators and researchers have formulated distinctive conceptual models of mentoring. For example, with their model of mentoring, Maynard and Furlong (1995) were interested in how mentors shared their knowledge, skills and experience with their mentees. In their article, they depicted three models of mentoring: 1) Apprenticeship model which involves the mentee's observation of the mentor in order to acquire techniques and strategies; 2) Competency model which refers to the mentor's provision of feedback to mentees regarding their performance and skills; and 3) Reflective model which refers to the mentor's assistance in enabling novice teachers to engage in self-reflective thinking.

With her case study analysis of an exemplary mentor teacher, Feiman-Nemser (2001) introduced a new conceptual approach to mentoring which not only integrates the three above models of mentoring, but also incorporates several mentoring strategies for working with novice teachers. The approach of educative mentoring will be discussed in greater detail in the following section. Moreover, two additional models of mentoring will also be introduced – Sweeney's three approaches to mentoring and transformative mentoring relationships.

Educative Mentoring

According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), unlike the conventional traditional approaches of mentoring which place the emphasis on environmental adaptation, transmission of knowledge and psychological support, the approach of educative mentoring integrates the distinctive concerns of novice teachers with the long-term objective of cultivating good teachers. Essentially, mentor teachers operating from this approach interact with their novice teachers and nurture their reflective skills. At the same time, these mentor teachers also utilise their knowledge and experience to provide the environment which will help novice teachers to increase their awareness of effective instructional skills and knowledge which will benefit the students.

In her article, Feiman-Nemser (2001) observed and interviewed Peter Frazer — an exemplary mentor teacher — in order to obtain an understanding of his philosophical stance and strategies, which are an integral part of the concept of educative mentoring. During the interview, Frazer coined the term "co-thinker" to emphasise that his role as a mentor teacher is not to impose his perspective as an expert or authority on the novice teachers. Rather, Frazer noted that he has to work with the unique perspectives of the different novice teachers and help them construct a professional identity and develop teaching strategies which will ultimately cohere with the principles of good teaching.

To accomplish these twin objectives, Frazer utilises various mentoring strategies which have been effective in enabling him to work successfully with novice teachers:

1) Discussion of useful topics: According to Frazer, the time allocated for the weekly meetings with the novice teachers should be used productively to address the issues which are most important to the latter at that point in time. Although mentor teachers should have a general idea of the topic to be

discussed, they should also be prepared to address new topics which have arisen for the teachers during the week. So long as the discussion addresses issues which are related to teaching practices, mentor teachers should promote the discussion with the novice teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

2) Identification of causes of problems: As Schön (1983) explained in his book, the identification of problems is crucial in drawing attention to the issue so that solutions can be found and implemented. However, Frazer argued that the simple identification of problems without seeking to understand their underlying causes will not be useful in eliminating them. For instance, when the novice teacher speaks about the problem of discipline and classroom management, Frazer often pushes the novice teacher to study possible causes of this problem such as the teacher's choice of an uninteresting topic or lack of clarity in instructions. Even more importantly, by encouraging novice teachers to identify causes of the problems, Frazer is also cultivating their ability to think critically, or reflect on their teaching practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

3) Utilisation of open-ended questions: Frazer often utilises open-ended questions in order to encourage the novice teachers to explore their motives for implementing specific projects or their concerns about certain issues. The purpose of these open-ended questions is not only to provide Frazer with important knowledge about the thought-processes of these novice teachers, but also to enable the teachers to learn about their teaching practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

4) Acknowledgement of teachers' improvements: As Frazer explained, the consistent and periodic acknowledgement of teachers' achievements in specific areas is a strategy for providing emotional support to the teachers. Because novice teachers are typically overwhelmed by the challenges of teaching and learning to teach during their first year, they need to be recognised for their strengths and improvements. In addition, Frazer asserted that specific praises in relationship to particular accomplishments should be given so that the teachers can build on these strengths. Furthermore, these acknowledgements of the teachers' improvements can also enable Frazer to follow their process of growth over time (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

5) Emphasis on the students: According to Fuller (1969), beginning teachers start

out by focusing on themselves and proceed to their teaching ability before addressing the needs of the students. However, in Frazer's opinion, the development of novice teachers and their ability should take place in tandem with their understanding of their students. Frazer highlighted the fact that students' perspectives can be a valuable source of information for teachers to plan their curriculum and adjust their instructional strategies. Frazer helps novice teachers attend to the needs of the students during visits to their classrooms. Instead of sitting in observation of the teacher's performance, Frazer participates in the classroom activities by assisting the students. In specific instances, he may draw the teacher's attention to certain aspects of a student's performance or note down students' comments to pass on to the teacher. These strategies are important in developing the teacher's awareness of the thinking and learning of students (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

6) Consolidation of theoretical understanding: During discussions with novice teachers when they raise specific concerns about their students or classrooms, Frazer will seize the opportunities to cite research and theory from the literature to incorporate theoretical context into the discussion. The introduction of theory enables the novice teachers to adopt a philosophical and profound understanding of teaching techniques and comprehend how theories can inform practical experiences (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

7) Apprenticeship model of learning: Derived from the concept of "cognitive apprenticeship" coined by Collins, Brown and Newman (1989), Frazer's demonstration of teaching not only involves the novice teacher's observation of his teaching, but also enables the latter to be aware of his thought processes as he talks about his motives underlying his teaching practices out loud. Essentially, the "thinking-out-loud" process will help the novice teacher to distinguish the general characteristics of good teaching from Frazer's distinctive teaching style and behaviour. For instance, when teaching a reading lesson in the demonstration, Frazer paused throughout the lesson to explain why he introduced certain activities or ideas to the novice teacher. Such explanations will thus supplement the novice teacher's interpretations of their mentor teacher's actions (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

8) Exploration model of teaching: In other instances, Frazer introduces learning materials in response to the novice teacher's desire for clarification of how to

teach various concepts. Even though Frazer has pre-formulated ideas on how to work with the students, he encourages the novice teacher to take the lead in determining whether he or she needs additional assistance or wants to experiment with the new learning materials. The analysis of the teaching experience after the classroom sessions will also enable both teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the new instructional approaches and determine whether alternative approaches can be used more effectively (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

At this level, a mentor such as Frazer can be considered to have attained the highest level of the development of a mentor — the level of transformational learning. According to Hay (1995), the development of a mentor consists of three sequential phases: 1) traditional learning which focuses on the acquisition of skills and techniques; 2) transitional learning which refers to the mentor's growing ability to utilise various strategies to help their mentees; and 3) transformation learning which depicts the mentor's ability to focus on his or her relationships with mentees and utilise strategies intuitively. Placing his emphasis on the development of a strong relationship with his mentees, Frazer is able to apply his experience and knowledge appropriately and effectively to the unique relationships he has with each of his novice teachers.

Sweeney's Three Approaches to Mentoring

Sweeney (n. d.) presented a comprehensive spectrum of the various approaches to mentoring, which are commonly utilised in educational institutions today starting from the traditional to the liberal perspectives. The three models described by Sweeney (n. d.) are: *orientation, instructional training* and *professional development.*

Orientation

1. Assumptions: This approach is based on the underlying assumption that teachers need to conform to the school system and curriculum. Therefore, they are encouraged to maintain the status quo, instead of improving the schools.

2. Practices: In the orientation model, the emphasis of the mentoring approach is for mentors to help new staff adjust to their school environment and curriculum (Sweeney, n. d., p. 1).

3. Outcomes: Sweeney (n.d.) argued that by providing individual attention to new teachers, mentors can be highly effective in acclimating them to their school

environment and program requirements. However, this approach only produces short-term gains and fails to tap into the full potential of mentoring. It places total emphasis on the needs and interests of schools, without acknowledging the individual interests of the mentors or the new teachers (p. 2). This indifference to the needs of educators will be detrimental to the long-term development of the schools and professionals.

Instructional Training

(1) Assumptions: This approach assumes that there is only one acceptable way of teaching. Furthermore, teachers in the same school should implement the same teaching strategies.

(2) Practices: In mentoring programs which adopt the approach of instructional training, mentors are expected to demonstrate a specific model of teaching and train their mentees to follow an "ideal" instructional approach (Sweeney, n. d., p. 2).

(3) Outcomes: As with the previous approach, mentors are likely to accomplish their objective of transmitting their specified teaching approach to new teachers.

However, Hargreaves and Fullan (1999) believed that such a rigid approach is extremely oppressive to new teachers, thus suppressing the development of innovative and creative teaching methods. Furthermore, the emphasis on the schools' interests above the teachers' needs and interests will ignore the new teachers' emotions as they move from their student life into teaching (pp. 5-7). Evidence suggests that teachers' positive emotions are correlated with teacher effectiveness (Sutton, 2005). Research also suggests that teachers' emotions are inseparable from their cognitions (Van Veen, 2006).

According to Beard (2005), perhaps one of the most pragmatic contemporary texts on the subject of emotions in higher education is offered by Mortiboys (2002), who in 'The Emotionally Intelligent Lecturer', examines the case for developing emotional intelligence in lecturers, and explores the meaning, significance and application of emotional intelligence. Mortiboys suggests the required core attitudes that are necessary for learning and development to take place are: realness and genuineness: prizing, acceptance and trust: empathetic understanding, and offers in his paper practical examples of lecturer dialogue that might support the development of emotional intelligence in lecturers. Mortiboys looks at the potential for using emotional

intelligence to make teaching more satisfying and effective, and refers to research into areas such as classroom climate and lecturer qualities. In his paper, students responded to questions about their favourite session using words such as 'enthusiastic', 'fascination', 'being valued', 'confident', curious', and 'excited'. It can be inferred that a number of these responses, both positive and negative, are reactions to the lecturer. In the same way that a lecturer influences, but is not wholly responsible for, the performance of their students, so it is with the feelings aroused by students. Whether you refer to your role as a facilitator, lecturer, tutor or educator, there are times when you interact with individual students and/or groups of students and the way you are affects the way they feel, which in turn influences their predisposition to learning (Mortiboys, 2002, p10).

Being able to acknowledge and sense underpinning emotions, and where appropriate, steer the emotional bases of student behaviour, is a key skill requiring and an understanding of factors affecting student motivation, such as identity, sociality, meaning and orientation. This needs emotional maturity, responsibility and personal understanding by tutors. Students are increasingly being encouraged to undertake personal and professional development portfolios and progress files that, through reflective exercises, help them to gain an understanding of their emotional and motivational states in the learning journey (Beard, 2005).

Mortiboys comments that rarely is the existence of, and power of emotions like excitement, joy, fear, relief etc, acknowledged or encouraged (2002). Beard concurs with Mortiboys (2002), that learning can be enhanced when people discover things for themselves through their own emotional engagement. This, he says, requires a commitment to discovery, experimentation and reviewing of personal emotional goals and visions. Emotional understanding underpins learning as a basic building block. In order for any experience to be interpreted in a constructive manner it is essential that learners possess abilities such as:

- **confidence** – in their abilities;
- **self-esteem** – in order to recognise the validity of their own views and those of others;
- **support** – from others whom they work with and bounce off ideas; from lecturers when they get grades, marks or feedback;
- **trust** – they must have confidence in the validity of the views of others and be able to incorporate them with their own where necessary.

(Beard, 2005)

Mortiboys suggests that emotional intelligence may not only have a role to play in professional survival and effectiveness, but also provide an essential set of skills in which students need to flourish at university and beyond. He advocates the need of development of emotional intelligence to be on the agenda for higher education (2002).

It was my intention to build the above four abilities in John during our mentor/mentee relationship.

Professional Development

(1) Assumptions: This approach is founded on the assumption that the cultivation of teachers' development will inevitably lead to the well-being of their schools. Furthermore, the mentoring process should not be isolated from the overall development of all teachers. Again, a collaborative perspective challenges the traditional concept of mentoring as a supervisory task.

(2) Practices: The approach of "professional development" aims at cultivating the individual development of all educators (mentors and new teachers) and establishing a professional culture. The objectives of the schools will be accomplished because of dedicated and passionate educators who are constantly improving themselves.

In this system, mentors work with their mentees on a collaborative basis and share information and experiences with one another. Other teachers are invited to join in the process of learning and growth, thus cultivating a collegial atmosphere. Apart from focusing on the new teachers, schools also acknowledge the need for mentors to receive ongoing professional learning (Sweeney, n. d., p. 2).

(3) Outcomes: The implementation of this approach will increase the number of teachers who want to be mentors. Furthermore, mentors and new teachers are able to work with one another to generate innovative and creative teaching methods and improve their teaching performance (Sweeney, n. d., pp. 2-3).

In recent years, the professional development approach has begun to capture the attention of educators and administrators in their effort to integrate the philosophy of mentoring into the school environment, thus enhancing the overall effectiveness of the mentoring process in retaining not only novice teachers, but also veteran teachers. Therefore, instead of limiting the mentoring process to the one-on-one relationship

within the mentor-mentee dyad, it has expanded to include the collaboration of groups of teachers and administrators based on the principle of professional learning and development (Sweeney, n. d).

As derived from this new approach, Wood and McQuarrie (1999) discussed three aspects of group mentoring structures: study groups, action research and reflective logs. In study groups, teachers and/or administrators gather to address specific topics such as discipline, curriculum design and instructional techniques in proactive ways. The participants may conduct research in these areas or visit model programs in order to learn about best practices. With this information, they then determine whether these practices or techniques are feasible for their schools within the study group. LaBonte, Leighty, Mills and True (1995) emphasised that regardless of the ultimate outcome, the participants of this process will address problems and topics in a collaborative fashion, share their thoughts about effective solutions and reflect on their experience of collaboration. As in a mentoring relationship, the participants of the study group enhance their knowledge and skills about the issues under investigation. Typically, this new awareness enables them to improve their teaching strategies and their ability to collaborate with others and reflect on their practice.

In regard to action research, Wood and McQuarrie (1999) explained that groups of educators come together to utilise literature and action research to assess the effectiveness of specific instructional approaches which can be used to enhance their teaching techniques. For this process, educators will have to conduct a literature review to identify specific instructional approaches which should be tested. A field test with the collection of data will then be implemented in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach. Based on the results and the analysis, the action research group will engage in further discussion to decide upon the course of action. As with the study group, the participants of the action research group certainly benefit from the process by acquiring new knowledge about conducting research and reflecting on their own teaching practices. While action research does not seem to be related to the type of activities associated with the traditional mentoring relationship, it should be considered as an extension of the exploration of effective teaching approaches which do occur in a pair mentoring situation. However, in a group mentoring situation, experienced and novice teachers can work together to figure out how to address particular problems or deficiencies in teaching strategies by implementing research projects.

The use of reflective logs encourages novice and mentor teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. According to Wood and McQuarrie (1999), teachers can use reflective logs to record significant events which occur in the classroom and at school, their perceptions of the events and their reflections. Killion (1991) noted that novice and mentor teachers can share the entries of their logs with one another within a group in order to address problems, identify positive aspects and determine how best to improve their teaching strategies.

Apart from the utilisation of mentoring groups, Wood and McQuarrie (1999) also emphasised how the philosophy of mentoring can be incorporated into existing activities which take place routinely at schools. For example, many principals have begun to apportion a section of their faculty meetings to allow teachers to talk about best practices. During this part of the meeting, teachers share their best practices such as effective new instructional strategies, discuss the problems and concerns of specific instructions and brainstorm for ideas. Other teachers may report their findings of their visits to model programs in other schools. Similarly, department and grade-level meetings also provide teachers with the opportunities to discuss curriculum issues, resolve specific problems confronted by one faculty member, address classroom management challenges and understand the implications of standardised assessments. The exchange of information and the acquisition of new knowledge mirror the same processes which occur in a traditional mentoring relationship at a higher and more productive level.

Another routine school activity involves the exchange of information about the curriculum and instruction planning and the analysis of students' standardised test scores. According to Wood and McQuarrie (1999), the mentoring component in which experienced and novice teachers collaborate with one another should also be integrated with this activity. During the sharing of instructional plans, teachers can elicit feedback and suggestions for improvements from their peers and more experienced teachers. By exploring various instructional approaches and new ideas for improving curriculum design, all the teachers can benefit from this activity and transform it into a learning experience. Similarly, the evaluation of the students' academic performance also provides the teachers with the opportunity to learn more about their students and adjust their teaching methods accordingly to match the students' needs. Instead of analysing the students' performance data on their own, the examination of the results with other teachers will thus yield multiple perspectives which can be highly illuminating for the individual teachers' teaching practices.

The use of the team teaching approach is another innovative way of combining the benefits of mentoring with another routine school activity – teaching. As Wood and McQuarrie (1999) pointed out, teaching can be an exceedingly isolated activity as teachers traditionally work on their own without immediate input from their peers. In traditional mentoring relationships, mentor teachers will typically address the novice teachers' challenges outside of the classroom. In more active mentoring relationships, mentors will observe novice teachers' performance in the classroom and vice versa. However, depending on the instructional approaches of the mentors, this approach can be extremely limiting in cultivating the teaching practice of novice teachers. Team teaching can thus reduce these limitations by enabling teachers to observe and acquire new knowledge in several different instructional strategies, classroom management and evaluation of children. The analysis of the team teaching experience after the classroom sessions can also help individual teachers to address the specific challenges they confront in the classroom. This experience can be highly enriching for all the participants involved in the team mentoring process.

Transformative Mentoring Relationships

From a radical humanist perspective, Darwin (2000) presented an approach which constitutes a departure from the traditional and group mentoring approaches described above. The approach is based on Mezirow's (1978, 1990, 1991) transformation theory, which begins with the recognition that each individual possesses a frame of reference through which he or she interprets experience. Each individual's initial frame of reference is formed in childhood and youth; however, new meaning perspectives may be required when the person cannot adequately interpret new experiences within the old frame of reference. Perspective transformation occurs when we become "critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-structural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings." (Mezirow, 1991, p. 6). Such perspective transformations are common in adulthood as individuals move toward more well developed conceptual structures (Mezirow, 1978).

Transformation theory has important implications for adult education (Mezirow, 1978). The theory includes four types of adult learning (Mezirow, 1991):

1) Learning through meaning schemes already acquired;

2) Learning new meaning schemes that are consistent with existing ones;

3) Learning by transformation of meaning schemes, when old meaning schemes no longer suffice;

4) Learning through perspective transformation, which is a more wide-ranging change in assumptions and beliefs.

Mezirow (1991) listed several teaching objectives which can help foster transformational learning in adult education. These include progressively liberating the learner from dependency on the educator while helping him or her understand how to use learning resources; assisting the learner to define his or her learning needs and to assume increasing responsibility for defining, planning and evaluating the learning program; fostering learner decision making and encouraging a reflexive approach to learning; and providing a supportive environment which reinforces the learner's self-concept as a learner and doer. These objectives can be applied as well when the learner is a new teacher and the adult educator is a mentor. Incorporating the objectives into the mentor-mentee relationship fosters transformational learning as the relationship progresses.

Essentially, such a transformative mentoring relationship involves a collaborative, creative and reciprocative association between mentors and mentees, as though they are peers, regardless of their designated roles. Mezirow (1990) noted that in these types of mentoring relationships, mentors and mentees can challenge one another to reflect critically not only about their teaching practice, but also about the power relationships which exist within the educational system and the system's fundamental assumptions. This critical reflection can uncover hidden assumptions about teaching which lead to practices that actually inhibit effective teaching (Brookfield, 1988, 1995). Such assumptions may serve the purposes of the existing political and social forces rather than sound education. By reflecting critically together on issues such as excellence in teaching, the teacher's proper role and the mentoring relationship itself, both mentor and mentee can gain new perspectives from which they are able to challenge old assumptions and practices and work toward replacing them with new, more effective ones.

In this way, transformative mentoring relationships can help transform education by challenging a fundamental premise of the traditional approach of mentoring: the transmission of a school's values and practices to novice teachers in order to ensure

their conformity. In contrast, the transformative mentoring relationship involves the re-examination of these assumptions, values and practices. This re-examination may have the potential to change oppressive school environments and create a positive environment which promotes the development of best practices in teaching and learning.

In helping to transform education for the better, transformative mentoring relationships may also be able to help transform the larger society. This is suggested by the work of O'Sullivan (1999) who, like Brookfield (1995), held that values and assumptions of the educational establishment can often be traced to powerful political and social perspectives and structures. He further claimed that there is a widespread need throughout educational establishments for re-evaluations of assumptions and directions. According to O'Sullivan, perspectives on what is most valuable must be transformed if the planet is to survive. Powerful economic interests have fostered increasing economic globalisation and consumerism which are leading to an unsustainable planet ecologically. What is needed is a new vision or paradigm of what the planet, human beings and human society can be.

In particular, O'Sullivan (1999) argued for the critical importance of creating a society which puts a high value on individual and cultural differences, community and the natural world. He maintained that the strongest current development model, which focuses on economic and industrial globalisation, is leading to ecological suicide. Furthermore, this development model has little respect for cultural differences and the potential richness of individual human development. Alternative models must be developed which can help to bring about a planetary ecological consciousness. These models should also attempt to define the conditions and contexts which can further the social, cultural and spiritual development of individuals and communities. In this way, we may be able to avoid ecological disaster and develop an ecologically sustainable future which strives for the richness of human life and cultures.

What is needed to bring about this vision is the kind of transformative education which Mezirow (1990) and others have described. O'Sullivan (1999) maintained that education must become much more relevant to the ecological, cultural and individual development problems brought about by consumerism, globalisation, depersonalisation and lack of respect for individual and cultural differences. Transformative education for O'Sullivan is education not just for knowledge, but to instil a number of values. These include peace, social justice and diversity; appreciation of

nature and of ecological sustainability; individual quality of life; community, sense of place and communities of diversity; and civic culture.

Transformative mentoring relationships can help further O'Sullivan's (1999) vision of educational transformation by expanding the kind of critical examination of educational power relationships which Mezirow (1990) described. Together, mentor and mentee can critically reflect on how the educational establishment is affected by the current ingrained development model, and how adult education can help to inspire and bring about a new, more sustainable model. Furthermore, the actions of mentors can help further O'Sullivans' vision by modelling the kind of concerned, ecologically sensitive and diversity-accepting individual which O'Sullivan speaks of.

Behaviours which Facilitate and Hinder the Mentoring Process

According to the Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), part of the 2.8-million-member National Education Association in the United States, all effective mentors need to possess positive qualities in the following four categories (p. 13). By doing so, they will be better able to behave in a way which facilitates the mentoring process. Conversely, mentors who do not possess these qualities may hinder the process. The four categories which will be examined are the following:

1. Attitude and character: Mentors with a good attitude and a strong character are dedicated to the task of helping their mentees and of learning from their mistakes. These mentors actively advocate for their mentees and share ideas and information. At the same time, they also attend mentor training in order to improve themselves (NFIE, 2001, p. 13).

   In Chapter Six of its publication on mentoring teachers, the University of California, Irvine [UCI] (n. d.) noted that ineffective mentors who hinder growth and development of their mentees are usually self-absorbed. Some engage in competition with their mentees. Instead of helping new teachers, they are unwilling to share skills and information because they fear that their mentees will become better teachers than they are. Other mentors are hampered by the fear that the failure of their mentees will be attributed to them (pp. 1-2).

2. Professional competence and experience: According to the NFIE (2001), professionally competent mentors are able to display teaching skills in front of

other teachers without feeling uncomfortable. They possess excellent instructional and class-management skills. Even more important, they are adept at observing classroom practices and providing constructive feedback to their student teachers. In addition, they are willing to collaborate with teachers and administrators in learning about new strategies (p. 13).

On the other hand, ineffective mentors who may be experienced in teaching strategies are rigid in their ways. Thus, they are unwilling to recognise the effectiveness of new teaching methods and suppress the development of their mentees in the latter's effort to grow. In addition, they provide misleading feedback about their mentees' teaching performance when it deviates from what they do.

3. Communication skills: Effective mentors are good at explaining instructional strategies. More important, they are able to listen and to ask probing questions which challenge their mentees to reflect on their teaching (NFIE, 2001, p. 13). In contrast, ineffective mentors not only lack the ability to explain themselves clearly, but also place the blame of any misunderstanding on their mentees. Furthermore, they do not pose stimulating questions to help their mentees reflect on their teaching performance.

4. Interpersonal skills: Effective mentors work well with their mentees by displaying compassion, tolerance and sensitivity towards them (NFIE, 2001, p. 13). Ineffective mentors do not acknowledge the needs of their mentees. Furthermore, they make little effort in building a caring relationship with their mentees.

In addition to the deficiencies of some mentors, Stalker (1994), along with Hale et al. (1995), highlighted the fact that many educational institutions utilise the mentoring process as a means of reinforcing an exploitative work environment and supporting unequal power relationships which exist among educators. Instead of alleviating the inequality which exists between novice teachers and mentor teachers, mentoring can be used to inhibit novice teachers' efforts to achieve their potential and bring about positive changes in their work environment. Regardless of the intentions of mentors, the overall values and practices of educational institutions may undermine the ultimate purpose of mentoring to nurture the growth of novice teachers. These negative components of mentoring thus extend beyond the personality characteristics,

qualifications and behaviour of the mentor and should be addressed by educational institutions.

Whether they arise from personal or from institutional characteristics, mentor practices which hinder the progress of the novice teacher also undermine the concept of a shared community of practice striving for teaching excellence. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1999, n.d.) have articulated the concept of shared communities of practice. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), learning is not just the internalisation of facts. Learning is a very social undertaking which involves increasing participation of the learner in the practices of a social community which pursues, over time, a shared enterprise which is defined by its interests and practices. Such a community can be called a *community of practice,* and a single individual may be a member of several such communities, including professional, educational, religious, and others. Increasing participation in a community of practice amounts to the learner becoming an active participant in the practices of the community and constructing an identity in relation to the community (Wenger, 1999).

Wenger (n.d., para. 1) defined communities of practice as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly." Such communities are characterised by their domain, their community, and their practice. The domain is the domain of interest to which the members of the community have a commitment. The community consists of the set of relationships which enable the members of the community to learn from each other. The practice is the repertoire of resources for learning which the members share with one another. The members of a community of practice are practitioners who share among themselves experiences, stories, ways of addressing recurring problems, tool, and other means for learning better practice in their domain of interest. They may do this more or less self-consciously (Wenger, n.d.).

The profession of teaching is certainly a community of practice as defined by Wenger because it involves all three of the characteristics which he mentioned. That is, it includes the domain of interest to which teachers are committed, namely teaching; the community of relationships among teachers which allow them to learn from one another; and the practice, which is a repertoire of shared resources for learning how to become a good teacher. Some of the relationships among teachers in which they share learning resources are informal. For example, new teachers may learn some practices from established teachers simply through conversations over cups of coffee

during lunch hours. Typically, however, educational institutions also have formal and self-conscious means of sharing learning resources among teachers.

Mentoring is a very self-conscious method and one of the most potentially useful relationships for helping new teachers to enter fully into their community of practice. Mentors can have a profound effect on their mentees, helping them to establish themselves as excellent teachers and thereby strengthening the entire community of practice. However, if mentors allow themselves to be influenced by personal ends contrary to the aim of teaching excellence, then they may slow their mentees' full participation in the community of practice and hinder their progress toward excellence. Furthermore, if mentors promulgate exploitative and educationally harmful institutional ends in the way that Stalker (1994) and Hale et al. (1995) explain, then their mentoring undercuts the entire community and its reason for being.

To guard against the possibility of unconsciously furthering harmful institutional ends, it is incumbent on mentors to critically reflect on how their role as mentors is defined by their educational institution. Is that role consistent with the best in mentoring practice as it is currently understood? The mentor can usefully employ Brookfield's (1995) four aspects of critical reflection here: self-reflection or autobiography, student feedback, colleague feedback and educational theory.   In this case, student feedback can come in the form of feedback from the mentee, which should be especially easy to obtain if the mentoring relationship is a collaborative one. Feedback from colleagues may come from open discussions with other mentors about mentoring roles, institutional expectations and the ingredients of effective mentoring. Contact with current theory can help put insights gained from self-reflection and feedback into perspective. By employing such a process, the mentor is less likely to unwittingly promulgate institutional ends which actually hinder the mentoring process and undermine the ideal of a community of learners.

Research on Factors Related to Mentoring Effectiveness

The findings of several research studies provide insight into the variety of factors which may contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program. This section will highlight the results of three such studies.

The relationship between the mentor's characteristics and the effectiveness of the mentoring process has been studied by Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993). Based on

their study of two novice teacher mentoring programs, Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993) concluded that differences between the qualities of these two programs could be primarily attributed to the mentors' perceptions of the program. Their perceptions were in turn influenced by their conceptions of their roles, the pressures of work, the philosophy of the mentoring program and the training received by the mentors.

In another study, Cochran-Smith (1991) identified the key components of an effective mentoring program by analysing the conversations which took place between mentors and their mentees during their weekly meetings in four schools. During these sessions, novice teachers were able to learn about sophisticated new instructional techniques which enabled them to apply the teaching strategies to their classrooms. Through these conversations, the novice teachers learned how they could help their students to employ critical thinking skills in dealing with problems in real-life settings.

Studying mentor-mentee relationships in various school sites in the United States, England and China from 1991 to 1995, the National Centre for Teacher Learning at Michigan State University was interested in identifying the teaching strategies and the mentoring attitudes and behaviours which determined the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. Based on their results, the researchers discovered that the influential factors were the attitudes of the mentors towards training, the difficulties of being a mentor and the effects of external factors such as the school and the nation's policies (cited in Feiman-Nemser, 1996).

The results of these research studies illustrate that the overall effectiveness of mentoring relationships is influenced by a variety of factors which go beyond the individual relationships between mentors and their mentees. Both internal and external factors can help determine effectiveness. Internal factors include the mentor's attitude toward and training and conception of his or her role. External factors including environmental aspects such as the mentor's working conditions, along with the policies of the educational institutions and the countries, can also determine the outcome of these mentoring relationships.

Telementoring

In this section, the relationship of technology to mentoring will be explored, through what is called telementoring, the electronic version of mentoring. According to Guy (2002), telementoring essentially serves the same purposes as traditional mentoring,

but uses technology to facilitate mentoring relationships. Typically, the interaction between mentor and protégé occurs through e-mail, but it may also entail communication via numerous technologies such as instant messaging, audio and video conferencing, and on-line discussion boards. As such, telementoring may occur in both synchronous and asynchronous formats (Guy, 2002).

As educational institutions explore various ways of tapping into the benefits of mentoring or overcoming the deficiencies of traditional mentoring, the advent of advanced computer technologies as a sophisticated communications tool has led to the phenomenon of telementoring, or online mentoring. Although the mentoring in this research study was done face-to-face and in real time, there are several reasons which make it appropriate to include a section on telementoring in this Review.

First, the mentee, who was a distance learner, was concerned about the possibility that my other work duties might take me away from Brunei for substantial amounts of time during our mentoring relationship and that my mentoring might have to be done via computer connection. He was concerned about just how that would occur if it became necessary, and how successful it would be in helping him toward his educational goals. Second, telementoring is of special interest to distance learners, and perhaps of greatest interest to those who reside in locales with limited local available educational resources. Finally, having telementored other individuals I have come to understand the value and some of the difficulties of telementoring for distance learners in such a large and diverse geographic area as that comprised by the Southeast Pacific Region and Asia. For these reasons a section on this growing phenomenon of telementoring seemed appropriate to include in this Review, and follows below.

According to Guy (2002), telementoring, or online mentoring, seeks to replicate the traditional mentoring relationship by utilising advanced communication technologies such as e-mail, instant messaging, audio and video conferencing and online discussion boards (p. 28). The online "blog" (short for Web Log) is yet another tool which can be used by the mentor, the mentee or both to record their thoughts about and reactions to the mentoring process as it develops, to converse with one another and to share information. With any of these devices of telementoring, mentors and their mentees can overcome the obstacles of time and geography to interact with one another. Since online communication can occur synchronously or asynchronously, the mentoring relationship in this case can be adapted to the needs and the convenience of the mentor and the mentee involved.   One of the greatest advantages of

telementoring is the fact that mentees can send a request for assistance to their mentors at any time of the day and mentors can respond to their mentees at their own convenience. Mentors and mentees who are physically distant from one another can also communicate with one another easily via online communication tools.   As Eisenman and Thornton (1999) pointed out, the failure of traditional mentoring models is often attributed to the difficulties of the participants in coordinating their work schedules without affecting their routines. Telementoring eliminates this obstacle.

In spite of the obvious advantages of telementoring, Guy (2002) raised the concern that telementoring which primarily utilised e-mails as a form of communication cannot fully replicate the personal quality of a traditional mentoring relationship. Essentially, the use of a text-based and asynchronous format of e-mail lacks the human dimension which is present in a face-to-face or telephone interaction. In fact, based on their study of online learning, Harris, O'Bryan and Rotenberg (1996) concluded that mentees and mentors communicating with one another online need to recognise the deficiencies of online communication because the use of text-based communication devices such as "smileys" ("o-:)") cannot serve as a substitute for facial expressions, gestures, intonation, pitch and humour. The possibility of misinterpretation and misunderstanding also increases significantly with this form of communication.

According to Guy (2002), other characteristics associated with online communication can also diminish the richness and quality of the traditional mentoring relationship. Mentees who do not receive timely responses from their mentors via e-mail will feel isolated and abandoned by their mentors. Furthermore, the brief exchange of messages which are characteristic of online communication can also undermine the type of interaction which is needed in a mentoring relationship when mentors need to discuss issues at length with their mentees in order to resolve problems or to provide genuine emotional support to them. Because of these limitations, educational institutions should consider telementoring as a way to complement traditional face-to-face mentoring, rather than to replace it.

Perez and Dorman's (2001) discussion of the three different types of online mentoring offered additional information about this alternative approach to traditional mentoring: pair mentoring, ask an expert and group mentoring. They are discussed individually in the following sections.

Pair Mentoring

Of these three groups, pair mentoring comes closest to the traditional mentoring model. In this model, the mentee and the mentor forge an enduring relationship in which the mentor provides professional and psychological guidance to the mentee. Technological tools such as e-mail, audio and video conferencing are utilised for communication.

"Ask an Expert" Model

In the case of the "ask an expert" model, Perez and Dorman (2001) noted that mentors and mentees engage in a short-term interaction in which mentors answer specific questions posted by the mentees. The primary component of this model is the exchange of information between mentors and mentees. Typically, mentors post their responses to electronic archives or bulletin boards. In contrast to the traditional one-on-one relationship between a mentor and the mentee, any specialist or expert can serve as a mentor to any mentee who is also not limited to a specific individual for help. Nonetheless, Bierema (1996), along with Galbraith and Cohen (1995), pointed out that this form of telementoring does not enable mentors and mentees to cultivate a long and sustained relationship which is founded on frequent interaction, trust and emotional support, which are all integral components of mentoring.

Group Mentoring

The final category described by Dorman and Perez (2001) is group telementoring. With this approach, one expert or a group of experts forge a mentoring relationship with one mentee or a group of mentees. The utilisation of computer technologies such as chat rooms, instant messaging, bulletin boards and e-mail can facilitate the communication among the mentors and mentees. Group telementoring is one of the most exciting new approaches which may enable educational institutions to overcome the deficiencies of traditional mentoring and telementoring.

Borja's (2002) Novice Teacher Support Project

According to Borja (2002), novice teachers participating in the Novice Teacher Support Project – a telementoring project run by the University of Illinois – in collaboration with over 40 school districts and three regional offices of education, are able to post their questions or concerns on the Internet bulletin board and obtain responses from their

colleagues. Apart from their peers, group telementoring provides novice teachers with access to a wide selection of new and master teachers, doctoral students and professors specialising in education. In this project, over 100 first to third-year teachers are able to communicate with approximately 40 experienced teachers within the state. Cari Klecka, a doctoral student at the University of Illinois and the moderator of the project, pointed out that online mentoring helps to minimise the sense of isolation experienced by teachers who work with students behind closed doors, without the support or assistance of their peers. Through online mentoring, teachers can reach out to their peers or experienced teachers for support.

Apart from the convenience of telementoring which enables teachers to post their queries and responses at any time of the day, the anonymity of these postings further encourages novice teachers to participate in the online mentoring process. As Sue Seymour, an e-mentor and an experienced elementary school teacher, highlighted, novice teachers are often unwilling to reveal their fears or uncertainties and pose questions to their designated mentors in a traditional mentoring relationship because they do not want to appear incompetent. With the anonymity component of online mentoring, novice teachers have no worries about communicating their concerns (Borja, 2002).

In addition, the Illinois program also sets up face-to-face meetings between novice teachers and e-mentors who meet at least twice a year. The face-to-face interactions thus strengthen the online mentoring relationship between the novice teachers and e-mentors. Nonetheless, Borja (2002) pointed out that although telementoring can bridge the gaps in distance and time, it still cannot compensate for the loss of human contact which occurs in face-to-face meetings.

Eisenman and Thornton's (1999) Electronic Mentoring Network

Eisenman and Thorton (1999) also found that group telementoring, when implemented in a well-thought-out fashion, can be highly effective in promoting the mentoring process. In their study, novice teachers were interviewed about their perceptions of an electronic mentoring network. According to the participants, they were able to do research for teaching resources, as well as post questions about classroom management, curriculum design and interaction with parents. Even more significantly, they considered the electronic mentoring network as an ideal means for them to connect with others in order to discuss their experiences and emotions about novel

teaching strategies and their student-centred philosophies. The electronic mentoring network thus sustained their motivation and provided them with the inspiration to pursue their ideal vision of education.

This component was particularly important because novice teachers often encounter a variety of pressures at their workplace. Compelled to comply with standardised testing and administrative burdens, novice teachers struggled to implement their student-centred approach and garner the support of their peers, staff members at the work place and the parents. The support they received from their peers in the electronic mentoring network, which include university faculty members, master teachers and other novice teachers, was exceedingly helpful in maintaining their momentum and enthusiasm.

Using the data collected from the study, Eisenman and Thornton (1999) formulated a long-term mentoring plan which consisted of setting up a list server, arranging face-to-face interaction among mentors and mentees, as well as establishing mentoring teams to maintain the network. Through the list server, participants of the mentoring network will be able to employ technological means to communicate their ideas and experiences with regards to specific issues, post questions or responses and resolve problems. In order to overcome the depersonalised nature of telementoring, face-to-face meetings would bring mentoring network members together and establish the foundation for personal and intimate relationships. With this face-to-face meeting, members can benefit from the closeness and support which are an integral part of traditional mentoring relationships. During the novice teachers' first year, the face-to-face meetings will occur periodically throughout the year. In addition, these face-to-face meetings also provide ideal settings for discussions about the future direction of the electronic mentoring network (Eisenman & Thornton, 1999).

The last and the most important feature of this plan was to ensure that the electronic mentoring network would be self-sustaining in the long-term with the training of new generations of mentors. Through their ongoing participation in the network, first-year teachers essentially receive on-the-job training as future mentors for novice teachers in proceeding years. The participation of university professionals will provide additional support to assist first-year teachers in transitioning to their new mentor roles. Every component of the electronic mentoring network -- the online interaction, the face-to-face meetings and the support -- thus serves to perpetuate the training of the mentors as first-year teachers move into mentor positions to prepare for the next wave of

novice teachers who are in need of assistance. With each generation of novice teachers forming their own mentoring support teams, they will not only be able to cope with their responsibilities as educators, but also collaborate with their peers in improving the quality of education (Eisenman & Thornton, 1999).

With these group telementoring networks, the emphasis is on collaboration — the exchange of information among novice and mentor teachers. Instead of imposing their authority and knowledge on specific mentees, e-mentors work on nurturing and cultivating a conducive environment to foster the growth of reflective educators who will be able to do the same for future generations of educators (Eisenman & Thornton, 1999).

Evaluation of Telementoring Models

Based on the discussion of the three different models of telementoring, it is evident that the purpose of the mentoring relationship should be clearly established before the implementation of the mentoring process. This is suggested by the views of Harris (1999:54-57), who emphasised that the mentors and mentees need to utilise the telementoring model which best meets their needs and interests, otherwise they will be frustrated with the mentoring process. Without understanding their purposes, the mentor and mentee will be unable to choose the most effective model to achieve those purposes. At the same time, Harris (1999) also highlighted the dynamic nature of the telementoring process. For example, an "ask an expert" telementoring model could evolve into the pair telementoring model over time through long and sustained interactions. Nonetheless, it is still important for the mentors and mentees to have appropriate expectations about the purpose of the mentoring process and the format of telementoring.

Ultimately, Guy (2002) concluded that educational institutions which are interested in tapping into the potential telementoring technologies to forge unique mentoring relationships need to take into account critical issues. First, the lack of face-to-face interaction because of the barriers of time and distance does exert an adverse impact on the sense of community and intimacy among online users. The extent to which mentor teachers are able to overcome these issues in their interaction with novice teachers so that they can provide the guidance and emotional support needed by novice teachers should be considered.

Second, the limitations of online communication can also affect the overall quality of

the interaction between mentor teachers and novice teachers. Because they cannot read facial expressions and body language of one another, mentor and novice teachers are liable to misunderstand one another in their online communication. Therefore, the training of mentors and mentees using the telementoring process should address the challenges of online communication in order to minimise miscommunication (Guy, 2002).

Finally, in spite of the introduction of telementoring technologies, the focus of telementoring should still be on the human needs of the mentors and the mentees. Without recognising the primary objective of telementoring, it is possible that the emphasis on the use of telementoring technologies will inadvertently sabotage the purpose of the project. Regardless of the format, developers of mentoring programs should not forget that the ultimate purpose of the telementoring technologies is to serve the human needs of the mentors and mentees, instead of vice versa (Guy, 2002).

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provided the theoretical background for the study by reviewing literature pertinent to mentoring. The first main section of the chapter explored multiple definitions of the concept of mentoring. The second section examined key components of teacher mentoring, while the third reviewed several common approaches to mentoring, both old and new.

The fourth section of the review discussed behaviours which facilitate or undermine the mentoring process. This section also discussed the concept of learning community, what such a community entails and how mentoring may contribute to or hinder the development of such a community. The fifth section reviewed several research studies which have identified factors which contribute to effective mentoring programs. The final section discussed telementoring in some detail because of its potential importance for mentoring distance learners who reside in locales with limited available local educational resources.

As can be seen from the review of literature, mentoring has entered an era in which the traditional hierarchical concept of mentoring is making way for a more collaborative style which emphasises not only professional development, but also critical reflection and transformation. Given the theoretical background presented above, the study itself

will start being described in the following chapter. In particular, the methodology of the study will be explained and an overview of the mentoring program will be presented.

C H A P T E R 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the methodology of the research. The research design, which is a form of action research, is first described. The nature of action research is discussed, and the cyclical and participative nature of action research as it was utilised in this study are explained. In the second section, the study setting, which was Brunei, Darussalam, is discussed, including the educational resources and the English capabilities of the students who were taught by the mentee. A description of where the mentee's classes were held is also given.   In the third section, a description of the mentee in relation to his educational goals is provided.

In the fourth section, the procedures for implementing the project are elucidated in terms of seven steps. These are choosing a topic of interest, developing a research question, determining strategies for taking action, dealing with ethical issues, data collection, data analysis and presentation of assessment.

In the final main section of the chapter, a description of the mentoring program is provided. Following discussion of the background, ten components of the mentoring program are described: rationale, requisites prior to the first meeting, initial meetings with the mentee, partnership agreement, mentor/mentee plan, preparing the teacher, a mentee journal, mentor's lesson observations, feedback and closure.

Summary of the Participatory Action Research Project

The goal of this participatory action research project was to determine what key elements would contribute to designing an effective mentoring program for an adult distance learner residing in an area with limited available educational resources.

The research was carried out over three months using a participatory action research methodology. The mentee was an adult distance learner living and working in Brunei Darussalam, and aspiring to become a vocational/technical adult trainer. The mentor was an adult educator experienced with mentoring distance learners and with a

background in the hospitality industry. The study was carried out as part of the mentor's professional learning. The mentoring process involved formulating personal vision and action plans; preparations for the mentee's lessons; lesson observations; and lesson debriefings. The mentoring program culminated in a series of four lessons about pest control presented by the mentee to eight workers employed by a bakery. Each lesson was of one hour duration, with another hour after the lesson observation for feedback and discussion. The lessons were carried out in an air-conditioned classroom arrangement which was designed to maximise teacher student interaction (see lesson observation layouts in appendices P1 to P4).

Data was collected from written lesson observations, mentee journal entries and other writings, post-program questionnaires and discussions between the mentor and mentee during the program. Subsequently, reflection on the mentor's feedback techniques and how they affected the mentee's teaching performance, followed by looking at which feedback techniques worked best to achieve our goals and which ones the mentor needed to modify or change in order to reflect and improve both the mentee's performance, as well as the mentor's mentoring performance.

An analysis of the data was conducted to find patterns or themes which might denote key elements. The analysis followed the three-part process suggested by Huberman and Miles (1984): data reduction, data display, and deriving conclusions. Patterns sought, included mentor and/or mentee attitudes as reflected in documents and/or discussions, as well as patterns in relationships between mentor and mentee as revealed in documents and/or discussions, and also any other pattern found in the data deemed relevant to the effectiveness of the mentoring program.

Research Design

The research question for this study was the following:

> *What are the key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources in his or her area of interest?*

This is an important question because there has been little if any research on the

specific issue of which mentoring style or approach is most suitable for adult education distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources. Because mentoring can be so valuable for such individuals, it is important to understand which elements contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for them.

In order to answer this question, the research method chosen for the study was action research. Action research is typically classified as a qualitative research method. Whereas quantitative research relies mainly on numerical data, qualitative research may use any of a wide range of non-numerical data such as words, text, videos, sound recordings or photographs (Trochim, 2006). For quantitative research, data tend to fall into pre-ordained categories, while the data for qualitative research tend to be more raw, with the categories determined by the data themselves. Qualitative research typically enables the researcher to describe some phenomenon in great detail. The phenomenon being studied, or the unit of analysis, may be any of a variety of things, including individuals, groups, artefacts, geographical units, social interactions or processes (Trochim, 2006).

Action research is a methodology which is concerned with performing actions to improve some process, situation or system, while at the same time developing a better understanding of the functioning of that process or system. Action research is typically a cyclical process. First, an intervention is made based on initial understanding of the process or system, then the results of the intervention are observed and analysed and a refined understanding of the phenomenon is gained. Following this, a further intervention is made based on the new understanding, and so on (Dick, 2005). Iteration of this cycle may take place only a few times, or more than a few, depending on the particular circumstance. In action research, the researcher is also often a participant in the process or system being studied, and the intervention may take place partly through the researcher's actions (Dick, 2005).

Four central premises of action research, as highlighted by McNiff, Lomax and Whitehead (1996), are the following:

    i. The researcher is the central person in the research.
    ii. The researcher is asking a real question about a real issue and is hoping to move toward a solution.
    iii. The researcher starts with what is given.
    iv. The researcher tries to bring about some improvement. (p. 37)

These premises highlight how action research methodology differs from the traditional conception of research methods. While traditional research tends to emphasise the objectivity or neutrality of the researcher, action research often requires the researcher to be subjective and immersed in the researching experience (Dick, 2003).

This participative aspect is an important feature of action research for educators. As pointed out by Russell (1998), action research provides the opportunities for educators to rely on the observations, perceptions and reflections of themselves and their students, rather than others (outside researchers and policymakers) to improve their teaching.

Dick (1993) discusses four different models of action research: (1) the participatory model, which is exemplified by the Deakin University model, (2) action science, (3) soft systems methodology, and (4) evaluation. What is characteristic of the Deakin model is a defined cycle of research, and utilisation of participatory methods to produce understanding, action and the eventual liberation of those who are researched. The cycle consists of four steps carried out by participants – *plan, act, observe and reflect* – which may be repeated a number of times.

The action science model of action research holds that un-stated assumptions and rules must be dealt with in studying social systems. Dick (1993) holds that the action science model may be appropriate if a social system has strong within-person and between-person dynamics, especially if hidden agendas appear to be operating.

The soft systems methodology form of action science (e.g., Checkland, 1992; Davies & Ledington, 1991), advocates immersion in a process or circumstance, from which a description of the essence of the process or circumstance can be gained. From this, a description of the ideal way to perform those essential functions is formulated, and a comparison between the actual process and the ideal process is made. Feasible and worthwhile improvements are then acted on to make the actual process closer to the idea. Soft systems methodology is appropriate for the analysis of information systems and for decision systems generally (Dick, 1993).

The fourth form of action research mentioned by Dick (1993) is evaluation methodology. This form is actually a family of models which focus on evaluating processes or systems. These more or less complex models may be appropriate for the evaluation of the workings of relatively complex systems whose elements are

already fairly well known. For example, one evaluation methodology which Dick (1993) describes involves the evaluations of system processes, short cycles and outcomes for the purpose of improving the workings of the system.

The participatory model of action research is the model which best suited this research. This is because both the mentor and the mentee were participants in the mentoring process as the process was being studied. Mentor and mentee found themselves in a position in which the mentee was in need of a mentor to assist in his professional development, and the mentor was in need of a viable and useful research project. As a result of this serendipitous situation, mentor and mentee came together in what quickly became a collaborative research effort. The participatory model was also fitting, because the mentoring process in this study fell into the plan, act, observe, reflect cycle characteristic of participatory action research. Furthermore, as in the Deakin University version of participatory action research, this study had the goal not only of understanding the mentoring process better but of also liberating the participants in the sense of enabling the mentee to change career directions and helping the mentor to become a more effective practitioner. Finally, the fact that the participatory model is less complex than some of the other models of action research was an advantage because at least some of the more complex models seem better suited to complex systems whose key elements are known. But this research, which dealt with mentoring an adult education distance learner faced with limited educational resources, was more exploratory. Its purpose was to try to determine some of the key elements making such a process effective. The participatory model seemed better suited to this purpose.

Overall, the action research approach was adopted in this study to enable me to do two things. The first of these was the action part of the project, which was the ongoing development throughout the study of an effective mentoring process for an adult education distance learner residing in a location with limited local educational resources in his field. The second was the research part of the project, which was to identify key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to an effective mentoring program for an adult education distance learner who resides in such a locale. An additional practical motivation for the project was that by conducting the study, I would be able to identify specific characteristics of a successful mentoring process which could improve my mentoring behaviours and which I could carry forward into the future.

An important limitation of action research is that its results may not be generalisable (Vernon, 2004), which is a criticism that has been levied against a good deal of qualitative research. However, qualitative research may be more appropriate than quantitative research when variables are not clearly defined and research is more exploratory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This was the case in the present research inquiring into the elements which are relevant to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for a certain kind of distance education learner. It was deemed that though the results might not be strictly generalisable to a larger population, they could be suggestive and useful for mentors and mentoring programs in similar circumstances as the one in this study, that is, programs involving distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources in their area of interest.

Another aspect of action research which could have served as a possible limitation was the direct involvement of the researcher in the research, as this could possibly result in less objectivity. However, as mentioned above, action research often involves the researcher's being actively involved in the processes being researched (Dick, 2003)—hence its name. I believed that in this case, my perceptions as the mentor being involved in the mentoring process would likely add to the understanding of what elements might make the process more or less effective. At the same time, I took care in attempting to observe my own actions objectively.

As mentioned above, the action research methodology utilised in this study was participative. Both my mentee and I were active participants in the process. The mentee was not a passive recipient who was subject to my manipulations and actions. Rather, with the action research method, I, as the mentor, was actively engaged in a collaborative effort with the mentee to achieve a common outcome (Russell, 1998). This outcome was the development and enactment of a successful mentoring program for the mentee. Even as the mentee learned how to improve his teaching practice, I was learning what elements were important to the development of such as program and how to better enhance my mentoring practice in order to progressively become a more effective mentor for the mentee. To do this, the mentee and I collaborated to devise a mentoring plan which would meet his goals of improved teaching. We then collaborated throughout the process to enact the plan. It should be noted that action research, due to its participative and collaborative nature, is especially suited to a mentoring program which is itself not hierarchical but rather collaborative.

The unit of analysis in this study was the mentoring program itself. However, this unit

can be divided into six sub-units. These were the preparation which went into developing the program, the four lessons which constituted the program and the follow-up to the program. The cyclical aspect of the research primarily involved the four lesson units. For each lesson unit, actions were performed, after which the results of the actions were observed and reflected upon by both mentor and mentee. These reflections gave rise to new or modified teaching actions to be performed by the mentee in the next lesson. In addition, the reflections modified the actions of the mentor (myself), and of the actual mentoring process. At the end of the four lessons, an evaluation of the lessons and of the entire process could then be formulated.

The overall process of action research can be encapsulated by the four following questions which need to be addressed sequentially:

1. What is the topic of interest which is related to my practice?

2. What actions am I undertaking to address this topic of interest?

3. What evidence will enable me to evaluate the effects of my action?

4. How will I present my assessment of my actions? (Russell, 1998).

These four questions can in turn be divided into seven sequential steps which should be implemented when conducting an action research project. The steps will be described within the context of this study in the "Procedures" section.

Study Setting

This study took place in Brunei Darussalam. A description of the demographics of the country will outline and emphasise the scene and constraints of the study conducted.

Demographics of Brunei

Brunei Darussalam, in translation, Brunei, the Abode of Peace, is a "Malay Islamic Monarchy" state, located Northeast of the Island of Borneo in South East Asia, occupying a land area of 2,226 sq. miles (5765 km^2). The idea of a "Malay Islamic Monarchy" means that the majority of the population of Brunei is made up of the Malays who embrace the Islamic faith. The Head of Brunei is the Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, the 29th Sultan. The royal lineage can be traced back to the first Sultan 600 years ago. Brunei gained its "independence" from the British in 1984 after being in

British "protection" for over 96 years. Oil was discovered in 1929 in Syria. Natural gas was discovered in the 1960s, and from the exports of these two valuable mineral resources, Brunei enjoys having one of the world's highest per capita income, helped by its small population of about 380,000, which a majority of are employed in the government service. His Majesty is the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Finance and the leader of the Islamic faith in the country. As citizen of this small state, free education, health care and housing schemes are available to the people, in line with the government's vision of ensuring that its citizens' lives are protected.

Like neighbouring countries, Brunei is mostly Malay. Many cultural and linguistic differences make Brunei Malays distinct from the larger Malay populations in nearby Malaysia and Indonesia, even though they are ethnically related and share the Muslim religion.

The national philosophy, or ideology, is Malayu Islam Beraja (Malay Islamic Monarchy). These three guiding principles are integrated, equally important and mutually dependent. First, it rests on the good virtues of Malay Culture, such as family values, respect, and social interactions. Second, it rests on Islam as the core of the Brunei Malay's being. Thirdly, it rests on the much beloved Monarchy - The Sultan. His Majesty, Kebawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mui'zzadin Waddaulah, Sultan dan Yang DiPertuan Negara Brunei Darussalam Sultan is the 29th Sultan of Brunei Darussalam.

The population as of July 2006 was estimated at 379,444. The official language is Malay, but English is widely understood and used in business. Other languages spoken are several Chinese dialects, Iban, and a number of native dialects. Islam is the official religion.

Education starts with preschool, followed by 6 years of primary education and up to 6 years of secondary education. Nine years of education are mandatory. Most of Brunei's college students attend universities and other institutions abroad, but approximately 2,542 study at the University of Brunei Darussalam. Opened in 1985, the university has a faculty of over 300 instructors and is located on a sprawling campus, overlooking the South China Sea.

Study Background Information

Brunei is a country whose workforce is mainly expatriate labour. Generally, highly educated and skilled people from Western countries fill the professional upper level management positions; Filipino's, Indonesians, Indians and Pakistani's generally fill the middle management and lower business and labour positions, as well roles such as house maids and gardeners.

Expatriate workers (all levels and nationalities) are not allowed any professional development while they are working in Brunei. The government apparently assumes that expatriate workers come to the country already trained, so don't need any further training. It is apparently not recognised that everyone needs on-going professional development, not only in order to learn more about what they do, but also to maintain a level of interest in their jobs. Bruneians, on the other hand, get free education for life at all levels from primary through to Doctorate level.

Educational resources, especially for English speakers, are quite limited in Brunei. There is only one public library there, but almost all of its books are in Malay, not English. There is also one academic library, which is at the university. However, only university students can borrow from that library. Though a non-student can access material there, the selection of books is not large by university standards and there are few journals housed there. Furthermore, the university library is not open at night or weekend. Though the Internet is present in Brunei, it is not yet reliable. There is little peer support available for distance learners.

The study focused on four classes which were presented by the mentee. The classes dealt with workplace pest control and were held on four consecutive days. The students were eight adult employees of the bakery which was managed by the mentee. They were Bruneians and Filipino's, and none were native English speakers. It was decided that the lessons should not be given at the workplace because of the many potential distractions there. My office had a large training room available which seated 50 people, and it was decided to hold the lessons there. Each of the lessons lasted about an hour and all took place at about mid-day. Discussions about the classes between myself and the mentee occurred in my office within half an hour after the classes ended.

The classes included both men and women, which was of some concern because in Brunei, dealings between unmarried women and men are regulated by Shariah,

religious law. Shariah requires, for example, that unmarried women and men cannot touch one another; as a result, the mixing of men and women in public is restricted. Typically, if men and women attend the same public functions, they sit in separate areas. As the mentee prepared for classes, there was concern about how freely students, especially female, would talk in class given the possible inhibitions that might be raised by the mixing of genders. How these concerns were dealt with by the mentee is explained in Chapter 4.

The Mentee

The mentee, John (a pseudonym), was a 29-year-old Australian native English speaker living and working in Brunei, married and with one child. He was a trade person who was the manager of a bakery in Brunei. Having achieved managerial success in his specialised profession of being a chef and a baker, he wanted to enhance his career opportunities and had decided to shift his focus from managing a company to educating and training individuals. As a result, he enrolled in a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) teacher training program. His professional goal was to become a fully-qualified TAFE trainer and instructor by attaining a Bachelor's Degree of Vocational Education and Training from NTU (Northern Territory University) within a three-year period.

John was a new and relatively inexperienced teacher who was learning at a distance. I met John through work, having used his bakery for food items for education exhibitions and meetings. He sometimes came to my office for coffee and we talked about his future goals for study and career. He decided to go ahead and take on his studies, and in several meetings we discussed the role of a mentor. I helped him to obtain a list of qualified individuals in the area who might be available to mentor him. After further discussion, he chose me to mentor him in the series of lessons to train members of his staff. Further detail on John's rationale in choosing a mentor is given in Description of the Mentoring Program below.

Procedures

As pointed out earlier, the implementation of the action research project involves following seven steps which are derived from the four central action research questions listed in the Research Design section above. These were:

1. What is the topic of interest which is related to my practice?

2. What actions am I undertaking to address this topic of interest?

3. What evidence will enable me to evaluate the effects of my action?

4. How will I present my assessment of my actions? (Russell, 1998).

In the following four sections, each of these steps will be described and discussed individually within the context of this research study.

Topic of Interest

The action research study begins with the identification of the topic of interest. Two steps are involved in this phase. First, the researcher should determine what specific area of practice is of the greatest concern (Step 1). In making this assessment, the researcher needs to narrow down the areas to aspects which are personally important and are within his or her realm of control. Once the area of concern is identified, the research topic must be phrased as a research question which will serve as the guiding framework for the research study (Step 2). This research question will help the researcher to select the types of data which should be collected and the methods of data collection (Welch, 1998).

With regard to this particular research study, the topic of interest lies in my desire to develop and understand the key aspects of an effective mentoring program for an adult distance learner living in Brunei, Darussalam. A practical benefit of doing so is that it will enable me to improve my mentoring behaviours through an increased understanding of how to implement an effective mentoring program for such an individual. Based on this topic, I formulated the following research question:

> *What are the key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources in his or her area of interest?*

To adequately answer this question required determining what are the characteristics of a successful mentoring program for such a learner in terms of:

1. the behaviours of the mentor;
2. the mentoring relationship between the mentor and the mentee; and

3. any other relevant aspects of the program which may have arisen during the study.

Actions Undertaken

An action research study must next answer the question of what actions are to be undertaken to address the topic of interest. Again, two steps (Steps 3 and 4) are involved in this phase of the study. Furthermore, Step 4 is itself divided into two parts.

The first action (Step 3) undertaken in an action research study is a review of the relevant literature which comprises the work of the key authors and the central issues which are pertinent to the research. The relevant literature thus offers a theoretical foundation with which to integrate the classroom experience (Welch, 1998). For this research study, the review of literature which provided a discussion of the diverse perspectives of the teacher mentoring process was presented in Chapter Two of this thesis.

The subsequent step is divided into two parts. The first of these, Step 4a, deals with the determination of the best strategies for undertaking actions in the study so that the relevant data can be gathered which will enable the researcher to address the research question. In this study, there were two existing practices. One was John's teaching practice on the first day of class. Observation of and reflection about that practice, which I shared with John, led to his modifying his practice on the next lesson, with this pattern of observation, reflection and modification continuing through all four classes.

The second existing practice was my initial practice as mentor to John. This consisted of my mentoring prior to and immediately following his first lesson. At that early stage, my intention was to perform the following basic functions (closely adapted from the Alberta Teachers' Association Model Project of a Mentorship Program [2001]) as John's mentor:

1. Support his professional development by providing him with instructional skills and knowledge, along with information about the teaching environment;
2. Establish a conducive environment for him to reflect on and analyse his teaching performance;
3. Provide constructive feedback;
4. Promote his overall development;
5. Forge a personal and professional relationship with him;

6. Acquire strong mentoring skills and knowledge; and

7. Improve my own teaching performance.

Given my beginning practice, it was essential to the study that I observe and reflect upon my mentoring behaviours and the mentoring process itself after the first lesson and to alter my behaviours, if necessary. Undertaking such a review of one's actions for the sake of changing them if necessary is central to action research (Dick, 2003). A key ingredient to reflecting on my own mentoring behaviours was to pay close attention to John's reactions and responses to my comments on his teaching. Being familiar with John's typical enthusiasm and what I judged to be his practical and intelligent manner of approaching asks, I was especially interested in whether he seemed to understand my comments and what his emotional reaction to them appeared to be. If it seemed to me that he did not understand my comments well or that his enthusiasm after the class was less than typical for him, I took this as evidence that my own behaviours toward john might need revising. In that event, I reviewed my behaviours and attitude in an effort to develop our mentoring relationship along more positive lines. This process of observation, reflection, and revision continued until John's four lessons were completed. At that point an evaluation of both John's teaching and the mentoring process could be made.

Step 4b in an action research project highlights the ethical issues which need to be addressed in any research study which involves the participation of human subjects. The primary concern in this area is to ensure that the "integrity, autonomy and dignity of the research subjects" is not compromised in any way through their participation in this research study (Welch, 1998). Although I was extremely respectful in my dealings with my mentee, it is also important to point out that the Departmental Ethics Review Committee (Human Participants) has examined and approved the ethics of the attached research/thesis project as submitted.

Evidence

The next steps in an action study are those which are required to address the question of what evidence will enable the effects of the researcher's actions to be evaluated. This segment of the study consists of two steps: data collection (Step 5) and data analysis (Step 6).

Data Collection

Data for this study was collected from several sources:

- The mentee's overview of the mentoring partnership, his personal vision statement and his personal development plan. These were formulated by the mentee after initial meetings in which we discussed what could go into these (see Appendix H).

- The mentoring partnership agreement (see Appendix H).

- The mentee's journals of meetings with the mentor.

- The mentor's written lesson observations.

- The mentor's lesson observation layouts

- Post-program questionnaires about the mentoring program which were completed by the mentor and the mentee.

- Discussions between the mentor and the mentee before and during the four-lesson sequence.

All of these data sources provided useful information; however, the most valuable sources were my lesson observations, John's journals of meetings with me and the discussions between the two of us which occurred during the four-lesson sequence. These were most important for several reasons. First, they were the primary sources of reflections which led to changes to John's teaching during the sequence. Second, they were the primary bases for my reflection on my mentoring behaviours and for actions taken to change mentoring behaviours. Third, they provided the main data for analysing the mentoring program to determine elements of the program which contributed to or hindered its effectiveness. This is not to say that the other data sources were unimportant. For example, John's vision statement and personal development plan enabled me to understand his own motivation better, which helped make our discussions more profitable.

It should be noted that the discussions between John and myself were not audio recorded due to what I believed would be his self-consciousness about being recorded, possibly resulting in his feeling less free to share his thoughts and ideas. I discovered during the four lessons when John's teaching was video recorded that indeed, my observing and recording seemed to generate in him a degree of anxiety. I also did not take notes during our discussions as I believed that this, too, would detract from the ease of our talks, possibly resulting in John's perceiving that I was not fully present with him during the discussions. Thus, in examining our

discussions, I had to rely on the accuracy of my memory. In retrospect, the absence of recordings of our discussions was a limitation on the methodology; however, this absence may have also conduced to a freer atmosphere for discussions.

Data Analysis

In general, qualitative analysis seeks patterns that emerge from, as opposed to being imposed on, the data (Patton, 1980). In this study, a certain kind of pattern was sought in the data, namely, patterns which pertained to the effectiveness of the mentoring process.   This was because the research question asked about the "key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness" of a mentoring program in an area with relatively few educational resources in the learner's first language. To find patterns or themes which might denote such key elements, an analysis of the data was undertaken which followed the three-part process suggested by Huberman and Miles (1984): data reduction, data display, and deriving conclusions. First, the data was examined to discover patterns which were related to the effectiveness of the mentoring project.   Given the openness of the research question, any pattern might be relevant to answering that question.   Thus, relevant themes emerging from the data might include any of the following:

- similarities in the topics dealt with in documents and/or discussions,
- patterns in mentor and/or mentee attitudes as reflected in documents and/or discussions,
- patterns in how one topic related to another as shown in documents and/or discussions,
- changes in the kinds of topics discussed or attitudes displayed as reflected in documents and/or discussions,
- behaviours of the mentor and/or the mentee reflected in documents and/or discussions
- patterns in relationships between mentor and mentee as revealed in documents and/or discussions,
- any other pattern found in the data deemed relevant to the effectiveness of the mentoring program.

Second, for the data display step, when a particular topic, attitude, behaviour, change, or other kind of element was indicated several times in one data source, the other data

sources were examined to determine if that same item was also found several times in other data sources. The different sources with the same element were displayed together, and if a total of three sources were found with the same element, that element was considered to be a theme emerging from the data. Based on this analysis, themes were identified and conclusions were drawn. In particular, the emerging themes were used to answer the research question.

Presentation of Assessment

The final step (Step 7) in the action research process is meant to answer the fourth question central to action research: How will I present my assessment of my actions? The presentation of the assessment typically consists of the presentation of the findings and their interpretations (Welch, 1998). With regard to this research study, this thesis will provide the presentation of the assessment of the mentoring program implemented by me.

Description of the Mentoring Program

Background

John first approached me to assist him in deciding on a course of study toward becoming an adult educator. He settled on pursuing a Bachelor of VET (Vocational Education & Training) through NTU (Northern Territory University) because of its degree recognition and also that if he had to defer his studies, he could still benefit from those that he had completed. However, he first had to take a VET (Vocational Education & Training) Train-The-Trainer course, which would enable him to enter the Degree program.

John was not required to have a mentor, but when he and I discussed mentor partnerships, he was very interested in the possibility of obtaining a mentor. Although he possessed tremendous content knowledge and experience in the field of his specialty, he lacked knowledge and skills in teaching and course design. I provided him with information on mentoring, including Web sites which would tell him more about the subject. I also provided him with my CV (Curriculum Vitae) and he gave me his own. After investigating mentoring and some thought, John asked me to serve as his mentor.

This request was based on several considerations. These included my extensive involvement in the higher education network, my knowledge of the different types of curricular courses, my background in the hospitality industry, our good communication and his evaluation of my integrity. He also took into consideration my professional and academic experience as an adult educator and educational consultant for Australian universities, as well as the fact that I had spent 10 years in the culture and had considerable knowledge of the challenges of teaching adult students in that culture. Another major consideration was my specific experience as a mentor. Though I had not previously taken on a formal mentoring role, I had been asked to informally supervise lessons for another adult education distance learner living in Brunei. This included sitting in on lessons and providing the distance learner with feedback regarding her teaching style and the appropriateness of her lessons. In addition, over 10 years, many other distance learners had approached me for assistance in explaining what their assignment questions meant, how to approach lessons, where to locate information and/or how to draw up a "skeleton" for an assignment. None of this was formal, as expatriates are not allowed professional development by the government.

I agreed to be John's mentor, making it clear that in doing so I would not be acting in an official capacity for NTU (Northern Territory University) or any other educational organisation. Thus, our mentor partnership was freely chosen by each of us. This is in contrast to the situation in some public service mentoring arrangements where there is limited or no choice available. In such cases, the mentor and mentee have little or no opportunity to determine how well their personalities fit before entering into the mentoring relationship. The fact that John and I had previously gauged how well we got along and that we entered into the mentoring relationship freely was a distinct advantage for our mentoring relationship.

The mentoring program was then designed in collaboration with John, who was actively involved in identifying the individual components of the program. We decided that during the mentoring program John would give a total of four practical lessons in workplace pest control to eight adults who worked in the bakery which he managed. I would observe each lesson and provide feedback. Each lesson would also be videotaped, allowing John to view his teaching behaviours afterward. The students were natives of Brunei Darussalam, as well as expatriate Filipinos. All spoke English as a second language with varying degrees of facility, and the lessons were given in

English, as explained in greater detail in "Study Setting" above. (See Appendix H for further details on the development of the mentoring partnership.)

Plan of the Mentoring Program

In order to provide a general guiding framework for the development of our mentoring relationship, I formulated ten components for the mentoring program. Each of these components will be described and discussed with regard to this particular research study.

Rationale

According to Mezirow (1990), a transformative mentoring relationship involves a collaborative, creative and reciprocative peer-like relation between mentor and mentee. In such a mentoring relationship, mentor and mentee can challenge one another to reflect critically not only about their teaching practice but about wider issues, which may include the relationship itself. Thus, the rationale for the mentoring relationship can be a topic that is explored by mentor and mentee both individually and in collaboration. While this can be done throughout the relationship, by sharing their conceptions of the mentoring relationship during the exploratory phase, mentor and mentee are more likely to begin with common objectives.

Mentor's perspective

The mentor's perspective was greatly influenced by the educational philosophy of John Dewey, who saw education as a reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of the experience and increases the learner's ability to direct experience (Dewey, 1944). Education should not just be the memorisation of information; rather, the process of conveying information should be combined with activities which have meaning for the learner, for "information severed from thoughtful action is dead, a mindcrushing load" (p. 179). Dewey further held that education should not be something that is institutionalised as separate from life's ordinary practices and purposes but should be continuous with life (Voparil, 2007). This was very much the case in this project. The objectives of the mentoring program for both mentee and mentor were integrally connected with their life pursuits. Thus, the program had great meaning for both mentor and mentee, which helped ensure enthusiasm for the program.

Also influential in forming my perspective as mentor were Mezirow's (1991) ideas. A main part of my conception of education—and of mentoring—was captured by Mezirow's (1991) view that it is the educator's responsibility to work to liberate the learner from dependency on the educator. This includes the educator fostering the learner's decision making and helping him or her to become increasingly responsible for planning and evaluating the learning programme. Thus, I believed that John should be encouraged to take responsibility for his learning process by making decisions about how he learns, works with the information and assesses his learning outcomes. I also believed that it was important for the mentee to have the power to set the agenda for the individual meetings, bringing up topics that he considered important and/or interesting.   Instead of imposing my knowledge and my experiences on the mentee, I intended to be a facilitator to help John reach his objectives and become a better teacher, which Mills et al. (2001) maintain is a proper role for a mentor. In doing so, I also wanted to promote John's autonomy and ability to think critically about his teaching objectives and methods, which is an important skill for the new teacher to develop (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) (see Appendix I).   Education is a process of empowerment, which grows as an individual learns from feedback from his or her decisions (Garrison, 2003). Thus, I believed that urging John to think critically and to make decisions about his teaching, and then providing him feedback, would help to empower him as a new teacher. Finally, as emphasized by Kochan and Trimble (2000), it was important to strive for a trusting atmosphere in which John and I could work together.

Mentee's perspective

From the mentee's perspective, it is important for a mentoring relationship to be one which is founded on a partnership between two individuals who are collaborating with one another to achieve common goals (Fox, 2003). In such a collaboration, the parties have different strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and experiences. Thus, mentor and mentee are both able to ontribute to the relationship by sharing their particular experiences and knowledge with one another (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1999). It is helpful if the mentor possesses extensive knowledge and experience in the relevant field of education (Kajs, et al., 2001; NFIE, 2001). His or her knowledge and experience can serve as an important counterbalance to any reckless enthusiasm or impatience of the mentee. In addition, it is useful if the mentor has established a wide network of influence in order to provide the mentee with the necessary information and access to relevant people or institutions within the field of adult

education. Most importantly, the mentor should comply with ethics and set high standards of achievement for the mentee.

At the same time, it is important for the mentee to be a viable partner in the process. This can include contributing fresh perspectives (Metros & Yang, 2006). For example, by introducing experiences and ideas from other professional realms, the mentee could expose the mentor to new perspectives and social networks of professionals. What needs to be emphasised is that even though the mentor is the knowledgeable authority in education, the mentee needs to take the initiative in selecting the appropriate mentor and determining how compatible he or she is with the mentor, as the compatibility of mentor and mentee is crucial to the successful development of the mentoring relationship (Fox, 2003). It is also the mentee's responsibility to work with the mentor to set goals for the mentoring process (California Governor's Mentoring Partnership, 2003) (see Appendix H).

Pre Meeting Requisites for the Mentee

Before meeting John for the first time, I wanted him to think about what he was trying to achieve and why he was trying to achieve it, so that we would have a starting point for our first meeting. A number of writers, both popular and academic, have maintained that developing a powerful vision of where one wants to go or what one wants to accomplish can be a key to more effective practice for individuals or groups (e.g., Bennis, 1997; Covey, 1997; Hammerness, 2001; Hitchcock, 1996; Senge, 1990; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994). Hence I advised John to write up a 'personal vision' statement, as well as a 'personal development' plan. To help John in creating his personal vision statement, I devised a set of questions for him to think about: What do you think your vision should include?: Making a vital change in your career?; Owning your own business?; Being fit and healthy?; Raising happy, well-adjusted children?; Helping others?; What are you good at?; What do you love to do?; What aren't you good at now, but would like to be?; Where do you think you will be career-wise in 5 years time? I put these questions to John in such a way that he would understand they were not exhaustive, but were the type of questions which were relevant to devising his vision statement.

Using formats (see appendices A1 and A2) devised from adapting and compiling my questions from several of the reading sources above, especially Senge (1990) and Senge et al. (1994), as well as my own experience, I asked John to think through the

questions and craft his own personal vision and personal development plan. It was hoped that it would prompt John to think and dream, thereby creating a personal vision and development plan for his future, from which the objectives of our mentoring relationship could evolve.

Initial Meeting with Mentee

The initial meeting can be considered the first phase of a mentoring relationship in which mentoring partners converse with one another and identify specific interests and objectives ("Four Phases of Mentoring"). During my initial meeting with John at the outset of the mentoring program, he and I reviewed and discussed his vision statement and personal development plan. In his vision statement, he sought to integrate his commitment to his family and friends with his new profession. In the process, he expressed his desire to acquire teaching and communication skills which would hone his ability not only to interact effectively with others, but also to treat them with compassion. His personal development revolved around his plan to complete a Bachelor's Degree in VET (Vocational Education & Training) and obtain employment as a TAFE teacher (see Appendices J1 and J2 for further details).

Partnership Agreement

In designing our mentoring partnership, a quote by a retired teacher, Ellen Logue, was my guiding principle as John and I designed our mentoring partnership: "A mentor helps teachers make sense of the realities that they face in teaching, learn their significance, and use what they have learned to improve their teaching skills" (NFIE, 1999, p. 2).

According to Zachary (2000), it is advisable to set out, at the beginning of the relationship, some mutual expectations. This not only allows mentor and mentee to establish a business-like framework, it invites some good discussion about the mentee's hopes and concerns. We discussed the following:

- **The elements** of our partnership agreement – that the agreement should contain certain elements which will provide parameters for the mentoring relationship which are beneficial to both mentor and mentee and are achievable.
- **Why** – the benefits of the proposed mentoring relationship. We discussed how an effective plan for the mentoring program will benefit both of us.

- **What** – the expected outcomes of the mentoring relationship. We discussed the concrete outcomes which we both wanted to achieve through the mentoring relationship.

- **How** – the personal boundaries of the relationship. We agreed on how to work together to make this mentoring relationship a successful one. Some examples of discussion points are:

  - When are the best times to meet, email or telephone, so as not to disrupt work or family commitments?
  - How are we going to develop a professional relationship which will allow us to share with each other honestly and objectively?
  - How will we deal with disagreement or what we perceive to be resistance?
  - What mutual fears do we have about the mentoring relationship?
  - What is it about me (the mentee), my way of viewing the world or my reactions which might block our relationship?
  - What is it about me (the mentor), my way of viewing the world or my reactions which might block our relationship?

Customising our partnership agreement

Through discussion we agreed that two kinds of conditions needed to be addressed in our mentoring agreement:

- Professional norms
- Personal behaviour

Professional norms to include:

- Time commitments
- Frequency of meetings
- Punctuality

Personal behaviour to include:

- Appropriate interpersonal behaviours

- Confidentiality

- Permission to give and receive feedback. Using feedback for discovery purposes about why things went well, besides the outcome. Also keeping in mind that feedback has two fundamental outcomes:

1) To reinforce what you are already doing, and;

2) To help you overcome challenges.

- Defining areas which are not appropriate for discussion or disclosure.

The mentoring partnership agreement we prepared as a result of our discussions can be seen in appendix H.

Mentor/Mentee Plan

During the subsequent meetings after John and I had decided to pursue the mentoring relationship, we entered into the negotiating phase. For this phase of the mentoring relationship, John and I delved into the details of the relationship, including the expectations, the mutual roles and responsibilities, the criteria for success and accountability ("Four Phases of Mentoring"). In deference to the John's specific desire to learn about teaching techniques and course design for the experiential part of his teacher training, both of us utilised the mentoring action plan (see Appendix B) to identify the specific needs and activities. John's mentoring goals and objectives were as follows:

- To acquire effective teaching and communication techniques; and

- To design an instructional program.

John and I decided that in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, it was necessary for John to develop the skills for presenting the instructional program's content in a way which would facilitate the understanding of his students, and to learn how to interact with the students in ways which would encourage them to participate actively in the learning activities. We also decided that John would have to learn how to create a comprehensive lesson plan which could be implemented within the designated time period. At the same time, it was important for the students to be able to keep up with the pace of the lesson.

Developmental activities which were used to enable John to acquire these skills included: a) my provision and reviews of handouts on teaching strategies and the lesson preparations during meetings; b) John's documentation of the meetings and the lessons to promote critical reflection on the teaching practice; and c) my lesson observations and the sharing of the feedback with John through lesson observation notes and meetings. Each of these developmental activities constituted an important component of the mentoring program.

Preparing the Teacher

To prepare the teacher for his teaching experience in the classroom, I provided and reviewed, with John, handouts on teaching strategies, classroom instruction and lesson preparation. These discussions were informal, as John and I went over the information on the handouts, with John being able to ask questions and make comments. The handouts were self-developed and comprised a synthesis of information that I had gathered from many different sources during my teaching career, along with insights from my teaching experience. The handouts offered a visual aid for my explanation of the different aspects of teaching. More importantly, John was able to pose questions and revise the information at a later stage. Some of these handouts also provided space for John to insert his lesson preparation notes (See Appendices K-M). I also shared the Classroom Observation checklist (regarding a classroom's physical qualities) and the Teaching Observation checklist with John to highlight the key areas of focus in teaching, which allowed John to attend to these components in preparing for his teaching experience (see Appendices D and E).

The handouts seemed to serve well the purpose of providing specific areas in which John and I could discuss teaching concepts and strategies, and John seemed to welcome the information. However, despite the fact that in discussing the information on the handouts, John had the opportunity to contribute his own ideas and points, one drawback of this method of proceeding was its quite prescriptive nature, which I did not fully realise at the time. Another way in which we could have proceeded is for John to have brought up questions and issues that concerned him about his upcoming tasks and then for us to have discussed these. Out of these discussions, we could have then developed lists of principles, strategies and techniques pertaining to his upcoming teaching. This method might have worked particularly well in the topic areas of Appendices A, E, F, G, K, and L. In this way, John could have served as a co-developer of the handouts. My function would have probably still included bringing up points that I considered important, but John, too, may have brought up points and issues that I otherwise would have forgotten. Furthermore, it seems likely that helping to develop these informational handouts would have also helped John to retain the information better. The prescriptive nature of my providing self-prepared handouts to John early in our mentoring relationship may have been part of the same mind set which resulted in my initial hierarchical approach in my responses to John's first lesson (see discussion in Chapter 4).

Journal

As Holt (1994) pointed out, reflective journals are commonly employed in the preparation of adult educators. Apart from using the reflective journals to record their observations of their experiences, mentees can utilise them to express their perceptions and uncertainties; identify problems and consider different solutions; as well as reveal their emotions about their experiences. The writing of the journal entries involves a thinking process which is encapsulated by Kolb's modes of experiential learning: record of experience; reflection on the experience; integration of observation with theories; and application of theories to find solutions (in Kerka, 1996). Within a mentoring relationship, the reflective journal can contribute to the professional dialogue between the mentor and the mentee (McAlpine, 1992).

In this research study, John kept a journal of the meetings with me and the lessons. To provide the guiding framework for John's journal entries, a template was created. These templates consisted of multiple questions which were designed to challenge John to critically reflect on his teaching practice – his preparation, his implementation and the progress made. The questions were also formulated to lead to ideas for improvement in the future (See Appendices C1 and C2). Based on the questions, John took the initiative to create his own template for journal entries which integrated the lessons and the feedback from the meetings. These journal entries consisted of the following sections: a) Trainee's preparation; b) Strengths; c) Weaknesses; d) Learning strategies; e) Identifying individual needs; and f) Improvements for next lesson (See Appendices N1 to N4).

Lesson Observations

One of the central components of this teacher mentoring program was the lesson observations. I attended John's course on pest control for four consecutive days. Without interrupting the proceedings, I took down extensive notes on John's presentation of the course by taking into account the various elements of the Teaching Observation and the Classroom Observation checklists. These notes were then used as a reference during the meetings with John in which feedback was provided to John for further improvement (see Appendices O1 to O4).

Feedback

Feedback is a key strategy which is utilised in the mentoring process (Mills et al., 2001). This is especially true insofar as the mentee's achieving competency is a main objective of the mentoring (Maynard & Furlong, 1995), as was the case for John and I. Such competency-directed mentoring is like teacher supervision inasmuch as the supervising teacher and the teacher being observed meet so that the former can provide feedback to the latter (Wood & McQuarrie, 1999). The feedback needs to be customised to the state of the readiness of the mentee in order to be effective in stimulating the mentee's growth ("Four Phases of Mentoring"). In this research study, I offered John both written and verbal feedback, which were addressed during the meetings which occurred after the lesson.

Conclusions

The final stage of mentoring, "closure," allows both the mentor and the mentee to assess the mentoring process, determine the progress made and acknowledge the learning which was achieved during the process. Within the context of this study, a handout which contained questions for critical reflection in action research (Dick, 2002) based on Argyris and Schön (1974) theory of action approach was used to help John and I to evaluate the mentoring process (see Appendix Q). These questions for critical reflection focused on the outcomes of the program, how well the outcomes accorded with what was sought and what was learned during the process. Questionnaires evaluating the mentoring program were then completed by both mentor and mentee (see Appendices F and G).

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the methodology of the research. The chapter first explained the action research design of the study, including the cycle of observation, reflection, action and observation, along with its participative nature. The study setting was also detailed, and a description of the mentee as an aspiring teacher was also provided.

The procedures for implementing the project were then elucidated in terms of seven steps involving choosing a topic and research question, developing action strategies,

and data collection, analysis and presentation. Finally, an overall description of the mentoring program was given in terms of ten key components of the program.

The following chapter presents the results of the action research project. Key themes are identified, an evaluation of the mentoring program is given and implications for practice and theory are discussed.

C H A P T E R 4

RESULTS

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents the results of the study, thereby answering the question which guided the study. That question was:

> *What are the key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources in his or her area of interest?*

As explained in chapter three, analysis of the data was done by examining all documents that pertained to the project, as well as discussions between the mentor and mentee. In examining these documents, themes within subject matters being addressed and discussed which pertained to the effectiveness of the mentoring project were sought. For a theme to be identified, two criteria had to be met: (1) the theme had to recur several times in at least three types of documents and/or in at least two types of documents and in the discussions, and (2) the theme had to pertain to the effectiveness of the mentoring project. This analysis revealed four recurring themes which reflected four elements of the mentoring program which bore strongly on the program's effectiveness. These four themes were:

1) Sensitivity to the educational and cultural context;

2) Focus on student learning strategies;

3) Moving from a hierarchical to a more collaborative mentoring style; and

4) Joint enthusiasm for the program.

Each of these themes is discussed in a separate section below. The data from which the theme emerged and how the theme relates to the effectiveness of the mentoring program are explained. Following presentation of the themes, an overall evaluation of the mentoring program is presented, including ways it could have been improved. In

the final section, implications for future mentoring practice and for theory are discussed.

Theme 1: Sensitivity to the Educational and Cultural Context

This theme often recurred in discussions between John and myself before and during the four-lesson sequence. The discussions demonstrated that we were each highly aware of the situation we were in, with John being a distance learner residing far from his educational institution (NTU – Northern Territory University) and having to carry out his studies and his teaching within the unique cultural context existing in Brunei; and with me assuming the role of John's mentor within that situation. In relation to the educational context, our early discussions often dealt with issues such as: (1) what assistance was available to John from NTU, especially in regard to his teaching efforts; (2) what reading resources were available to John in Brunei; and (3) was there any way for him to gain feedback on his teaching style without the assistance of a mentor? In relation to the cultural context, our discussions dealt with issues such as: (1) how must John's lessons be formulated given the students' level of English comprehension; and (2) how well would women and men mix in his classes given the predominant Muslim culture which discourages mixing of genders in public? (Having resided in Brunei for a considerable time, we were both aware of the rather strict standards maintained by Shariah, religious law, with respect to the mixing of genders in society.) This cultural context part of the theme was also often reflected in my written lesson observations and in John's log entries following lessons.

Each of these two kinds of concern affected both John's teaching practice and my own mentoring practice as the project developed. The following two sub-sections highlight the two aspects of this theme.

Sensitivity to the Educational Context

John was highly aware of the educational context he found himself in as a distance learner in Brunei, and this context was arguably a prime motivation for his wanting to be mentored. To understand this, it helps to understand John, and how serious he was about his new direction. His serious attitude is clearly reflected in many of his statements in his overview of the mentoring partnership (Appendix H), such as:

"I have progressed to a high position in management in my field of operations and have had great success. However, the job satisfaction I once had from meeting budgets and increasing turnover just doesn't give me the fulfilment they once did. I want to and need to interact and train people. I enjoy seeing people utilise skills which I have passed on. I do, however, enjoy my trade and field of expertise. After many hours of deliberation, I have come to the realisation I want to change direction in my career, but I still want to work in the field of my trade. Becoming a qualified TAFE teacher will combine my field of training, as well as my personal need for communication, interaction and contribution to a people-based industry. I have set a goal of becoming a fully qualified TAFE trainer and instructor within three years. To reach this goal, I will need to develop my skills and acquire the training tools needed to develop and lead people through training."

Also:

"I like to believe that there are very few things in life, which happen through luck or by accident. To achieve goals, you need to have a detailed plan. A plan or design or whatever you like to call it acts like a guide when you become confused. If your plan is strong and well-thought-out, it maps your achievements and shows the progress which you are making, which is invaluable, when times get you down. You can look at what you have achieved and gain enthusiasm from it. In designing your plan, you should set your goal and list the various points you need to achieve before actually reaching it. Once these sign posts have been established, list the tools and equipment needed for each of the steps. These tools and equipment may take many different forms and identities. My mentor partnership is one, a Bachelor's is another."

Given the focused attitude indicated by these statements, it is understandable that John would want to be mentored within the educational situation he found himself in. John had been a professional chef and had never presented a formal class. When we discussed his actually giving lessons, he was excited and desirous of doing so, but he was also unsure of himself. Furthermore, he felt that the distance education he had so far received was not conducive to learning. He didn't understand at first what all the requirements were and he felt his questions to the university were sometimes not answered in a way which helped him. He said he felt like a "fish out of water" and was

contemplating dropping out. After we discussed the situation he was in and I suggested a mentoring program, he was on fire with the prospect.

The key elements of the mentoring program were for me to help him prepare for teaching in the classroom and then to observe and critique his four lessons. If he had been residing near NTU, he could have likely found instructors, other teachers or interested peers to observe his teaching. But locating such an interested observer was a much more difficult task in Brunei. Though his program at NTU required his having four classes videotaped and sending the videos back to NTU for observation, and though he was hopeful that this would eventually provide some helpful feedback, he didn't want to wait. He wanted someone to observe him firsthand and provide him with immediate and detailed critiques. It is no wonder that John identified a mentor partnership as being one of the "tools" which he referred to in the quote above. In sum, the educational context which John found himself in was a main motivator for his wanting to enter into a mentoring relationship.

It is worth noting that John informed the university that we had embarked on a mentoring program, but they did not appear to be interested, as being mentored was not a requirement. I offered to send my classroom observations to his lecturer, but was told that it was not necessary. In my opinion this is unfortunate, for the school might have also learnt from John's mentoring experience. It would have given them more insight into how he was progressing.

A second way in which John's educational context of being a distance learner in Brunei affected the mentoring program was the relative lack of guidance materials available for the lessons he was to teach, materials which could guide him in preparing lesson plans and teaching strategies. If he had been residing near NTU, he would have had abundant educational resources available to help him design his lessons. However, no extra materials had been added to the course (which is also an on-campus course) to assist the student who is studying by distance. The university was informed about this deficiency, but nothing could be done about it midstream, hence I assisted John by designing teaching materials and handouts for him.

Though there was some discussion with John about the content of the handouts at the time I presented them to him, my attitude at that early point in the mentoring relationship was very much one of a hierarchical, expert-to-novice nature. This was illustrated by the fact that I did not consult with John about the nature of the handouts,

or about the kinds of handouts that he felt might be most useful. The handouts not only provided information, but also offered structure and guidance to help John to identify the appropriate strategies and prepare a lesson. The handouts included one on Teaching Strategies in a Practical Situation (Appendix K), a Lesson Plan Reflection (Appendix L) and a Lesson Plan Template (Appendix M). I reviewed these handouts with John, and they served as visuals aids for my explanations of various teaching aspects. These reviews occurred before John began his four-lesson sequence, and they appear to have been useful to him based on his comments as we reviewed them.

Sensitivity to the Cultural Context

It is clear from several data sources that sensitivity to the cultural context was a main aspect contributing to the effectiveness of the mentoring program. These sources include my written lesson plans, John's daily log during the four-lesson sequence, our discussions and email communication from John after the program was completed. In all of these, various aspects of the cultural context arose; especially in regard to how best John could teach his students given that context. John and I were at an advantage in this situation by both having resided in Brunei for some time. John had lived and worked there for several years and knew some Malay (the national language), and I had lived there for 10 years as well and also knew some Malay. Thus, we had a reasonable understanding of the culture and of what to expect of the students in terms of language and prior educational preparation. This, along with the preceding explanation, should not be seen as a patronising statement. Rather, it explains that John and I were both somewhat familiar with what could reasonably be expected in regard to the educational preparation and English language proficiency of the students that John would be dealing with. Thus, whilst the instruction was conducted in English, the more difficult concepts were reinforced by also using the Malay language equivalent in an effort to further ensure understanding. However, we were open to the possibility that any or all of the students might defeat our expectations by having a broad and deep educational background or by being fluent in English.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the eight students were Bruneians and Filipinos (four each) and all were employees of the bakery which was managed by the John. They did a variety of jobs: bakers, cashiers, cleaners, delivery, supervisors and storemen. John wanted to train his staff to understand why they were doing what they did at work, and to retain them. In particular, he wanted to show his employees what happens if

they are not careful and hygienic, to help them think about what they were doing and to learn the consequences of not doing things right. This was unusual on two counts. First, it often seems to be the norm in Bruneian workplaces to make demands upon workers without reason or explanation. This may be related to what Blunt (1988) claims is the Bruneian tendency to accept unequal distributions of power without question. In the Bruneian workplace, this inequality takes the form of the relations between workers and supervisors (Minnis, 1999). Second, offering any training class to employees in Brunei was out of the ordinary. Though historically, Brunei's oil wealth has resulted in an economic system largely disconnected from education and training, efforts to modernise technical and vocational education have been made recently (Minnis, 1999). However, this new emphasis on training seems not to have reached the workplace itself. It is thus uncommon for trade workers and those who work in small business to receive special training in their fields in Brunei. This includes Bruneian as well as expatriate workers. In this case, however, John obtained permission from his supervisors to upgrade the staff training, as long as it did not require the staff to take too much time off work.

As it turned out, the students had to work longer shifts because of the classes, and this was of some concern in our discussions before the classes began. It was unknown how motivated the students would be with the classes being in addition to their regular working hours. Furthermore, we were concerned about their ability to grasp the lesson material, given that we were dealing with students who had little education and not a great command of English.

Taking all of this into account, I advised John, as he was preparing lesson plans, to make the lessons as practical as possible. In this situation, the students needed to learn for the workplace, so a practical form of teaching was more appropriate than a more academic approach. Also, given their English-speaking level, in order to maintain interest, a practical approach was best for clarity and to maintain interest.

As it turned out, the motivation of the students during the first lesson did not seem high. This changed, however, as the classes proceeded and the students became more engaged in the classes. This progression is explained in greater detail in the next section.

Another concern John and I had before the classes began which was related to the cultural context was how well the women and men would mix in the class. Brunei is a

Muslim country, and male and females are generally not allowed to mix, even if they are not Muslim, at public functions. With John's classes being equally divided between males and females, it seemed possible at the outset that gender issues might have a negative effect on class learning.

Our sensitivity to this possible cultural complication had positive benefits in helping John to fashion effective ways of addressing the men and the women in the classes. He reported to me in an email some time after the lessons were finished that he handled this issue by attempting to instil trust in the women: *"... by instilling trust and empowering the ladies they were able to contribute more."* John did this by encouraging the women to ask questions and letting them know their questions were relevant, which further encouraged them to speak up. At the same time, he sought to empower the men *"by allowing men to feel confident by offering encouragement for answers and praise for contributing."* In this way the men *"were able to gain face and continue to contribute to the class without disruption."*

John's success in presenting a class in which women felt empowered was reflected in my lesson observation layouts, in which I recorded the number of class contributions for each student (Appendices O1-O4). Overall, there were more male than female responses in the four classes; however, in the first class the number was equal between the genders, and in the third class there was more female than male participation.

Theme 2: Focus on Student Learning Strategies

It stands to reason that a focus on student learning strategies would be a theme of the mentoring program, given that the mentoring centred on John's presentation of lessons to his students, and that all good education should be student focused. Not all education is sufficiently focused on student learning, so the fact that this was found as a theme of the mentoring program is a positive sign for the program.

The focus on student learning strategies which was present during the mentoring program was repeatedly reflected in my lesson observations, John's journal entries and our discussions both before and during the four-lesson sequence. Though in some ways this theme is closely related to the cultural context part of the first theme, it goes beyond cultural context by also involving basic learning strategies which were used in teaching the students.

The strong emphasis on learning strategies which pervaded the program was partly due to my own experiences in adult education and my philosophy of education, which has been strongly influenced by John Dewey. Dewey (1897) stressed the importance of focusing on the individual student and what his or her interests and abilities are. He held that an interest is always a sign of a "power" below, some capacity of the student which can be cultivated. Accordingly, I believe that it is crucial for the teacher to discover what naturally interests their students, to determine what their capabilities and learning needs are and to find ways to address those needs. In my view, this also holds true for problem students, whether the problem is due to behaviour, lack of understanding or lack of interest. In this case, the students were a mixture of nationalities, yet all were members of the same culture. With 10 years of experience in that culture, I had some insight into the kinds of issues which might tend to crop up in the classes. I believed that a large part of my value as a mentor to John would be to help him become aware of the learning needs of his students.

At the beginning, John had no experience teaching and only a small theoretical base. He was very eager to strengthen that base, and weeks before he was to begin the four-class sequence, we began to focus on providing him practical ideal and a reasonable theoretical standpoint from which to teach the classes. Some of our meeting time was devoted to matters of preparation and classroom management. This included basic issues such as ensuring that there is adequate lighting, seating, ventilation, equipment and first; and management issues such as checking roll and preparing appropriate handouts (see Appendix K). Most of the time, however, was spent on teaching philosophies, teaching strategies and how different students learn.

John was an apt student. He loved to talk about education. He was always very interested and engaged in our discussions about education. He loved what we were doing and he was like a sponge, soaking up as much information on teaching and education theories as he could from me. I, too, love what I do, and so we had many conversations on subjects such as the merits of teaching; different types of students, teaching styles and strategies; and teaching philosophies from Plato to B. F. Skinner to John Dewey. He very much enjoyed these discussions, as did I, and it certainly enriched our whole mentoring relationship. It probably provided me extra credibility as far as he was concerned, and I think that the extra information and our discussions helped to spur him on to continue with his studies.

In regard to teaching and learning strategies, I prepared a list of different learning styles with brief explanations for him, which we reviewed together point by point (see Lesson Plan Template, Appendix M). I also discussed with him the importance of practical teaching strategies such as addressing the level of competency of his students, explaining ideas in bite-sized pieces and ascertaining students' retention of the material before moving on.

Once the lessons started, I began observing and offering my feedback, a great deal of which was in reference to particular strategies John might use to help his students to understand and retain the lesson material and to get them involved in the class. In each case, we reviewed and discussed my lesson observations within a half hour after a class had ended. Before the beginning of class, he would have set up the video recorder in one corner of the room, and he took the tape home and viewed it later that day. That night, he would call me and we would discuss how what he had viewed on the videotape in relation to my observations.

During this period of teaching, John was very engaged, continuously reflecting on his classroom practice and trying to become increasingly effective each lesson. A number of issues related to teaching strategies arose as the classes took place. For example, at first, some students were very hesitant to talk. This was to be expected. In my experience, I have found that as in some other Asian cultures, students are often hesitant to speak up in class in Brunei. This may be partly because they are often subjected to a method of teaching which emphasises copying notes down from the board for the entire lesson and does not encourage the asking of questions. I have always used strategies to encourage students to speak and ask questions, and I encouraged John to do the same, to draw the students out by finding ways to make the lesson enjoyable and interesting for them. Because of the cultural differences and also that the students spoke English as a second language, I also emphasised the need for John to utilise supplementary tools such as visual aids to communicate with these students more effectively.

In general, in making comments to John about some teaching method which I thought might be improved, I attempted to explain just why a particular behaviour or action on his part might be conducive to the students' learning. At the same time, I would offer specific suggestions about what he might do differently. Based on feedback, as well as our discussions, John's initial tendency to teach primarily from notes quickly evolved into a more hands-on type of engagement. This included a trip to the bakery during

one lesson in order to observe areas and situations which were particularly vulnerable to the infringement of pests, and to discuss possible solutions to these vulnerabilities. My own experience in the hospitality industry, where pest control can be a serious issue, helped to spur this idea.

In retrospect, it is possible that some of learning strategies I suggested to John may not have been as appropriate for our Brunei classroom as they would have been for some Western classrooms. Minnis (1999) observes that assumptions about learning and teaching strategies may need to be adapted to a local culture. For example, given that educational practice in Brunei is greatly influenced by state-supported cultural and religious norms (Minnis, 1999), beliefs about the most effective educational methods may not apply as readily in Brunei as in some other countries. Although John and I paid attention to how well specific strategies seemed to be working as the classes proceeded, we did not carefully test some of our basic assumptions, such as those about what constituted an enjoyable class for the Bruneian students. Especially if the number of classes had been greater, it would have been wise for us to have done so.

The following selections from my observation notes and from John's journal for the four classes provide examples of how my comments and his were very often focused on strategies for student learning.

Lesson Observations 1:

> *"Try putting examples on whiteboard - you were too quick to write all the answers you wanted on the board. Ask the students for specific points – then write up their answers and discuss with them."*

> *"Due to the culture and the fact that English is a second language to the students, notes in point form on flipchart would be advisable when you are explaining the concepts."*

> *"You tended to name a person, then to ask them a question. In doing that you allowed the rest of the class to relax. They then don't have to think of an answer to the question you asked as you have put the onus on one particular person. It's a good idea to ask a question in general to the whole group, look around the room at everyone, then ask a specific person – not pick on one person in particular. To say a name & ask a question takes heat off everyone else, they didn't need to think of an answer.*

Lesson Observations 2:

"Due to more visuals & explanation you got 100% more participation rate today (see class map below). They took notes, were showing that they were interested and getting the message. You got more enthusiastic answers. More responses when they were not being asked directly. You did revert a couple of times to asking one person, but were aware quickly of your oversight and corrected it – and it worked!"

"They were uncomfortable when you asked them a question directly – strategies? For example: Write the question on the board? Say it twice? Is it their lack of English making understanding difficult? Jokes are good – relaxed everyone."

Lesson Observations 3:

"It was a good strategy for you to talk to the rest of the group whilst the student was drawing her plan on the board – it took the heat off her and she was relaxed and able to complete her diagram."

"They responded very well to the visual aids."

"Teamwork was good during group activity (inspection report). You need to walk around each group & listen & add little comments – this will assist you in gauging their knowledge."

Lesson Observations 4:

"Look at strategies for disruption. For example: 'My job is to teach you, your job is to learn – if you are talking, you can't hear me – hence you are not learning – so neither of us are doing our jobs.'"

John's Journal Entry for Lesson 1:

"More movement when delivering the lesson might have drawn the quiet participants into the lesson and helped to control disruptive trainees. I did not utilise visual techniques enough to help overcome the language barrier."

Journal Entry for Lesson 2:

"When asking questions and reinforcing points, break them down for the trainees on the board."

> *"The target group being from an Asian culture had only limited understanding of English. To compensate for this, I used visual teaching strategies extensively, such as:*
>
> *1 – Role playing*
>
> *2 – Use of diagrams and flip charts*
>
> *3 – Simulated exercises"*

Journal Entry for Lesson 3:

> *"When setting task to be completed outside lesson time frame (homework), write the task on the board and outline requirements and time frames. This visual technique will help reinforce the work needed to be done."*

Journal Entry for Lesson 4:

> *"Trainee participation was excellent. This lesson was great fun; I enjoyed the atmosphere of the class because I could see they were gaining knowledge from the course, from the answers they were volunteering and their group discussions. Some trainees were actually beginning to apply the principles outlined in the course in their own work environment."*
>
> *"Identifying the personal needs of the individual is a very personal skill and requires knowledge on how to understand the various problems a trainee may pose for the trainer. I will improve in this area with more exposure to this environment, as well as from my studies."*

It should be noted here that the application by John of new or altered teaching strategies in a new lesson, with the new strategies being based on reviewing and reflecting on my and his own observations, constituted one main part of this action research project. The cyclical nature of action research goes from observation and analysis of current practice, which leads to some new or revised practice. This new practice is in turn observed and analysed, possibly leading to yet further revisions in practice. In a sense, this is just what good teaching amounts to – constant revision toward the ideal based on reviewing what one has done previously.

Theme 3: Moving from a Hierarchical to a More Collaborative Mentoring Style

The third main theme found in this study was my movement from a hierarchical mentoring style to one which was more collaborative in nature. This theme is exhibited

by comparing my first lesson observation notes to my subsequent lesson notes. It is also present in some of John's replies in the reflective questionnaire which he completed following the mentoring program, as well as in some of my replies on my own reflective questionnaire. It was also very much evident in our discussions on the day of John's first lesson.

At the beginning of the project, the mentoring relationship was highly collaborative as John and I met together a number of times before he began teaching. In those meetings we worked together in establishing the expectations of the relationship and formulating the plan of the mentoring program. It was clear that John felt himself to be at a transformative juncture in his life, one in which he was entering into a new career path. As a result, he was highly focused on his learning agenda and his vision, and he was actively involved in contributing to the process and determining the direction of the mentoring program. The positive and mature vision of the mentoring relationship with which the mentee began is reflected in the following passage from his Overview (Appendix H).

> *"Choosing a mentor is as important a choice in life as choosing a school or career path. The mentor will become your compass in the ocean which you will both cross together. If he or she flounders, there is a good chance you will too. When looking for a mentor you should first follow three steps.*

> *"Decide on your goals or what you want to achieve. There is no use in finding somebody to guide you if you don't know where to go. The way I have done this is by first writing a vision statement or mission statement. A vision statement is not a static project; it continues to evolve as you do. The method I followed was to imagine that I was attending a funeral. My funeral. I would sit and listen to what people would say and how they would remember me. Friends, family, workmates, enemies. I would try and think of how I would like to be remembered for living my life, the principles I lived by and goals which I achieved. Then I incorporated this essence into my vision statement."*

Despite the mentoring relationship beginning in collaboration, as the time for John to begin his teaching drew near, the relationship started becoming more hierarchical. Because I possessed considerably more experience in teaching and education, I began to take the lead in introducing John to new ideas and learning materials for the preparation of his lessons. There was no problem in my doing this; in fact, our

discussions about teaching and the learning materials were something which John wanted and appreciated. However, this incipient hierarchical relationship reached an unpleasant height when I produced a very strong and directive critique of John's first lesson in my lesson observation.

I showed John my lesson observations in my office shortly after the first class ended. It quickly became clear that he felt somewhat stunned by my comments. His disposition was subdued, and he commented that he had thought he did well on his first lesson and was surprised at the number of points which I made in his critique. I attempted to counter his reaction by pointing out that it was to be expected that on his first lesson he would make some mistakes. At home later that day, he viewed the video record of the lesson, and he called me. He agreed that many of my criticisms were accurate, and he thought my comments were generally helpful. Nonetheless, he pointed out that not all mentees would be able to handle that level of criticism at such an early stage. I found myself empathising with him as I recalled my own first efforts at teaching and the way negative feedback had made me feel. I began realising that having to read and digest over 25 comments from me, most of which were critical, could indeed be very discouraging for John

An examination of my lesson observations for John's first lesson makes clearer why he felt discouraged by the comments. The critique included many specific criticisms, including comments such as the following:

> *"Students were not given enough time to finish the task you set or discuss it… There was no explanation from you, so it was not apparent what the point to the exercise was? Why? Where to next? It was a dead-end."* (Appendix P1)

> *"When you introduced the 'circles of influence,' you just said it with no explanation about what you were talking about. You didn't explain properly how word of mouth works, just that it does. Later you did, but they were confused at the beginning."* (Appendix P1)

As I reviewed my comments, it became clear that the sheer number of criticisms could be overwhelming to John. Furthermore, their tone often seemed somewhat harsh. Close examination revealed many negative phrases in the critique. For example, "you didn't" occurred in the observations 6 times. The word "too" was used 7 times in constructions such as "you were too quick," "too vague," "exercise too long" and "far too vague." Though I had praised John four times with the word "good"

in reference to one or another aspect of the lesson, two of those times the word was quickly followed by "but."

In addition, I recognised that I had not only identified problem areas, but had also proposed immediate solutions. My comments had done little to challenge John to come up with his own solutions. Rather, they were very directive in outlining specific solutions:

> *"Try putting examples on white board – you were too quick to write all the answers you wanted on the board. Ask the students for specific points – then write up their answers and discuss it with the group."*

> *"Why did you get the student to read aloud from the notes? It may frighten the others. Not really any point as it was a handout. Better to have an overhead of the main points in the handout and discuss with the group."*

It was little wonder that in John's first journal entry most of his comments simply echoed my criticisms, without any of his own personal reflections. This unintended outcome further illuminated the negative effects of the hierarchical style into which I had abruptly steered our mentoring relationship.

Through his reactions to my observations and by frankly sharing his thoughts with me, John helped me to realise that my mentoring style had unconsciously become something which violated my own principles. Furthermore, my style had departed from the kind of collaborative relationship that we had been developing from the beginning of the program. As pointed in Chapter 3, the participatory and collaborative nature of action research lent itself to a collaborative mentoring relationship; however, that collaborative relationship had been eclipsed by a more hierarchical style. Worst, however, was that by its adverse effect on John's enthusiasm, the new style threatened the effectiveness of the program.

At that point, I stood back from myself and my actions and reflected on the relationship I wanted to build with John. I quickly realised the necessity of moving back immediately to a more collaborative relationship and that I especially needed to do this in regard to my critiques of John's teaching. This reflection process was an extremely important aspect of the entire mentoring program as it changed my subsequent behaviour significantly. Here, reflection guided action and led to an outcome which I

believe was much more successful than would have been the case had I continued along the same track.

This self-reflection was aided by my empathy for the mentee. When faced with his reaction to my evaluation of his first lesson, I recalled my own rather strong negative reaction to criticism when I was first beginning to teach. The ability to empathise with others is, according to Goleman (1995), an indication of emotional intelligence. I feel that the mentee also displayed considerable emotional intelligence at this point of the mentoring process by pulling himself out of the discouragement he temporarily felt and addressing the specifics of my critique. The dialogue during the subsequent meeting and the responses of both John and me to the reflective questionnaires revealed how we both learned from the negative experience.

Realising that it was crucial to adjust my tone in the remaining lesson observations and to seek a more balanced mixture of positives with negatives when I provided John with feedback, I set about making those changes immediately. This was the point when the action research paradigm was most obvious in relation to the mentoring program. My initial practice was my mentoring style during John's first lesson as I recorded observations and then shared with him my observations of his teaching. At that point, both John and I were embedded in the mentoring relationship, but we were also capable of observing what we were doing, and I was able to observe how my mentoring was affecting John. What followed was discussion and reflection, which ultimately led to a set of actions which I took to modify my practice to a more collaborative and less hierarchical style. This led to several specific changes in my way of dealing with John. One of these changes was to make fewer criticisms about John's teaching (7 for lesson 2, 12 for lesson 3, and 4 for lesson 4). In part, this was simply due to John becoming a better teacher with every lesson. However, I had also decided that I would modify my comments so as not mention issues which seemed to me to be relatively minor.

The overall tone of the critiques also changed. For one thing, there was much less use of negative terms. The words "you didn't" occurred only 3 times in the next 3 lesson observations, and the mentions of doing this or that "too" much ceased altogether. I was also more conscious of highlighting the strengths of John's teaching practice to encourage him in his progress. Thus, I included more positive comments, such as the following:

"Due to more visuals & explanation, you got a 100 percent more participation rate today… More responses when they were not being asked directly. You did revert a couple of times to asking one person, but were aware quickly of your oversight and correct it – and it worked! " (Appendix P2)

"Jokes are good – relaxed everyone." (Appendix P2)

"It was a good strategy for you to talk to the rest of the group whilst the student was drawing her plan on the board – it took the heat off her and she was relaxed and able to complete her diagram." (Appendix P3)

"The questions you asked while drawing the plan on the board prompted results from the class – great!" (Appendix P3)

"Good explanation by you all through this exercise." (Appendix P3)

"Good lesson today – not much interaction from students – but that was due to the nature of the lesson." (Appendix P4)

"Good homework and assessment explanation." (Appendix P4)

Again, much of this change in tone was simply due to the fact that John made steady progress through the four lessons. At the same time, however, I consciously paid attention to trying to avoid any harsh or abrupt tone in the lesson observations.

Another change was that although I continued to make critical observations and offer specific strategies for improvement, I also made a greater effort to present the strategies in the form of suggestions – ideas to stimulate John's thinking about problems and alternative solutions. Instead of categorically stating a single strategy for him to use, I sometimes attempted to offer a range of possibilities using a question format to help him start developing his own strategies. For example:

"To get more participation from everyone, maybe you need to think of other strategies to employ. Seating? Activities?" (Appendix P2)

"They were uncomfortable when you asked them a question directly – strategies? For example: Write the question on the board? Say it twice? Is it their lack of English making understanding difficult?" (Appendix P2)

"Write tomorrow's exercise on the board – did they understand what was expected?" (Appendix P3)

Such relatively open-ended questions were, however, fewer than they could have been. In reviewing the lesson observations after the four lessons were completed, I realised that this element of a more collaborative relationship between John and me was not developed enough. In the educative mentoring model, utilisation of open-ended questions is considered to be an integral part of the mentoring process. According to the mentor Frazer, the purpose of open-ended questions is to challenge mentees to examine the underlying motives for their actions and identify new strategies (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). However, this strategy was seldom employed by me. Even when it was, one or more possible answers to the question were suggested so that the questions were not fully open-ended. This was clearly a weakness of the mentoring program.

At the same time, it is important to note that in our discussions following lessons 2 through 4, John seemed to appreciate not only the specificity with which I identified his strengths, but particular strategies which I suggested for problem areas. Furthermore, even in regard to the many criticisms and suggestions I offered in my observations for lesson 1, John expressed to me his belief that despite his initial negative emotional reaction, the criticisms had been helpful to him. Thus, the specificity with which I focused on John's problem areas in the lessons and my suggested strategies did have positive results. This is understandable, because one of the main jobs of a mentor for a novice teacher is to assist the mentee by sharing knowledge about specific teaching strategies (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Thus, there must often be a substantial degree of directedness and specificity. It remains, however, that more open-ended questions could have helped to stimulate John's thinking in regard to possible teaching strategies. .

The more collaborative approach which I took after John's response to my lesson observations after the first lesson was evident in our discussions, in which I consciously sought to regain the kind of mentoring relationship we had had in the beginning. For lessons 2 through 4, we went over my observations and talked about them as colleagues rather than as if we were in the traditional hierarchical mentor-mentee relationship. This was probably aided by the fact that with one class under his belt, even if that class did not go perfectly, he felt more on an equal footing with me. I

encouraged that feeling, and in our discussions in the later lessons were animated and positive.

From John's comments, it was evident that he was able to discern a measure of his success in communicating the content of his course to his students. More than just a cognitive acknowledgement of his accomplishment, his comments also indicated that he was very encouraged by his students' responses. The result was that he became increasingly relaxed and proficient in his lessons. This began immediately, in lesson 2, about which he made the following comments in his journal:

> *"I did much better in the second lesson. I felt more relaxed. By addressing the problems pointed out by Collette, I did not force participation and the class volunteered information. The class responded very well to visual aids. The lesson had better flow because the students understood the topics better and could move on to next points without needing constant explanations of the original point made."* (Appendix H)

We continued this process through the next two lessons, meeting within a half hour after the class was completed, and discussing my observations in a collegial atmosphere. Instead of feeling intimidated and overwhelmed, John was able to review the comments and share his perceptions of the experience with me without hesitation. We discussed what was positive about the lesson, as well as whatever problems he felt he had had during the class, or that were identified by me during my observations. We also discussed strategies for overcoming problems. Later that evening after John viewed the videotape on his own; we talked again by phone, often going over the same material. In the next lesson, John would incorporate strategies which we had discussed. He was also sometimes able to devise his own ideas for improvement which were recorded in his journal entries. These were ideas which did not, like his journal entries after the first lesson, come directly from my lesson observations. These strategies included:

> *"Work on timing for discussions,"* and

> *"When asking questions and reinforcing points, break them down for the trainees on the board."* (Appendix O2)

As the lessons developed, both John and I felt that he was gaining self-confidence and making continuous improvement in his teaching. This was reflected in his enthusiasm, especially following the later classes:

> "Today was the best of the three lessons. I focused on utilising the space and incorporating visual aids into my talk increasingly. Student participation was excellent and I could see they were enjoying the lesson. I also felt great satisfaction when I saw that they had fully understood the previous days' talks and were learning the subject matter." (Appendix H)

> "This lesson was great fun; I enjoyed the atmosphere of the class because I could see they were gaining knowledge from the course from the answers they were volunteering and their group discussions. Some trainees were actually beginning to apply the principle outlined in the course in their own work environment." (Appendix O4)

In describing the mentoring relationship on the reflective questionnaire, John noted the change from hierarchical to collaborative (Appendix G):

> "Collaborative. But in the beginning more hierarchal, however I think I needed that, as I started like a fish out of water, not knowing what to do. I thought it would be easy, but after the first lesson when Collette gave me the feedback, I was shocked to see that I had made so many mistakes and didn't get my message across to my students in a way which they understood or learnt from".

This comment and others which John made to me in discussion suggest that the hierarchical, very directive tenor of the relationship in the beginning may have had some benefits. However, given John's emotional reaction to my initial critique, it is doubtful that the program would have been as successful as it turned out to be if the initial hierarchical style had continued throughout.

For this reason, I am thankful for John's honest and forthright comments during our discussion following his first lesson 1. I was genuinely surprised at first by his reaction, a surprise which was due to my having unconsciously fallen into a certain kind of mentoring role. John's reaction and comments helped me to become conscious of what I had been doing, which enabled me to reflect on it and see what needed to be changed. I believe that change was a key element in the success of the program.

Theme 4: Mentor and Mentee Enthusiasm

The fourth main theme found in the study was the enthusiasm exhibited by both John and myself throughout the mentoring program. This was reflected in John's overview of the mentoring partnership, his personal vision statement and his personal development plan. It was also in John's journal entries, his replies to the reflective questionnaire, and my replies to the questionnaire. Most predominantly, it was present in our many discussions before, during and after John's four-lesson sequence.

Mentor and mentee motivation and enthusiasm are important because they spur energy and effort, both of which are important to the success of a mentoring program. Results of a study on how mentoring is practiced at State University of New York's Empire State College indicated that the active participation of mentees in the mentoring process is very important for the success of the process (Langer, n.d). In addition, mentor energy and availability have been found to be positively correlated with effective mentoring relationships (Carter & Francis, 2000). In this study, the motivations of both mentor and mentee were strong, leading us both to apply substantial time and energy to the program. For John, this enthusiasm began with his developing a clear, and in fact transformative, goal for his future as a teacher:

> *"After many hours of deliberation, I have come to the realisation I want to change direction in my career, but I still want to work in the field of my trade. Becoming a qualified TAFE teacher will combine my field of training, as well as my personal need for communication, interaction and contribution to a people-based industry. I have set a goal of becoming a fully qualified TAFE trainer and instructor within three years. To reach this goal, I will need to develop my skills and acquire the training tools needed to develop and lead people through training. A Bachelor of Vocational Education and Training is the answer."*

Given John's goal, I assisted him in choosing NTU for his Bachelor of Vocational Education course. He was very excited about this new direction, but he had misgivings about being a distance learner and wanted very much to have someone nearby who was a professional educator who could help guide him in his first steps and observe his teaching. His understanding and appreciation of the value of having a mentor is clearly reflected in what he wrote about a mentor partnership in the Mentee's Overview of the Mentoring Partnership (Appendix H):

"A mentor brings an established network of contacts and areas of operation, as well as years of experience, which are invaluable for a mentee who is trying to avoid pitfalls and maintain progress in the right direction. A mentor also has the patience and maturity to ride out hard periods of business or progress towards goals. This makes for a great foil for enthusiasm and sometimes-reckless approaches of an inexperienced novice. A mentee however, also brings valuable contributions to the partnership, such as fresh ideas, outside views on problem solving, community interaction, friendship and human experience for the mentor. A mentor can use a mentee to express his or her need to contribute what he or she has learnt, back into the industry. Often mentees are groomed for the replacement of the mentor. All in all a mentor partnership becomes a valuable and masterful tool in the achievement of both personal and career goals…. Choosing a mentor is as important a choice in life as choosing a school or career path. The mentor will become your compass in the ocean which you will both cross together. If he or she flounders, there is a good chance you will too."

John's enthusiasm was evident in the many meetings we had before he began teaching. It is important to remember that there was no requirement for John to have a mentor for his program at NTU. The choice to have a mentor and to choose me as that mentor was entirely his. Making that choice required him to meet with me a number of times, study various handouts which I prepared, prepare vision and other statements and keep a log. All together, this amounted to a considerable investment of time and energy by an individual who was also working full time and fulfilling course requirements for NTU.

After John chose me as his mentor, we began meeting in earnest in September and had approximately a dozen arranged meetings before his four-lesson sequence. During that period we also conversed by phone a number of times about issues dealing with his preparations for teaching, and he often stopped by my office in the morning to talk for a while over a cup of coffee. During those conversations we usually ended up discussing education. He was like a sponge, soaking up as much information on teaching and education theories as he could from me.

With the exception of our meeting immediately after John's first lesson, his enthusiasm continued and even grew during his teaching. This is clearly reflected in journal entries such as the following:

"Today's lesson was excellent. I really enjoy the reward you get when the students start to show you that they are learning." (Appendix H)

"The overall program went well. After the daily reviews from Collette, I was able to make changes to the program and the way I delivered the sessions which made vast improvements on the initial plan. I have learnt a great deal from this exercise." (Appendix H)

John's enthusiasm for the program was also reflected in his replies to the reflective questionnaire at the end of the program (Appendix G). For example:

"I found the whole mentoring experience invaluable. It provided me with an opportunity to learn about the teaching profession from someone who was able to provide me with guidance, share personal and professional experiences, as well as serve as a role model. I gained a great deal from the mentoring program with Collette. I had not had any teaching knowledge or experience and was not aware of what was expected or required to teach properly to get the best results."

His enthusiastic attitude toward the program was also mentioned in some of my comments on the reflective questionnaire for the mentor (Appendix F):

"The enthusiasm the mentee brought to the experience was infectious. The following attributes of the mentee aided the programme to the successful outcomes it produced. The mentee:
- *was eager to learn and open to new ideas*
- *was willing to take risks*
- *had a positive attitude*
- *was open to receiving feedback about skills*
- *was able to integrate feedback and act on it*
- *took initiative and demonstrated resourcefulness"*

In regard to my own enthusiasm, it matched John's well. This was important because enthusiasm is a key characteristic for choosing veteran mentors (Ganser, 1995). One reason for this enthusiasm is that I have been a distance learner myself for considerable periods of time, and I appreciate the difficulties which distance learners must face. Thus, I felt that my efforts as a mentor in this case were very important. One of the main difficulties which a new adult educator faces when he or

she is a distance learner is the absence of immediate feedback. Although videotapes can be taken of lessons and self-reviewed, immediate feedback from veteran teachers and/or instructors can be very beneficial to the new teacher. However, to send tapes to the sponsoring university for observation and feedback and to receive them back may take up to three weeks or more. I was also enthusiastic about my mentoring because the mentee appeared to have considerable potential for becoming a strong and effective adult educator. In addition, I enjoyed his own enthusiasm both for his teaching and for the mentoring relationship.

One of the most important sources of my enthusiasm was that my background in adult education has left me with considerable knowledge of the field, and that knowledge is something I love to share. I believe that almost every teacher knows the great pleasure which comes from finding a student who genuinely wants to learn. The pleasure is in being able to share what you know with that student, and in seeing the student grow. I believe that the same can be said about the mentor-mentee relationship — mentors who have had the good fortune of mentoring an individual who is truly focused on learning are likely to know the immense satisfaction which can come from such a relationship. That is the kind of mentoring relationship I found myself in with John.

As mentioned above, he was so desirous of learning about education that he seemed like a sponge – and I was more than happy to try to relate to him as much as I could of what I knew. In this sense, we sometimes had almost a teacher-student relationship, one similar to the "ask-an-expert" model described by Perez and Dorman (2001) for telementoring. It may have been partly for this reason that I found myself taking an overly hierarchical stance at the beginning of John's lessons. That is, in my classroom observations for his first lesson, I seemed to be viewing myself as his teacher – and unfortunately, a rather authoritarian one – and not as his collaborator.

That soon changed, as explained in the preceding section, and both John's and my own enthusiasm remained high after that. I was further enthused by the fact that he was clearly progressing in his lessons, and I felt that that was partly due to my efforts. This is perhaps the greatest satisfaction of all in being a mentor, especially in being a mentor to someone who is highly motivated and with whom one has a good relationship – to see the individual succeed and to believe that the mentoring had something to do with the success.

Aside from our discussions, my enthusiasm for the mentoring relationship was reflected in my efforts to prepare handouts for John to assist him in his learning and teaching. It was also reflected in some of John's replies to the reflective questionnaire at the end of the program (Appendix G), for example:

> *"What Collette taught me to do and enhanced the whole experience for me, was in:*
> - *Observing and interact with my students;*
> - *Receiving encouragement (which in turn increased my motivation);*
> - *Constantly acquiring lifelong knowledge and updating my professional skills…"*

I believe the importance of the mutual enthusiasm that John and I had for the project cannot be over-emphasised. I believe it was a key ingredient in the program's success. The mentor certainly must be enthusiastic (Ganser, 1995) and have knowledge in his or her field, but enthusiasm is crucial when the mentee is an aspiring teacher. Without this, it is difficult for mentors to fulfil one of their most important functions: to inspire their mentees to believe in themselves and to feel comfortable in what they are trying to accomplish, thereby empowering them to achieve what they may have thought was unreachable. Furthermore, enthusiasm leads to participation, and the active participation of both mentee and mentor is correlated with a successful mentoring process (Carter & Francis, 2000; Langer, n.d).

Evaluation of the Mentoring Program

Overall, the mentoring program which was enacted in this study was effective, although it could have been improved in several ways. In this section, the basis for the overall evaluation is presented first, and then several ways in which the process could have been improved are discussed.

The effectiveness of the mentoring program was shown by John's developing teaching skills over four lessons, the increasing student involvement which was evident as the classes proceeded, the application of principles by the students at the workplace, John's evaluations of the program on the reflective questionnaire and my own evaluations on the reflective questionnaire. First, in regard to John's teaching skills, it was clear that he made significant improvement over the course of the four lessons. According to his own evaluation, my observations and our discussions of

how to improve his lessons were critical to helping him to develop skills in teaching a class of adult students and to prepare lesson plans which matched the time available and the abilities of his students. As for my evaluation, I found John to be an eager learner throughout the program, with his confidence and teaching skills developing satisfactorily over the four lessons he taught.

The effectiveness of the classes for the students was evidenced by their coming to class, which was voluntary, their substantial class participation and their obviously increasing interest as the classes continued. It was also shown by their application of what they learned in the workplace, which was rather dramatic. John had taken me on a tour of the bakery before the classes began to show me the cleanliness and pest-control issues which concerned him and which he wanted to help correct through the classes. About halfway through the classes I visited the bakery again and saw substantial improvements in these matters. I then visited the bakery after the classes were finished and was impressed by the changes which had been made for the better. These included shifting foodstuffs from the floor onto shelves, whereas before items such as flour bags had been left on the floor. The floor had then sometimes been hosed, wetting the bags and making it easier for rats and other vermin to get into them. The workers were also cleaning areas which were seldom cleaned before. It was gratifying to see that John's lessons had made a valuable impact on the students' behaviour in the workplace. John commented that he had tried many times before to get the workers to follow safety and hygiene principles in the bakery, but they always reverted back to what they had always done. It was gratifying to John to find that the student-workers were implementing important pest-control and safety changes without his direction after the classes were conducted.

The effectiveness of the mentoring program was also reflected in John's replies to the questionnaire at the end of the program (Appendix G):

> *"I found the whole mentoring experience invaluable. It provided me with an opportunity to learn about the teaching profession from someone who was able to provide me with guidance, share personal and professional experiences, as well as serve as a role model. I gained a great deal from the mentoring program with Collette. I had not had any teaching knowledge or experience and was not aware of what was expected or required to teach properly to get the best results."*

"I learnt how to get results from my training to my staff (students). I learnt these principles from readings which Collette suggested I read, and through Collette's direction, before and after my teaching lessons and through discussion at other times. The mentor programme expanded my knowledge of my career path and options; it developed my interpersonal and communication skills; and it also improved my job satisfaction and morale, through gaining knowledge of a different function other than my management role. It has opened new doors for me."

My own replies on the reflection questionnaire also expressed the effectiveness of the program (Appendix F):

"For me the mentoring experience was very satisfying. Overall the mentoring programme went very well for both the mentee and myself. We both felt we gained much needed professional development. I was able to develop my mentoring skills and devise an appropriate and useful mechanism for future use. As a mentor, I was personally rewarded by the opportunity to become involved with the mentee and to participate in his learning process. Observing the mentee progress through his academic studies was gratifying, having the knowledge that I was an integral part of his professional development."

One aspect of the mentoring program's effectiveness was related to the opportunities for reflection which were available to John during the program. In accordance with Schön's (1987b) advocacy of the "reflection on reflection-in-action," John expressed to me in discussion and in his reflective questionnaire that he felt there were opportunities to engage in reflection both in the journals and with me during meetings. The dialogues about our objectives for the mentoring program, the discussions about the lessons and John's being able to watch videotapes of his lessons all contributed to his ability to view his efforts from the outside and to reflect on those efforts. By doing so, he gained an understanding of which specific aspects of his teaching were effective and which were less effective. This reflective process was effective as measured by John's observable progress. In the course of only four lessons presented by John, he was able to identify and effectively address a number of specific elements of his teaching.

John's enthusiastic attitude and his desire to become a competent teacher were certainly keys to his successful reflective practice in this case. As Mezirow (1991) maintains, discussion with others is integral to adult learning and development. Even

in the face of a number of criticisms after the first lesson which could have been overly discouraging, he focused on the specifics of the comments and made substantial improvements in the next lesson. His ability to honestly reflect on his efforts in the classroom and then to make adjustments to increase his effectiveness was amply displayed throughout the mentoring process. This was probably aided by a significant capacity for interiority, which is suggested by his comments in the Mentee Overview (Appendix H) concerning his feelings and thoughts about his academic direction and mentoring. Mezirow (1990) asserts that through reflection, individuals often arrive at an "a more inclusive, differentiated, permeable and integrated perspective" (p. 14). Another technique which was utilised in this study involved Cranton's (1994) suggested method of journal writing, in which learners use one side of the page for observation and descriptions and the other side for thoughts, feelings, related experiences, or images provoked by the description. This allowed John to reflect on the whole experience.

The overall effectiveness of the mentoring program suggests that the mentoring plan described in Chapter 3 worked well in this instance. The ten components of the plan were:

1) determining the rationale of the program from both the mentor's and the mentee's perspective;

2) posing pre-meeting requisites for the mentee, including writing up a personal vision and personal development plan;

3) having an initial meeting in which mentor and mentee identified specific interests and objectives, partly through reviewing the mentee's vision statement and personal development plan;

4) designing a partnership agreement together;

5) negotiating a mentoring plan;

6) preparing the mentee for his teaching experience through discussion and by providing handouts on teaching strategies, classroom instruction and lesson preparation.

7) the keeping of a reflective journal by the mentee of mentor-mentee meetings and the four lessons;

8) the mentor's observing the mentee teaching and recording lesson observations to be shared with the mentee;

9) the mentor providing feedback, both written and oral, to the mentee; and

10) closure, in which mentor and mentee assessed the mentoring process.

Despite the overall effectiveness of the program, there were several ways in which the program could have been improved. One of these, which was mentioned in the preceding section, was that I should have used more open-ended questions. Although I attempted to do so after the first lesson observations, and although I succeeded to some extent, I believe that I could have done substantially more along this line. Though my suggested strategies were often appreciated and put into action by John, I would have liked to see him work out his own strategies more often. My asking more open-ended questions would have encouraged him to do so since open-ended questions provide respondents the opportunity of replying across a greater range of possible responses than more close-ended forms (Sanders & Horn, 1995).

The program could have also been improved if I had asked John to develop a teaching portfolio, a collection of all the instructional materials he selected during the mentoring program, since a portfolio is a vehicle that can be useful in teacher development (Seldin, 1993). Moreover, developing a portfolio would have helped to show him the overall complexities of teaching and learning. By documenting his learning experiences and then reflecting on and re-evaluating the information, we both could have better assessed his professional growth and change over the four lessons, as a teaching portfolio can be an effective means for helping one to recognise good teaching (Murray, 1997)."

I could have had more meetings with him to help him critically analyse his entries and gain a better understanding of his practices by asking him questions which would have required him to reflect on his entries. This type of teaching portfolio could also become a repository for experimenting with new strategies, investigating questions, and rethinking practice. All in all, it could be a very useful tool for a mentoring program.

Another weakness of the mentoring program was that John should have had an opportunity, especially before he began teaching his lessons, to observe me or some other experienced teacher teach. This could have been done with a video of me teaching. Use of a video can help in teacher evaluation (Doolittle, 1994). In this case, John's viewing a video of me teaching could have helped him to evaluate my own teaching behaviours and to select those which might have been useful to him. Being told how to teach can be very valuable to a beginning teacher; but it can become even more useful if there are opportunities to observe someone else putting those strategies and techniques in action.

Another prominent weakness of the program was the failure to integrate theoretical concepts with the teaching experience. Though we often discussed theories of teaching and learning in the earlier part of the program, we did little along this line once John began teaching his lessons. Almost all of the discussion then was about specific teaching strategies to reach his students. Integrating theoretical concepts with what John was experiencing could have helped him to develop a more profound understanding of his teaching practice.

One final way in which the mentoring program could have been substantially improved was by making it longer. This issue was noted on John's reflective questionnaire in reply to the question *"What areas of the mentoring process should be improved?"* (Appendix G)

> *"I would have preferred the program to continue, so that I could continue to learn more about teaching effectively, but due to work commitments, this was not possible. I cannot think of anything which would improve the process, except more time."*

Time would have undoubtedly made the program stronger. Still, within the relatively short period which I mentored John, we accomplished, by both of our estimations, a good deal. Our mentoring relationship ended on a very high point. After a somewhat shaky moment following John's first lesson, we regained our footing. This was due to our being able to handle the problem in a frank, emotionally intelligent and productive way. I feel it was this intelligent handling itself which marked our return to a collaborative mentoring relationship which was crucial to the program's overall success.

Implications for Practice and Theory

Action research focuses on gaining a detailed understanding of a particular situation or process, but what is learned from the research may be relevant to similar situations or processes. In this study, there were many unique aspects of the mentoring program. However, the context of the program, in which an adult education distance learner who resided in a location with limited available educational resources was being mentored, was similar to the context which may be present for some other mentoring relationships. Some or all of the themes which were revealed in the data analysis may therefore be relevant to mentoring programs which occur within such a context. This

section presents several implications of the study for such programs and discusses how these are related to mentoring theory and models.

One implication of this research which is relevant to the effectiveness of mentoring programs in similar contexts is that it is important for both mentor and mentee to be sensitive to the educational and cultural context in which the mentoring takes place. Because they reside far away from their home institution, adult distance learners lack resources which are available to those who live near the institution. These include ready access to the institution's library or libraries as well as to the typical educational opportunities which are found in a university setting. They also include face-to-face contact with other students and instructors, which is very important for intellectual development (Landbeck & Mugler, 2000). Distance learners who reside in an area with limited available local educational resources are even further deprived. It is thus especially important for mentors of such individuals to be aware of their mentee's special educational needs and of what may be lacking in available resources.

Due to these special needs, mentors may be called upon to assist the mentee in ways which would not be required if the mentoring relationship were not occurring at such a location. Assistance which I provided to John, other than observing lessons and providing feedback, included:

- providing information about possible courses of study he might take;

- assisting him in enrolling in NTU;

- providing him with reading material in education;

- creating handouts relevant to his teaching; and

- being available for many conversations about educational theory and strategy.

When the mentoring relationship occurs distant from the home institution and with limited available educational resources, the mentee may require these or other special assistance from the mentor, depending upon what materials are provided by the home institution and what is available locally. The mentor may also be called upon to understand the mentee's overall program in greater detail than would otherwise be necessary.

Mentors of adult education distance learners in areas with limited educational resources should also be aware of the possibly increased need for contact with the mentee. This is because the mentor may be the only professional person who is available to talk with the mentee about his or her educational interests and goals. Whereas non-distance learners have instructors and fellow students with whom to talk about their educational goals, interests, problems and misgivings, the mentor may be called upon to fill those shoes for the adult distance learner, especially in locales with limited available educational resources. The locale in which this thesis study was conducted, Brunei, had no internet resources available, nor an adequate library to access. Information had to be sent away for from overseas.

The first theme found in this study also points out the important for both mentor and mentee to be highly aware of the cultural context if the mentee is a novice adult educator who is teaching classes to local students. Knowledge of the culture, including language abilities of the students, can help mentor and mentee to design lessons and classes which are appropriate for the students.

The second theme of this study suggests that the development of strategies for teaching and for student learning is an essential part of any mentoring program for a distance learner who is a novice teacher. This is probably the aspect of the program which John most appreciated – my helping him to understand classroom strategies to obtain student understanding and involvement. Such strategies should be developed both on the basis of knowledge of the cultural context within which the teaching will be done and sound educational principles.

While this sharing of focused strategies which are appropriate for the students should be an integral part of the mentoring program for a novice teacher, it is also important to assist the mentee in developing his or her own ideas about classroom and student needs and strategies. This can be aided by use of open-ended questions and emphasising to the mentee the importance of critical thinking about all aspects of teaching.

The presence of the third theme which was found in this study suggests that it may be easy for a mentor to unconsciously fall into a hierarchical relationship with a mentee who is a novice teacher because of the greater knowledge and experience the mentor typically has in regard to teaching. To fall into such a relationship may be even easier if the mentee is a distance learner who must rely on the mentor as a source of

knowledge and support more than would otherwise be the case. However, such a relationship can threaten the success of the mentoring program by not moving the mentee to independence.

A collaborative mentoring relationship has the great advantage of helping to foster transformational learning for the new adult educator. By treating the mentee as a co-investigator in the relationship, the mentor helps to bring about what Mezirow (1991) states should be an objective of adult education, which is to progressively liberate the mentee from dependency on the mentor. This includes assisting the learner to assume responsibility for defining, planning and evaluating the learning program, encouraging a reflexive approach to learning and reinforcing the learner's self-concept as a learner and doer.

In this study, I could have done a better job of fostering transformational learning for John by encouraging his critical thinking more strongly. However, he was given full responsibility for developing the four classes, and after the problems following his first class, I took care to reinforce his self-concept and to establish the idea that we were equals. This more collaborative style had positive results, which suggests that creating a collaborative mentoring relationship which aims for transformational learning is as important for distance as for non-distance learners. It is perhaps especially important for those residing in outlying locations with fewer educational resources. Such learners may tend to feel more vulnerable academically than other learners and thus be more reliant on the mentor. At times this seemed to be the case with John. However, it was also clear that John was an accomplished self-starter who was in the midst of a transformational period in his life in which he was striking out on a new career path and seeking to meet new challenges. On the one hand, he wanted a mentor who could help guide him through a sometimes confusing maze of educational requirements, and provide him with specific assistance and knowledge in educational theory and practice. On the other hand, he needed a professional advisor who would help buttress his self confidence and help free him, through knowledge and encouragement, to pursue his chosen path. The first need matches well with some concepts of traditional mentoring, while the second is in the realm of more collaborative mentoring which aims for transformational learning.

In regard to the fourth theme found in this study, it seems clear that for any mentoring program, the enthusiasm of the participants is a key to its success. Though it is of course important for the mentor to have knowledge and experience to relay to the

mentee, without enthusiasm the sharing of this knowledge may amount simply to going through the motions. High motivation and enthusiasm may be especially important when the mentee is a distance learner having to deal with limited educational resources. Certainly, an individual who has recently chosen to become a distance learner in such a context may be expected to be highly motivated about a mentoring program which provides educational resources that are lacking. However, not all distance learners are new, and some may have found the difficulties and isolation of studying at a distance to be wearing. In that case, especially, it is important for the mentor to enter into the relationship with great enthusiasm, thereby helping to refresh the motivation which may have lagged for the learner.

An important aspect of the mentoring program in this study which helped to ensure mutual enthusiasm was that both mentor and mentee were totally free to enter or not to enter into a mentoring relationship. John and I had become friends prior to the mentoring program and knew something of each other's history and personality. We were enthusiastic about working together. Often, however, mentors and mentees are not able to choose one another freely but are instead assigned to one another by their organisation. If the two are not well matched or if even one of them is not enthusiastic about entering into the mentoring relationship, the relationship may suffer greatly (Hansman et al., 2002). The role of attitude and how to ensure that mentors and mentees are highly motivated and well matched should be carefully considered by organisations who seek to build effective mentoring relationships.

Overall, the mentoring program in this study had elements of both traditional mentoring, including transmission of knowledge and psychological support, and transformative mentoring. One well articulated model of mentoring which can shed light on the program in this study is educative mentoring. Educative mentors provide an environment to help the novice teacher increase knowledge and awareness of instructional skills. However, the mentor does not act so much as an expert or authority but rather as someone to help the mentee develop his or her own professional identity while developing sound teaching strategies. Elements of the educative model include (Feiman-Nemser, 2001):

1. discussion of useful topics;

2. identification of the causes of problems;

3. utilisation of open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking;

4. acknowledgement of teachers' improvements;

5. emphasis on the students;

6. consolidation of theoretical understanding;

7. an apprenticeship model of learning, involving the mentee observing the mentor teaching;

8. the exploration model of teaching, in which how best to teach students is explored as the program proceeds.

The program in this study incorporated all but two of these elements, though it could have been improved in utilisation of open-ended questions. Of the two missing elements, the lack of consolidation of theoretical understanding (number 6 above) was largely due to the brevity of the program. Once the lessons started, they came very quickly, and the focus was on incorporating specific learning strategies. However, my not arranging for John to view me teaching (number 7) was more due to oversight than to time constraints.

Because it incorporated so many elements of the educative model of mentoring, the effectiveness of the mentoring program in this study supports that model. Furthermore, if the mentoring in this study had included the two missing aspects of the educative model and had used open-ended questions more liberally, it is probable that the program would have been even more effective.

It should be noted, however, that although the educative model of mentoring describes some of the key elements of the mentoring program in this study, those aspects of the program were shaped by the context in which the mentoring occurred. For example, one element of the educative model is emphasis on the students (number 5 above). In this study, the students were Bruneians and Filipinos living within a certain cultural context and with limited English abilities. This required specific strategies focused on those particular students. As John's mentor, if I had not been familiar with the culture, I would have been unable to help him as much in devising effective strategies for his classes.

Another element of the educative model, discussion of useful topics (number 1), was also significantly determined by the context of the study. John's situation as a new distance learner with limited educational resources made it more important for me to discuss with him educational theory than would have probably otherwise been the case. Such information is something which a non-distance learner, or even a distance

learner living in an area with abundant available educational resources such as major libraries, would have had much readier access to from other sources.

That the way in which the educative model applies to this study must be understood in terms of the research context underlines something which guided this research throughout. This is the idea that adult education distance learners who reside in locations with limited available educational resources are a unique group with special educational needs. Landbeck and Mugler (2000) have documented some of the serious issues faced by distance learners enrolled in the University of the South Pacific, including restricted interaction with instructors, lack of academic and psychological support from other students, lack of local educational resources and heavy dependence on printed matter sent by the university. In addition, like many other distance learners who reside in locations with limited available educational resources, these learners were mostly adults who had to balance education with jobs (many were teachers) and family responsibilities, making learning all that much more difficult.

The kinds of issues which these individuals had to deal with are similar to those faced by many other distance learners who live in areas with limited educational resources – including John in this study. Unfortunately, there has been little research on how best to meet the needs of this unique group of learners that is spread out across the globe. However, mentoring is surely one promising way in which their unique needs might be addressed. Landbeck and Mugler (2000) noted the negative effects of the isolation faced by many of the distance learners they studied and pointed out how tutorials which some of the students were able to attend brought benefits such as helping them understand the subject matter, giving them an opportunity to share ideas and providing important psychological support. This kind of academic and psychological support is precisely what an effective tutoring program can provide to a distance learner. In this study, it was clear that the John had for some time been contemplating a career change which would mark a significant transformation in his life. However, his distance from the universities which he might enrol in and the lack of local academic support made it more difficult for him to make this change. Being able to obtain a mentor to provide him academic and psychological support was a key to his beginning to seriously make the change he desired.

The value of mentoring for adult education and other distance learners who must deal with limited educational resources and relative academic isolation seems clear.

However, further research is needed into the special needs of such learners and how mentoring might address those needs. Such research should take into account several of the findings of this research:

- It is important for the mentor of an adult education distance learner to have knowledge of the local culture, especially if the mentee is to teach in the culture.

- Depending upon available educational resources, the mentor should be prepared to provide educational assistance which goes beyond what non-distance mentees would require.

- The most effective mentoring processes may include elements of both traditional relationships (providing knowledge and psychological support) and collaborative relationships (for example, planning details of the program together, critically reflecting throughout on its effectiveness, and seeking to improve the practice of both mentee and mentor).

- Mutual enthusiasm for the program may be an important predictor of success for mentoring programs targeting adult education distance learners faced with limited educational resources.

- Choice may also be an important predictor of success. Carter and Francis (2000) suggested that if a mentoring relationship was established by choice rather than assignment, it was more likely to be effective for a longer period. The results of the present study support this. The fact that John and I were able to freely choose one another as mentor and mentee probably added to the enthusiasm and motivation which we brought to the program, thereby increasing its effectiveness.

Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reported the results of the study. Analysis of the lesson observations, the mentee's journal entries and other writings, the reflective questionnaires and mentor-mentee discussions resulted in four themes which reflected elements of the mentoring program which increased the effectiveness of the mentoring program. These themes were: (1) sensitivity to the educational and cultural context; (2) focus on student

learning strategies; (3) moving from a hierarchical to a more collaborative mentoring style; and (4) joint enthusiasm for the program.

The chapter also presented an evaluation of the mentoring program's effectiveness. Though the program was effective overall in helping the mentee to develop his teaching skills and to moving into a new career direction, several ways in which it could have been improved are discussed.

Finally, the chapter discussed implications of the study for mentoring practice and theory. All four of the themes found in the study have implications for mentoring programs which involve mentees who, like John, are distance learners who reside in areas with limited available educational resources. This is a unique group of learners for whom mentoring could be especially valuable, and further research should be carried out to understand the needs of these learners and what kind of mentoring programs could best address their unique situation.

The next chapter provides a summary of the research and presents conclusions of the study. Recommendations for further research are also presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of the Chapter

This final chapter is divided into three main sections. The first provides a summary of the study. In it, the purpose, methodology and results of the study are briefly reviewed.

The second section presents conclusions of the study. For the most part, these conclusions revolve around the themes which were found in the analysis, the special situation faced by adult education distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources and the importance of continuing research on mentoring programs for these individuals.

The final section of the chapter presents several recommendations for further research.

Summary

This study began with the identification of an important group of learners – adult education distance learners who reside in locales with limited local educational resources in the learner's area of interest. Such learners are often lacking in not only printed information or a lack of adequate internet facilities (or none), but also people with whom to converse in their area of interest. Mentoring, either in person or via telementoring, can be especially useful to these learners as mentors can provide not only vital information but someone with whom to share ideas as well as educational aspirations and problems.

Given the importance of mentoring for such learners, it is important to understand what mentoring approaches are most effective for them. However, there is little research on mentoring programs for these learners. The present study thus sought to determine elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for such a learner and posed the following research question:

What are the key characteristics, behaviours or other elements which contribute to the effectiveness of a mentoring program for an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources in his or her area of interest?

To investigate this question, a participative action research methodology was used in which I, as a professional educator, mentored an aspiring adult vocational educator for three months, which culminated in the mentee teaching four vocational education classes to eight adults. The methodology was participative in the sense that both I and my mentee were participants – and in fact collaborators – in the research and actions taken affected both him and myself. The unit of analysis was the mentoring program itself. The cyclical nature of action research was present in that there were four classes given by the mentee, and during and after each class there was observation and reflection, which was followed by planning and acting in the next class. This cycle repeated over four classes.

The mentoring program included ten components, beginning with a rationale developed from both the mentor's and the mentee's perspectives and ending with closure. The data analysed in the project included the mentee's overview of the mentoring partnership, his personal vision statement and his personal development plan; the mentee's journals entrees, the mentor's written lesson observations, the mentor's lesson observation layout, post-program questionnaires about the mentoring program which were completed by the mentor and mentor-mentee discussions.

The data was analysed to determine recurrent themes which contributed to the effectiveness of the program. Four such themes were revealed: (1) sensitivity to the educational and cultural context; (2) focus on student learning strategies; (3) moving from a hierarchical to a more collaborative mentoring style; and (4) joint enthusiasm for the program.

The data also indicated that overall, the mentoring program was successful, leading the mentee to greater knowledge of teaching strategies, improved teaching skills and greater confidence. This success suggests that the 10-point mentoring program was effective. However, a number of ways in which the mentoring program could have been improved were identified.

There were several implications of the study for mentoring practice and theory as it relates to mentoring adult education distance learners residing in locales with limited

available educational resources. Because the 10-component program exemplified most elements of the educative mentoring model, it supported that model. However, the way in which particular aspects of the model were exemplified in this study were related to the context of the study in which the distance learner was residing in a locale with limited educational resources.

In this section, the summary of the research findings will be used to address one of the fundamental research questions in this study: *"How effective was the mentoring program for you and your mentee?"* Based on the responses to the questionnaire, it is evident that both parties considered the mentoring program to be extremely effective in enabling them to acquire the desired learning skills.

Conclusions

Based on this study, several conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness of the mentoring program which was implemented.

1. For a distance learner who is a new teacher teaching in the local culture, it is important for the mentor to be familiar with the culture.

2. It is also important for the mentor to be aware of the educational context the distance learner is in and to be prepared to provide educational assistance which may go beyond what non-distance learner mentees would require.

3. Adult education distance learners are themselves adults, and the traditional hierarchical mentoring relationship is probably inappropriate for most such learners. Although the mentor of a new teacher must act as an advisor by providing knowledge and offering clear-cut teaching strategies, he or she should seek to do this in a collaborative atmosphere which also nurtures the mentee's critical thinking abilities.

4. Enthusiasm, in both the mentor and the mentee, was a key to the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship in this study and may be a key to any effective mentoring relationship. To ensure enthusiasm, freedom of the mentor and mentee to freely choose the mentoring relationship can help. This agrees with the findings of Carter and Francis (2000), who suggested that if a mentoring

relationship was established by choice rather than assignment, it was more likely to be effective for a longer period.

5. The effectiveness of the mentoring program in the study suggests that the 10-component program was an effective design.

Several conclusions can also be drawn in relation to the mostly collaborative nature of the mentoring relationship that John and I were in. As pointed out during the literature review, there are many different models of mentoring ranging from those which simply offer an orientation for the novice teacher to those which seek to transform the teaching practice of both the mentor and the mentee. The findings of this study suggest that the latter model of mentoring was more effective in this case, where the mentee was an adult education distance learner residing in a locale with limited available educational resources. In this study, the implementation of such a mentoring program led to ongoing professional development not only for the mentee, but also for me, the mentor.

While John's acquisition of teaching and lesson preparation skills were accelerated through the mentoring program, I had first-hand experience of why knowledge and experience in education are not the only prerequisites of a good mentor. Being aware of how one is coming across and taking care not to unconsciously fall into a hierarchical kind of relationship with the mentee is also very important. Otherwise, there is a danger of overwhelming the mentee or undermining his or her confidence, especially during the initial stages of training.

The learning experience was facilitated by the fact that both John and I were highly motivated and determined to forge a partnership between equals, rather than a hierarchical relationship. Our efforts to create such as relationship were successful for the most part. Our expectations of the mentoring relationship established a forum for us to express our genuine perceptions, reveal our fears and concerns, as well as resolve any underlying tensions. Even though my unintentional attempt to impose my perspectives on John at the beginning of his teaching experience could have led to negative consequences, we were able to engage in an important dialogue about the situation and resolve it promptly.

My change in strategy in the light of feedback from John highlighted the value of reflection during the mentoring process. Standing back from the program and thinking about what was going on helped me to understand my own actions better and to have

more realistic expectations. In particular, self-reflection showed me that it was possible for me to unconsciously violate my own teaching principles through my mentoring actions. It also enabled me to become more conscious not only of shortcomings but also of what I was doing correctly. I listened carefully to the mentee and paid close attention to his agenda throughout the program, but these behaviours were unconscious for the most part. Through reflection, however, I became more clearly aware of these beneficial ways of acting and even more committed to continuing them in any future similar scenarios.

I feel that reflecting on the process and on my mentoring behaviours was valuable not only for this program, but also for my future teaching and mentoring. Perhaps most importantly, reflection on the process served to emphasise the value of using a collaborative approach in mentoring adults. In future adult mentoring situations, I intend to act throughout as an interested, caring colleague who serves as a "sounding board" who helps the mentee to develop a capacity for professional reflection. Mallison (1998) claimed that the ideal mentor seeks to understand the mentee's needs and respond to them in various situations. In doing so, the mentor can perform a crucial role by passing on practice wisdom and helping the mentee to develop their own skills in identifying problems and searching for solutions. This encourages the mentee to differentiate and instigate, not just imitate. As a result of this study, I understand more fully that a mentor who takes such an approach can be an invaluable support and growth vehicle for the mentee, perhaps especially in cases of distance learning when other support may be minimal or lacking.

Overall, the mentoring program was certainly beneficial to me. I was personally rewarded by the opportunity to become involved with John and to participate in his learning process. Observing his progress through his academic studies was gratifying, knowing that I was an integral part of his professional development. According to Palmer (1998), a mentor's identity and integrity may evolve through mentoring. I believe this was true in the present case as reflection led me to become better attuned to John's needs and more aware of my mentoring style. As a result, I made adjustments which enabled my actions to better match my educational philosophy. One shortcoming of the program was its length. Though the mentee made good progress over the four lessons, we both felt that the mentoring relationship would have proven even more valuable if work commitments had not prevented a longer program. Knowing that we had limited time, however, may have inspired a more intense focus

and may have led us to work especially hard to create as much value as possible from the mentoring process.

The mentoring program also affirmed the importance of many of the strategies of the model of educative mentoring. Most of the diverse mentoring strategies mentioned in Feiman-Nemser's (2001) model of educative mentoring were utilised in this mentoring program. Based on the improvements in the John's teaching performance and perceptions of the mentoring program, the mentoring program in this research study supported the effectiveness of these mentoring strategies: the discussion of useful topics; utilisation of open-ended questions; acknowledgement of teachers' improvements; and emphasis on the students. The apprenticeship and the exploration models of learning were also incorporated into the meetings which occurred after the classes in which John had the opportunity to learn about the problems of his instructional approaches and identify strategies to resolve them by exploring them.

Finally, one of the main outcomes of this research is its focus on a unique group of learners who span the globe – adult education and other adult distance learners who reside in locations where educational resources are relatively scarce and there are few or no peers or professionals nearby with whom the learner can discuss matters pertaining to his or her field. These individuals are often missing much of what makes education stimulating and enjoyable. That many of them also must deal with jobs and family responsibilities, so that they have limited time to give to their studies, can make their situation even more difficult to contend with.

Mentoring of such individuals can certainly be a powerful tool to help alleviate their situation and help them advance in their education. John was a case in point. He felt a serious lack in not having an interested and knowledgeable person to talk to about his educational aspirations and educational theory, and to provide him with immediate feedback on his teaching. At one point, he was even contemplating not going ahead with his plan to become a vocational teacher because he felt so isolated from the university and from peers and professionals with whom he might share his ideas and dreams. I believe that our mentoring program helped to provide the kind of contact with a professional educator that he was very much seeking, and that it may have made a significant impact on his educational future. Though John has since left Brunei and has had to put his educational plans on temporary hold, he still testifies to the value of the mentoring program and states that he intends to continue seeking his educational objective when other responsibilities allow him to do so.

Given the special issues faced by all adult education and other distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources, and the value which mentoring could have for them, it is important for institutions of higher education to consider the possibility of creating mentoring programs targeting these individuals. This seems especially important for institutions who have a substantial number of distance learners residing in such outlying locations. To begin dealing with this issue, educational institutions could do the following:

1. Determine how many distance learners they have who are residing in areas with limited educational resources. Just where are the institution's distance learners? What available resources are available to them? What difficulties do they face?

2. Determine how these distance learners might benefit from a mentoring program. What should such a program be like? Here again, the unique needs of these individuals must be taken into consideration. Would some groups of learners, for example novice teachers, benefit more from a mentoring program than others? Would a short-term mentoring plan (e.g., 3 months), or intermittent mentoring provide important benefits?

3. Investigate the possibility of setting up a network of competent individuals who live in or near the same locations as the distance learners and who could be called upon to provide mentoring services. For aspiring adult educators, these might include experienced professional educators residing in the area, capable of serving as mentors and willing to do so. Credentials of potential mentors would need to be carefully checked, and to become a member of the mentor network might have to involve some special training. Mentees might also require training before entering into a mentoring relationship, as suggested by Hansman et al. (2002).

Recommendations for Future Research

On the basis of this study, there are several recommendations which can be directed toward future researchers.

1. Further research is needed to investigate the special needs of adult distance learners who reside in areas with limited educational resources. Learners in this unique group face issues and problems that other learners, including other distance learners, do not, and a greater understanding is needed of what those issues and problems are.

2. Research should be undertaken to further examine aspects of the mentoring program which were found to be effective in this study. These were: the educational and cultural context, an emphasis on students (for aspiring teachers), a collaborative mentoring style and mutual enthusiasm. Greater understanding is needed of how these aspects individually and together contribute to other mentoring programs for adult distance learners, and especially those who reside in locales with limited educational resources.

3. Further research is needed to investigate what role a mentor and mentee's free choice in choosing one another plays in the effectiveness of the mentoring.

   The following recommendations are made to other educators who may conduct a study similar to the one reported here. Based on the present results, the recommendations are proposed to improve the effectiveness of mentoring programs implemented in future research.

4. Those who conduct similar studies in the future are advised to encourage their mentees to delve into the underlying causes of any problems which occur in their teaching practice. This is an aspect of the present study which could have been improved. By encouraging John to identify the causes of teaching problems, I could have helped him to critically reflect on his choices and his rationale for his teaching strategies. By using such a process of critical self-examination, the mentee is better able to arrive at their own understanding of the problems and discover solutions to overcome them.

5. I recommend that future researchers cite and explain to their mentees pertinent research and theory from the literature. This is another area in which the present study could have been improved. Assisting a mentee to understand relevant research and theory can help him or her to develop a philosophical understanding of teaching techniques and to benefit from various theoretical conceptions. This, in turn, can help the mentee to understand the rationale underlying the use of teaching strategies. Even more importantly, such theories

can provide the mentee with conceptual understandings which can be translated into the development of new teaching strategies in other teaching situations. In the present research, the mentee learned about teaching strategies which were solely applicable to the specific population of students that he was dealing with.

6. Future researchers should make substantial use of open-ended questions in their mentoring. As indicated in the previous chapter, I should have utilised more open-ended questions to encourage John to explore his rationale for adopting certain instructional approaches. This questioning strategy is vital in helping mentees to hone in on their critical thinking skills.

7. Future researchers should strongly consider providing their mentees opportunities to view, either in real time or on a video recording, the behaviours of the mentor or of another competent teacher in teaching action. In the present research, I met with John and provided him with my teaching observations, but I did not provide him opportunities to see me or other teachers in action. The effectiveness of the mentoring program could have been improved by applying the apprenticeship model of learning, as described by Feiman-Nemser (2001), in which the mentor not only demonstrates teaching strategies, but also thinks out loud about the processes. John could have observed me teaching a lesson, while I highlighted the different teaching strategies used. Alternatively, a videotape of a teacher utilising good practices could have been shown to and then discussed with John.

8. Future research studies in this area should include long-term investigations of the mentoring relationship. Mentoring is an ongoing relationship, and the three-month-long mentoring process in the present research study was insufficient to enable John and myself to obtain the maximum benefits of the mentoring process. Long-term investigations of the mentoring relationship may uncover important strategies and relationships which are more difficult to perceive in short-term investigations.

Summary of the Chapter

This final chapter of the thesis provided a summary and conclusions of the study. Several conclusions mentioned specific findings of the study, and several others

focused on the collaborative nature of the mentoring relationship and how it contributed to the program's effectiveness. A final important conclusion was that institutions of higher education with distance learners who reside in locales with limited educational resources should investigate the possibility of setting up mentoring programs for these learners.

Recommendations for future research included several recommendations for follow-up studies to this study, and for research on adult distance learners faced with limited educational resources. Several other recommendations were made as to how studies, which implement a mentoring program, such as was reported here, might improve the effectiveness of the program.

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A P P E N D I C E S

Appendix forms were developed for the study by the researcher. They are a synthesis of (1) information gathered from many different sources during her teaching career and (2) insights from her teaching experiences.

Appendix A1

Personal Vision Statement of Mentee

What brings me contentment and satisfaction in life and career?

My strengths?

My weaknesses?

Personal Vision Statement:

Things I really enjoy doing	What brings me contentment and satisfaction in life and career?	The two best moments of my past week	Three things I'd do if I won the lottery
Issues or causes I care deeply about	My most important values (Circle)	My strengths?	What I'd like to stop doing or do as little as possible

Appendix A2

Personal Development Plan

My First Major Goal:

Knowledge to Gain/Skills to Build/Attitudes to Develop (What must I acquire/improve?)	Proof (How will I know I did it?)	Development Activities (How will I actually gain/build/develop these?)	Potential Mentors (Who might help me with my development?)	Target Completion Date (When will I be there?)
1.				
2.				
3.				

Appendix B

Mentoring Action Plan

Name:_____

Date:_____

Mentoring Goals and Objectives:

_____

_____

_____

Developmental Need_____	Beginning Date	Projected Ending Date	Funding Required
Developmental Activity:			
a.			
b.			
c.			

Developmental Need_____	Beginning Date	Projected Ending Date	Funding Required
Developmental Activity:			
a.			
b.			
c.			

Developmental Need_____	Beginning Date	Projected Ending Date	Funding Required
Developmental Activity:			
a.			
b.			
c.			

Signatures:_____

Mentee_____

Mentor

Appendix C1

Journal of Meetings with My Mentor

Date:		Time:		Place:	
Purpose of Meeting:	Assess progress, establish new goals, define actions to implement, exchange information, review reflections of my learning's, others: (please list)				

After the meeting:

What went well?	
What could you have done to make the meeting better?	
What can you do to make your next meeting even more productive?	
What did you commit to do before your next meeting?	

Appendix C2

Journal of Lessons Learned

To help reach my goal of:	
I will take the following action:	
No later than:	
Reflections:	
Describe what you actually did:	
What did you learn?	
What went well?	
What didn't work?	
Did you practice and prepare enough?	
What could you have done differently?	
What was a surprise or something you didn't expect to learn?	
Where do you go from here?	
What progress do you feel good about?	
What other situations will you practice what you have learned so that the learning's become a habit?	
What personal challenges or feeling inside you are still barriers?	
What do you still need to learn to fully achieve your goal?	

Appendix D1

Teaching Observation Checklist

1. Class Structure	Could Improve	Acceptable	Excellent	Not Observed
a. Reviewed previous day's course content.	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Gave overview of day's course content	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Summarised course content covered.	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Directs student preparation for next class.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

2. Methods	Could Improve	Acceptable	Excellent	Not Observed
a. Provided well-designed materials.	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Employed non-lecture learning activities. (eg. Small group discussion, student-led activities).	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Invited class discussion.	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Employed other tools/instructional aids: (eg. Technology, computer, video, overheads)	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Delivered a well-planned lecture.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

3. Teacher-Student Interaction	Could Improve	Acceptable	Excellent	Not Observed
a. Solicited student input.	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Involved a variety of students.	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Demonstrated awareness of individual student learning needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

4. Content	Could Improve	Acceptable	Excellent	Not Observed
a. Appeared knowledgeable.	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. Appeared well-organised.	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Explained concepts clearly.	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Related concepts to students' experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. Selected learning experiences appropriate to level of learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

5. Other comments (Effective and/or ineffective teaching practices observed):

Appendix D2

Elements of Teaching Observation Checklist

Class Structure:

A well-structured class usually begins with a brief review of concepts from the previous class period. In addition, students benefit from a brief overview of the major concepts of each new class. Summarising the main points covered allows students the opportunity to review their own notes for thoroughness before the class period ends. And finally, it is important that students be told what is expected of them for the next class period.

Methods:

Although various teachers use a variety of teaching methods, clear communication is the basis of all of them. Providing handouts is an aid to this clear communication, as is something as simple as writing legibly on the whiteboard. Although well-planned and well-delivered lectures are the tried and true tools of the teaching trade, non-lecture learning activities are becoming increasingly common in most college classrooms, because they offer a different way for non-verbal learners to learn. For example, whenever possible, classroom discussion is also a valuable tool as it allows students to actively participate in the topic and keeps them from becoming mere "sponges," soaking up information.

Stimulating discussion can be difficult. Asking students questions can trigger much discussion; however, these questions need to be carefully phrased. For example, simple "yes or "no" questions are not going to stimulate discussion. Similarly, posing a rhetorical question is going to imply that discussion is not encouraged. A second part of the discussion approach has to do with handling student responses. A teacher needs to allow students sufficient time to answer and should offer sincere, not forced, verbal reinforcement. Students are much more likely to participate in group-discussion if they feel comfortable that their ideas have value.

Using technology and linking to web-based resources in the classroom is also valuable in certain classes when it actually provides for increased effectiveness. Certainly, the use of technology simply for technology's sake is not effective. However, technology can enliven the classroom and create visual interest in the content. Using electronic resources, videos, or other audio-visual materials can offer experiences and information to students in a way which simple lectures and handouts cannot.

Teacher-Student Interaction:

Creating solid teacher-student interaction is an important way for teachers to assure effective learning takes place. Calling students by name as early as possible in the semester and making eye contact can pull hesitant students more quickly into the learning process. Seeking student ideas, suggestions, and discussion reminds students that they have a role in their own learning. In addition, it's also important, when possible, to involve all students in class discussion and activities so that the primary beneficiaries are not just the vocal few. While not always possible, establishing a comfortable rapport with students is integral in effective teaching.

Content:

The success of the classroom experience hinges on content. Being well organised imparts a professionalism which students appreciate and respect. Appearing knowledgeable and explaining concepts clearly in several different ways is probably one of the most important teaching tools of all time. Students absorb information and knowledge much more readily when it relates to experiences they understand and are able to relate to.

No one teaching technique is effective for all teachers. Not all students respond as positively as we would like to our best teaching efforts. Anyone who has taught for any period of time knows that some students will never allow student-teacher interaction; some will never participate in discussion; some will never have homework ready no matter how you stress its importance. But, the majority of students appreciate learning from a teacher whose preparation includes attention to class structure, effective methods, teacher-student interaction, and content.

Definitions of Ratings for the Student Teacher

Could Improve:

A rating of "Could Improve" signals that the teacher has not demonstrated effectiveness in the area being observed. For example, a teacher may only quickly refer to the homework for the next class, without fully explaining the requirements of the homework. Or, the teacher may use inferior handouts which are hard to read and understand. Perhaps the teacher has problems organising their thoughts and lecture content or does not clearly explain the concepts being taught. This rating implies that with some effort, the faculty member could greatly improve his or her effectiveness in the area noted.

Acceptable:

A rating of "Acceptable" indicates that the teacher has adequately addressed the area being observed. For example, to a degree, they invited class discussion or employed non-lecture activities. Perhaps their lecture is thorough and sound, though it is not exceptionally good. Or, to an acceptable degree they related concepts to student experience. An Acceptable rating indicates that the teacher has satisfied the important minimum expectations; however, they have not demonstrated exceptional facility in this area.

Excellent:

A rating of "Excellent" reveals that the teacher being observed has demonstrated exceptional facility in the area observed. They conducted an effective classroom discussion, involving all members of the class. They may have used effective and innovative technology which caught class attention and interest. Perhaps the teacher is exceptionally organised or has a uniquely effective way of explaining complex topics. An Excellent rating indicates that the teacher is especially effective, engaging the students' intellectual curiosity.

Not Observed:

A rating of "Not Observed" indicates one of two things: first it may indicate that the observation area on the checklist does not apply to the course being taught. For example, the classroom environment may not allow for a board upon which to write legibly. Or, the hands-on approach of some courses may preclude any use of handouts.

Or, this rating may indicate that the area addressed on the checklist did not occur in the class being observed when it could have or should have been. For example, although the class environment and course topic might lend itself to the use of technology, a rating of "Not Observed" would indicate that although technology could have been used effectively, it was not.

Whether the former or the latter is the case, this will be explained in the Comments portion of the checklist, why the "Not Observed" rating was assigned.

Appendix E

Classroom Observation Checklist

This checklist is intended to help both who are being observed and those who are observing. The focus is on the mechanics of the classroom interaction, not on the content of the course.

1. PHYSICAL FEATURES

FEATURE	COMMENTS
Room	
Lighting	
Position of seats	
Doors (e.g., at front or back)	
Blackboards/Whiteboards, OHP, other equipment, podium	
General noise level (does room echo; is there street noise, air conditioning noise, etc.)	
Ventilation (stuffy, cold, hot, etc.)	

2. TRAFFIC FLOW

	COMMENTS
Where do students sit? in back? down front?	
Disruptions if people come late? (having to find a seat in middle, squeaky doors, etc.)	
Where are handouts placed?	
Number who attended (compare to enrolment)	
Is material handed out at beginning/end/how?	

3. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
Material on the board (Outline of the day)	
Interactions with audience while handing out material?	

4. BEGINNING

	COMMENTS
Is there a real beginning or does it just start?	
Does the beginning encourage the audience, make them feel welcome?	

5. THE MAIN EVENT

	COMMENTS
Outline of what will be accomplished today?	
Is lecture easy to follow (even if detail of the subject matter isn't easily accessible to observer)?	
Are there distinct sections?	
Are there clear transitions between sections?	
Summaries of points?	
Time for questions?	
Is lecture material read? Are notes used? Extensively?	

6. INTERACTION WITH AUDIENCE

	COMMENTS
Eye contact? Or reading or board work without reference to audience?	
Encourages questions? When? How?	
How are questions handled? Repeating them? Can everyone hear all the questions? Are the questions clear?	
Are questions from students treated seriously or as interruptions?	
Asks questions? Is it clear that there are questions to be answered?	
Is the interaction continuous/frequent/occasional/rare?	

7. VOICE

	COMMENTS
Is it clear/ loud enough for the room? Varied?	
Are important points properly emphasised?	
Other characteristics of the voice, e.g., does tone indicate interest in the subject/in the audience/in their questions?	

8. PACE

	COMMENTS
Seems about right	
Seems too slow	
Seems too fast	
All one speed; no variation	
Does the speech/workshop seem to end where it should?	
Does all material planned for the day get covered?	
Is class kept beyond scheduled time?	

9. AUDIENCE

	COMMENTS
What are they doing?- taking notes; looking over prepared notes?	
General attentiveness	

Appendix F

Questionnaire for Mentor

1) How effective was the mentoring program for you and your mentee?

2) What educational principles did you acquire from this mentoring process? How were the knowledge and skills acquired?

3) How would you categorise your mentoring relationship with your mentee (eg. hierarchical or collaborative)? Provide specific details.

4) What areas of the mentoring process should be improved?

Appendix G

Questionnaire for Mentee

1) How effective was the mentoring program for you and your mentor?

2) What educational principles did you acquire from this mentoring process? How were the knowledge and skills acquired?

3) How would you categorise your mentoring relationship with your mentor (eg. hierarchical or collaborative)? Provide specific details.

4) Which behaviours of your mentor were helpful to your development? Which behaviours were detrimental to the mentoring process?

5) What areas of the mentoring process should be improved?

Appendix H

Mentee's Overview of the Mentoring Partnership

Introduction

I am 29 years old and for the past year, I have been restless and looking for direction. I have a beautiful wife and a wonderful child. I am very happy personally and I have a comfortable lifestyle. I have progressed to a high position in management in my field of operations and have had great success. However, the job satisfaction I once had from meeting budgets and increasing turnover just doesn't give me the fulfilment they once did. I want to and need to interact and train people. I enjoy seeing people utilise skills which I have passed on. I do, however, enjoy my trade and field of expertise. After many hours of deliberation, I have come to the realisation I want to change direction in my career, but I still want to work in the field of my trade. Becoming a qualified TAFE teacher will combine my field of training, as well as my personal need for communication, interaction and contribution to a people-based industry. I have set a goal of becoming a fully qualified TAFE trainer and instructor within three years. To reach this goal, I will need to develop my skills and acquire the training tools needed to develop and lead people through training. A Bachelor of Vocational Education and Training is the answer.

Getting Started

Selecting the right course for you is very difficult and shouldn't be taken lightly. The course is often costly and the time frame is extensive. I need to remember that this course will help me to achieve goals far into my future.

I made an appointment with Collette Foster, an associate I had met, while working in Brunei. Collette is an education consultant for Australian universities. Through discussion, I learnt that Collette was also an academic, also studying currently, and that she is also a qualified adult educator. Collette and I discussed various institutions and the different courses they offered. In the end, I chose the Bachelor of VET (Vocational Education & Training) through NTU. This is a degree which is recognised worldwide and NTU has a respected name within the education field. In order to do the Bachelor program though I needed to start with a VET (Vocational Education & Training) Train-The-Trainer course first, this would enable me to enter the Degree program. Another reason I chose NTU and the Vet program was that this course offers various exit points. This means that if for whatever reason I have to defer or halt my studies, I can still benefit from the course or studies already completed, thus preventing me from wasted time and money. It was during the course of our discussion that the topic of mentor partnerships was brought up and I became very interested.

Collette gave me various pieces of information and Web sites to investigate mentorship's further. Over a period of two weeks, I researched the area and I knew that somehow, I wanted to combine this technique in the process of completing my Bachelor. It was time to call Collette again and have another meeting.

Mentor Partnership

What is a mentor partnership? Well in short it is where two people work together to achieve goals. A mentee is a newcomer in the area or field and is relatively inexperienced and lacking in the networking and skills to achieve the success aimed for. A mentor brings an established network of contacts and areas of operation, as well as years of experience, which are invaluable for a mentee who is trying to avoid pitfalls and maintain progress in the right direction. A mentor also has the patience and maturity to ride out hard periods of business or progress towards goals. This makes for a great foil for enthusiasm and sometimes-reckless approaches of an inexperienced novice. A mentee however, also brings valuable contributions to the partnership, such as fresh ideas, outside views on problem solving, community interaction, friendship and human experience for the mentor. A mentor can use a mentee to express his or her need to contribute what he or she has learnt, back into the industry. Often mentees are groomed for the replacement of the mentor. All in all a mentor partnership becomes a valuable and masterful tool in the achievement of both personal and career goals.

Choosing a mentor is as important a choice in life as choosing a school or career path. The mentor will become your compass in the ocean which you will both cross together. If he or she flounders, there is a good chance you will too. When looking for a mentor you should first follow three steps.

Decide on your goals or what you want to achieve. There is no use in finding somebody to guide you if you don't know where to go. The way I have done this is by first writing a vision statement or mission statement. A vision statement is not a static project; it continues to evolve as you do. The method I followed was to imagine that I was attending a funeral. My funeral. I would sit and listen to what people would say and how they would remember me. Friends, family, workmates, enemies. I would try and think of how I would like to be remembered for living my life, the principles I lived by and goals which I achieved. Then I incorporated this essence into my vision statement.

I like to believe that there are very few things in life, which happen through luck or by accident. To achieve goals, you need to have a detailed plan. A plan or design or whatever you like to call it acts like a guide when you become confused. If your plan is strong and well-thought-out, it maps your achievements and shows the progress which you are making, which is invaluable, when times get you down. You can look at what you have achieved and gain enthusiasm from it. In designing your plan, you should set your goal and list the various points you need to achieve before actually reaching it. Once these sign posts have been established, list the tools and equipment needed for each of the steps. These tools and equipment may take many different forms and identities. My mentor partnership is one, a Bachelor's is another. Like any good expedition, you should also set time frames for the completion of each minor goal. This helps you to define each step and keeps you on course. You know when you have to apply yourself harder or if you can take it a little easier.

Choosing a Mentor

I have completed my vision statements and my plan. It is time to choose a mentor to help me achieve my goal. When choosing a mentor, you need to write a list of what you want a mentor to contribute to the partnership and also write down a list of the ways you will contribute. These lists will help later when the time comes to write an agreement between your mentor and yourself outlining the partnership, or as I like to call it, relationship. In my mentor, I am looking for someone who has extensive

experience in the field of adult education. I also feel they need to have the contacts in the industry or a network of influence, which they can call on when information isn't available through the usual channels. My mentor should be able to communicate at my level and we should be able to work and combine easily on projects. Lastly, but most importantly, my mentor should have great ethical qualities and high standards when it comes to integrity. It is a good idea to ask potential mentors for copies of their CVs (Curriculum Vitae); this will give you an in-depth background on their qualifications, as well as a good training practice for yourself for when you need to interview students or new employees or recruiting other mentors. I rang Collette and asked if she could send me a copy of her CV.

Starting My Mentoring Partnership with Collette

On the 13th of August, Collette met me for a coffee. I had arranged this meeting early that weekend by e-mail. I told Collette that I was going ahead with my mentor partnership program. I had decided to ask Collette if she would be interested in being my mentor. As it happened, Collette who was currently doing a doctorate in Education said she wanted to incorporate a mentor program into her thesis. It could not have worked out better for both of us. Collette asked for a copy of my CV so that she could identify my strengths and weaknesses and analyse in which way she could best help me to achieve my goals. Collette had also done in-depth research into the mentoring program; so the steps we needed to start the program were quickly outlined for me. We decided on meeting next Wednesday as Collette had commitments until then. Together, we had started our mentoring relationship.

Why I Chose Collette

Collette has an extensive background in adult education, having been a qualified TAFE (Technical And Further Education) teacher, instructor, and consultant. Her current position as adviser for Australian Universities will facilitate smooth enrolment, and if any enrolment problems should occur, she will know how to deal with them. Her knowledge of courses and education facilities will be useful in picking the right curriculum and subjects.

Collette is currently doing a professional doctorate (Doctor of Teaching); she has also completed a Master's and Bachelor, as well as a Diploma – all in the areas of education. This valuable insight will help me to negotiate the pitfalls of assignments and she will know about the times of hardship and when to motivate me.

Collette is respected and admired by her peers in the industry. This network of contacts will help when information through the usual channels is unavailable. It will also provide a source of reference when I enter the work place.

Overall I feel Collette's ability to communicate on a personal level, combined with her high ethical standards, can only help me to achieve my goals. Collette's integrity as a person and high standards of principles makes me confident in the fact that I will succeed and in the process gain a friendship and relationship which will last on into my future years.

Creating a Mentor Agreement

We decided to create an agreement which would outline what each of us would contribute to the relationship, this outline of responsibilities, ethics and of course what

was to happen if one or the other wished to terminate the partnership. Collette had researched mentor programs extensively and also had mentored others before, so her notes on the issues we needed to take into consideration when drawing up our agreement were very useful. Here is a copy of Collette and my mentor agreement.

Our Mentor Agreement

MENTORING PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Working in partnership, we are entering into this mentoring relationship. It is our expectation that this partnership will foster professional growth and career development. In order to ensure that the mentoring relationship will be a mutually rewarding and satisfying experience, we have agreed on the following goals and objectives as the focus of this mentoring relationship:

- To develop a dynamic reciprocal relationship fostering professional growth;
- To work towards the development of a career development plan;
- To introduce mentee to best practices in adult education.

We have discussed the process by which we will work together, develop, and, in that same spirit of partnership, collaborate on the development of the mentoring plan. In order to ensure that our relationship is a mutually rewarding and satisfying experience for both of us, we agree to:

- Take joint responsibility for the success of the mentoring partnership.
- Take individual responsibility to engage in positive and constructive communication and feedback.
- Make regular, at least weekly, if not daily, contacts (in person, email, phone).
- Plan and implement follow-up activities to the professional development training.
- Participate in classroom observations, debriefing and discussions.
- Look for opportunities and experiences to enhance the mentee's learning.
- Together, develop and utilise self-reflective professional growth strategies (i.e., stop, take a breath and reflect on how we are both doing).
- Provide regular feedback to each other and evaluate progress.
- We agree to meet regularly until we have accomplished our predefined goals. At the end of this period of time, we will review this agreement, evaluate our progress, and reach a conclusion. The relationship then will be considered complete. If we choose to continue our mentoring partnership, we may negotiate a basis for continuation, so long as we have stipulated the mutually agreed-on goals.

- In the event one of us believes it is no longer productive for us to continue, we may decide to conclude the relationship. In this event we agree to use closure as a learning opportunity.

_____

Mentor's Signature and Date

_____

Mentee's Signature and Date

Recording and Documentation of Progress

Creating a log in which your meetings and progress can be documented, is not only useful, but it enables you to keep a closer eye on your progress. The documentation can provide future references of appointments, minutes of meetings, future goals and plans. Writing down your goals and plans also embosses them into your mental focus.

We decided that the log should state dates, times and places, subjects and goals status, and future goals. Comments and achievements needed to be accurately documented. Discussions could be done in summary terms.

Whilst I initially felt that this was a waste of time, Collette explained that it is your diary which helps you to keep focused on the tasks at hand and gives you a detailed description of your partnership and program from start to finish. Your diary shows whether you are making progress or not. If done properly, she maintained, a diary can be a major boost for you in times of frustration. By looking at what you have already accomplished, it gives you a feeling of satisfaction and helps you through those tough times.

Journal Entries

Date: 02/09/02
Place: Collette's house.
Subjects Discussed -
1) My online enrolment:
2) Collette and I e-mailed Linda Brendan and went through the online process with NTU. We did the on-line enrolment process together.
3) Time for photo shoot for module: It was decided that I would call Coll for a time for the shoot during the week. I needed to take photos of the bakery to show my company what I was trying to achieve.
4) After so having so much trouble trying to enrol on-line, I suggested that Collette could inform NTU about the difficulties of enrolling online.

Status of Projects-

5) Module: Food-borne Illnesses: I rewrote and designed the module, adding in the graphs and breaking down the blocks of information into smaller amounts which could be more easily absorbed.
6) Documentation of mentoring program: I have documented and written all information required for the mentor and I am now ready to proceed with my diaries.

Things to achieve by next meeting, Saturday, 8th of September:
a) Follow up with enrolment with Linda Brendan
b) Call Collette and do first photo shoot of proposed work area for food-borne illness module
c) Fine-tune written module of food-borne illness.

Dates: 22/09/02 – 27/09/02
Subjects discussed:
1. Check on package from NTU
2. Planned photo shoot and video
3. Reviewed final drafts of modules
We have finished the modules. Now we are doing the filming for the videos and photos for scanning into the booklets. I am also doing my first lesson plans with Collette with the intent to implement them from October to January 2002

Date: 4/10/02
Called Collette and discussed starting the lesson plan
Made meeting for 4pm today at her place
Have followed up with NTU and I have ordered workbook
Chris Dixon has given me a guide to first subject and what I have to complete
Today, I started my first subject Training Small group

Date: 5/10/02
Place: Collette's house
Discussed training small groups and lesson plans
Decided to restructure modules
Next meeting Saturday, 13th of October

Date: 6/10/02
Place: Collette's office
Review of modules
Session plans
Discussed ideas on training small groups

Date: 12/10/02
E-mailed Chris Dixon copy of lesson of plan "Training Small Groups"

Date: 15/10/02
Finished lesson plans for small groups and training programs for Basic Pest Control.

Date: 17/10/02
Contacted Collette to meet to review work completed and discuss time for lectures.
HOLIDAY TO AUSTRALIA BACK IN BRUNEI EARLY NOVEMBER

Date: 02/11/02

Called Peter Nickel from Queensland TAFE and we discussed my opportunities in teaching.

Date: 10/11/02
Called Collette to arrange meeting.

Date: 22/11/02
Met Collette and we discussed things needed to be done to complete Cert 4: lesson to be conducted, times, place requirements last fine tuning of written segment of cert 4 talked about enrolling in bachelor vet next year.

Date: 26/11/02
Called Collette and arranged to use IDP office to hold program

Date: 28/11/02
First lesson in Pest control module training.
Collette sat in and after this initial course, these were her suggestions:
Don't single out individuals when asking question; address group as a whole; then if nobody comes forward with an answer, volunteer an individual.
More movement while giving the lesson.
Better use of visual techniques to enforce main points of lesson.
Points were good but need to be linked so that the lesson flows.
Encourage the taking of notes by the participants.

After reviewing the video, I could see the valid points made by Collette and I think I was nervous and this affected my delivery of lesson. I know the next lesson will be better. I need to better plan the flow of the lesson. Prior to the lesson, go over my notes and write on the board the topics I want to re-inforce to the students.

Overall, I got a lot out of this first lesson and really identified my strengths and weaknesses.

Date: 29/11/02: Lesson 2-pest control
I did much better in the second lesson. I felt more relaxed. By addressing the problems pointed out by Collette, I did not force participation and the class volunteered information. The class responded very well to visual aids. The lesson had better flow because the students understood the topics better and could move on to next points without needing constant explanations of the original point made

Some other areas Collette suggested I could improve:
To help the students understand the questions I asked even further, write them on the board and then explain them because the students respond well to visual aids.
Homework set for the next day should be enforced by writing down the tasks on the board and explaining them
To help draw out quieter students when asking them a question, I should use visual aids.

Date: 30/11/02: Lesson three-pest control
Today was the best of the three lessons. I focused on utilising the space and incorporating visual aids into my talk increasingly. Student participation was excellent and I could see they were enjoying the lesson. I also felt great satisfaction when I saw that they had fully understood the previous days' talks and were learning the subject matter. The task which I had set for their homework was not clear enough for them. A

few students had trouble. Also, when doing group work, I should listen more then talk. This will give them a chance to finish the task at hand without interruption. If I do talk to them, it should be subtle hints to help lead them in the right direction. Overall, this was a successful day.

Date: 02/12/02: Lesson four-pest control
Today's lesson was excellent. I really enjoy the reward you get when the students start to show you that they are learning. Collette suggested that I develop strategies to handle late students and disruptive influences in the classroom.

Date: 03/12/02: Review of lessons
The overall program went well. After the daily reviews from Collette, I was able to make changes to the program and the way I delivered the sessions which made vast improvements on the initial plan. I have learnt a great deal from this exercise.

Date: 04/12/02: Assessment
Collette reviewed the assessment and suggested changes to the unit.
Multiple choice questions should have one answer.
Have examples of how you want the answers.
At start of the exam and above every section, have detailed instructions on how you want the exam done and the rules of assessment.
Allow more time for essay question. A good idea is to use the essay questions as a set assignment for completion during the course.
After I adjusted the assessment, I could see the reasoning in Collette's suggestion

Date: 07/12/02
Called Collette to meet and finalise cert. four work.

Date: 10/12/02
Met Collette at the IDP centre and ran through the Cert. IV programs. Made meeting for Tuesday the 11th.

Appendix I

Mentor's Conception of Education

I don't teach subjects per se; I teach students. I believe that learning is an ongoing process which never ends. Everyone learns as they go through life. A poster saying, "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts," hangs proudly in my office. This is a reminder to both myself and my staff that just when we think we have learned it all, or when we are comfortable with what we know, we find that there is still much more to learn, understand, experience and to enjoy. It is this information learned after we thought we knew it all which is most beneficial to us since most of us don't search for the knowledge above and beyond what is required.

I believe that students should have choices in the way they learn, process information and how they are evaluated in the classroom. Students, by having some control, take ownership of what they learn instead of just having information which is important to "someone else." Curriculum should be relevant and applied to students and their lives. This is an educator's principal role, because many times this cannot be planned. Discussions can't be timed or arranged to go certain ways. Our best teaching opportunities are the tangents which we take "off" of the curriculum. It is during these tangents that students really listen and can find ways to apply what they learn to what they already know.

My job as an educator is that of a facilitator, rather than an authoritarian. I do not pretend to know everything or strive to always have the final say about an issue. I know that my creative and multi-intelligent students have just as much to add to a class discussion as I do. My role is to guide students through problem-solving activities so they can make conclusions about the events which occur around them. I also want to help them to make connections to how the material they learn applies to their lives.

During this thesis study I attempted to define academic advising or mentoring from my own perspective, in order to build the experience for both myself and the mentee. A quote by Barrow (2004) best sums up what I now perceive mentoring in an academic context to be:

> *"Advising is inevitably intertwined with the concept of education. Advising is an important component of the learning process. My goal in this discussion is to both ground the notion of advising in education and to recognise and define the importance of advising in the context of the process of education. In other words, advising is fundamental in understanding what education is about, yet, at*

the same time, advising facilitates the process of education. Fundamentally, we come to know not only the world around us, but also ourselves, by means of a developmental process of understanding, taking responsibility, and ultimately making choices that continually define and affirm who we are. Advising is not epiphenomenal; rather it is rooted in the very nature of education."

Appendix J1

Mentee's Vision Statement

What brings me contentment and satisfaction in life and career?

Family, friends, job satisfaction and security.

My strengths?

Great communicator; hard-working; have high standards of integrity; eager to learn; understand new ideas easily.

My weaknesses?

Impatience; overly enthusiastic; lack of knowledge and experience in techniques of teaching and course design.

SUMMARY

Looking at the questions above, and how I had answered them, I developed this vision statement:

MY VISION

In my life I will endeavour to treat my family and friends with love and honesty; look after their best interests; and help them to reach their goals in any way I can.

I will develop my skills in teaching to help me build a secure future for my family, while maintaining my integrity and hardworking relations with my peers.

Acting without judgment and understanding people first will be a major goal for me.

I will learn to practise patience and restraint when it is called for.

Through educating myself and gaining further training and insight, I will achieve my goals physically, mentally and emotionally.

Family first, career and friends second, but all participated with equal commitment.

Things I really enjoy doing	What brings me contentment and satisfaction in life and career?	The two best moments of my past week	Three things I'd do If I won the lottery
Working, being with family and friends.	Family, Friends, job satisfaction and security	Sense of achievement in my studies. Seeing my staff (who are also my students), learning something new and enjoying it.	1) Buy a house. 2) Start a business 3) Look after family
Issues or causes I care deeply about	**My most important values (Underline)**	**My strengths?**	**What I'd like to stop doing or do as little as possible**
Environment Education	<u>Having integrity</u> Being fit and healthy <u>Having a nice home and belongings</u> <u>Leaving the world a better place</u> Having fun <u>Learning and improving myself</u> <u>Making other peoples lives easier or more pleasant</u> <u>Enjoying my family</u>	Great communicator; hardworking; high standards of integrity; eager to learn; and understand new ideas easily.	Losing patience with my staff.

Appendix J2

Mentee's Personal Development Plan

Major Goal	Skills Needed	Proof of Completion of Goal	Mentor for This Goal	Timeframe
Enrol in VET – Train the trainer Course.	Contact NTU and fill in application.	Placement in course	Collette Foster	August 2002
Complete VET course.	Assignment and construction and development; course planning and development.	Complete and pass course.	Collette Foster	End 2002
Gain entry-level position in TAFE organisation as a teacher, instructor	Bachelor of Education - VET; Part-time teaching; Experience or on-the-job training	Employment as teacher or instructor	Peter Nickel	2004

Appendix K

Teaching Strategies in a Practical Situation

PREPARATION FOR A PRACTICAL LESSON

- Subject research
- Objectives defined
- Lesson plan prepared
- Theory and practice related
- Location adequate for class size
- Lighting
- Seating
- Ventilation
- Suitable demonstration area identified
- All workshop equipment operable
- Sufficient equipment available
- Material available
- Back-up materials available
- Storeman aware of lesson requirements
- Knowledge of fault procedure with equipment acquired
- Student task completed by teacher
- Sample of finished exercise prepared
- Knowledge of operation method for all machines required
- Student handout/drawing
- Procedure list available
- Level of student skills established
- Student group checked for disabilities etc.
- Safety procedures known
- First aid available
- Fire extinguishers available
- Safety instructions for students available

DURING A PRACTICAL LESSON

- Roll checked
- Objectives set
- Work related to industry

- Work practice related to theory

- Students motivated

- Task demonstrated

- Total group visibility

- Work areas allocated for ease of work and safety

- Constant movement around class

- Individual assistance available

- Class grouped for correction of common mistake

- Individual correction of: Skill faults; Poor workshop practice

- Sufficient time spent with slow achievers

- Alternative work available where insufficient equipment

- Advanced jobs available for quicker students

- Student performance monitored

- Standards maintained

- Good practices reinforced

- Work progressively evaluated

- Safe practices continually demonstrated

- Safe environment maintained

- Room secured during break

- Teachers legal responsibility observed at all times

TOWARDS THE END OF A PRACTICAL LESSON

- Students notified of time 5/10 minutes before end of class

- Students work assessed

- Equipment checked

- Materials returned to store

- Equipment covered and switched-off

- Work area thoroughly clean

- Equipment breakages, faults reported

- Accidents reported where applicable

- Job identified to student

- Handouts collected

- Handouts to be retained issued to students

- Closure

- Lesson reviewed

- Summarised with relation to industry

- Lesson evaluated
- Following lesson previewed
- Student feedback encouraged
- Students with remedial/tutorial needs identified
- Lesson plan evaluated

Appendix L

Lesson Plan Reflection

Class Title:
Date:
Subject material to be covered today:

Objective:

Materials Needed:

Previous material to review: (Could go before or after intro)

Introduction: (How will you get students interested in today's content?)

General Outline of Procedures: (Make detailed notes on a separate sheet that you will carry around with you as you teach. List the different techniques you will use, cooperative learning, lecture etc.)

Closure: (Give some feeling of completion)

Evaluation: (How will you know that your students reached your objectives?)

How did I do on this lesson? (List frustrations and changes you will make the next time you teach it!)

Appendix M

Lesson Plan Template

Lesson Plan Title: _____

Lesson Time: 150 mins	Date
	Learner Outcome: This is not read to the learners. Instead, use the Objective and Course Requirements below. This is to help the developer build the lesson plan. **Task:** Starting with a verb, describe the observable performance or behaviour. **Condition:** Describe the actual conditions under which the task will occur or be observed. **Standard:** State the level of acceptable performance of the task, in terms of quantity, quality, time limitations, etc.
Time: 5 mins	**Introduction:** Introduce yourself – name, authority (why should the learners listen to you), interest devise (humour, work or other related story). Special instructions, facilities, etc.
Time: 3 mins	**Objective:** Help them to visualise a clear goal, such as; "What will this learning help me to achieve?" "What will I be able to do in the future?" "Why am I spending time in this class?"
Time: 2 mins	**Course Requirements:** "What must I do to pass this course?" How do I know that I can perform the task correctly?"
Time: 5 mins	**Course Description:** Give the 'big picture' (Global). The instructional outline will list the details. Some people prefer large-scale concepts (overall view of the material). Others prefer 'one step at a time' instructions. **Stimulate recall of prior learning:** Show how this lesson is built upon prior lessons or pre-course requirements.
	Instructional Outline
Time: 25 mins	**First learning Point:** For effective learning, use the full range of Howard Gardener's work on multiple intelligences. **Linguistic-verbal** learners tend to think best via words (word smart). Use activities which involve hearing, listening, impromptu or formal speaking, tongue twisters, humour, oral or silent reading, documentation, creative writing, spelling, journal, poetry. **Logical-mathematical** learners are questioners who think best by reasoning (number or logic smart). Use activities which involve abstract symbols/formulas, outlining, graphic organisers, numeric sequences, calculation, deciphering codes, problem solving. **Visual-spatial** learning employ images and pictures (form mental models of the world). Use activities which involve art pictures, sculpture, drawings, doodling, mind mapping, patterns/designs, colour schemes, active imagination, imagery, block building. **Bodily- Kinesthetic** learners use somatic sensations (body smart). Use

	activities which involve role playing, physical gestures, drama, inventing, ball passing, sport games, physical exercise, body language, dancing.
	Music-rhythmic learners tend to think via melodies and rhythm. Use activities which involve audio tape, music recitals, singing on key, whistling, humming, environmental sounds, percussion vibrations, rhythmic patterns, music composition, tonal patterns.
	Interpersonal learners think by bouncing ideas off of each other (socialisers who are people smart). Use activities which involve group projects, division of labour, sensing others' motives, receiving/giving feedback, collaboration skills.
	Intrapersonal learners think deeply inside of themselves. Use activities which involve emotional processing, silent reflection methods, thinking strategies, concentration skills, higher order reasoning, 'centring' practices, and meta-cognitive techniques.
	Naturalist learners are connected to the intricacies and subtleties in nature. Use activities which involve bringing the outdoors into the class, relating to the natural world, charting, mapping changes, observing wildlife, keeping journals or logs.
Time: 15 mins	**Second Learning Point:** Normally, each learning point will last about 15 or 30 minutes (lectures only will run 5 to 10 minutes), depending upon the complexity of the subject and the type of activities performed. Use teaching aids for long term memory, such as mnemonics, visualisations, mind maps, or activities – get the learners involved! Use all sensory channels – Visual, Auditory & Kinesthetic (VAK). Using all three will reinforce the learning concepts.
Time: 20 mins	**Third Learning Point:** David Kolb found that the four combinations of perceiving and processing determine the four learning styles. We use all four, but we favour one style. According to Kolb, the learning cycle involves: **Theorist** – Abstract Conceptualisation – lecture, papers, analogies, how does this relate to that, case studies, theory readings, thinking alone. **Pragmatist** – Concrete Experience – laboratories, field work, observations, how can I apply this in practice, peer feedback. **Activist** – Active Experimentation – simulations, case study, small group discussions, peer feedback. **Reflector** – Reflective Observation – logs, journals, brainstorming, time to think about this.
Time: 15 mins	**Fourth Learning Point:** Normally, there should be about 4 learning points for each hour or two of instruction, depending upon difficulty the learners need time to 'absorb' the information.
Time:30 mins	**Elicit performance (practice) and provide feedback:** **Avid Beginners** – The learners are enthusiastic to learn a new skill and may be somewhat apprehensive because they are about to enter a change process. They need clear instructions, a little support and lots of feedback, because the task is new. **Disillusioned Beginners** – The level of technical support becomes less so that they may experiment with which of their learning styles works best. They must have reached failure a few times, which means emotional support must increase to help with their confidence. **Reluctant Learners** – They have become capable in performing their

	new skill. The amount of guidance drops to a few pointers so that they can experiment. They are still not confident, so emotional support stays high to help build confidence.
	Task Performers – Little direction and little support are required. They begin to take ownership of their new tasks and responsibilities.
Time:10 mins	**Review:** After about 1 or 2 hours of class, depending upon the complexity of the material, perform reflection or review activities.
	Reflection is an active process (the doer must think) – do it in pairs, groups and individually.
	Reviews can also be an activity, i.e. toss a nerf ball around, the receiver of the ball then explains or lists what they thought was a major ideal or concept. The ball is then tossed to another person.
Time:20 mins	**Evaluation:** Know what behaviours are to be looked for and how they are rated. These behaviours MUST support the learner outcomes (learning objective).
	Retention and Transfer: How will you ensure that the training will be used on the job? There is absolutely no use in training if they are not going to use it (we lose what we do not use).

Appendix N

Lesson Observations Summary

The data from the following four practical lesson observations falls within the section, "Theme 2: Focus on Student Learning Strategies," in which my main claim is that a focus on student learning strategies is a theme which emerged out of the data. I have presented data which shows that indeed, that was a continuing theme. The data presented, which is in the form of a number of statements from my lesson observations and from John's journal, supports my claim that there was a continuing theme.

Furthermore, I believe that the data does successfully show that student learning strategies were a primary and continuing focus throughout the lessons for both of John and myself. If indeed this is the case, and by presenting the data, I have successfully defended the claim that a focus on student learning strategies was a theme arising from the data.

In order to ascertain the overall effectiveness of the practical observation lessons, the questions I felt I needed to ask myself were in relation to the similarities and differences in the post-observation comments which John and I discussed. As a result of this reflection, I posed the following questions: "Is John simly parroting my observations?"; "Does he seem to be saying what he thinks I want to hear?" If this was the case, what did that suggest about our mentoring relationship? Or, did John show, in his comments, that he had his own ideas? If so, what does that say about our mentoring relationship?

My practical lesson observation comments to John were meant to be both constructive and useful for later lessons. However, I was also aware that I needed to hone in on his positive communicative traits and teaching strategies to maintain a balance between what he needed to know about his less strong points and to reinforce his positive teaching and communication traits. I noticed after the first lesson that John was ashamed of the number of comments I had made during the lesson observation, so during our feedback discussion time, I reinforced to him that the comments were to assist him in identifying both his strong and weaker teaching and communication traits, in order to be able to continuously improve. He understood this, but did seem to look at the number of comments as a reflection of his teaching performance. Hence I was very careful to point out not only areas he could improve in, but also his strong points that made a difference to the students learning experience.

During the first practical lesson John was indeed nervous as he states in his journal entry (see appendix O1), but he was open to learning new techniques in order to be able to effectively teach his students. There were 26 comments recorded by the mentor in the first lesson and the learning strategies that were discussed after the lesson in our feedback/discussion sessions were taken well by the mentee, considering he was fairly shaken by his first teaching experience. His comments after our first lesson observation feedback/discussion session were:

> *"After reviewing the video, I could see the valid points made by Collette and I think I was nervous and this affected my delivery of lesson. I know the next lesson will be better. I need to better plan the flow of the lesson. Prior to the lesson, go over my notes and write on the board the topics I want to reinforce to the students."*

The second of the four lesson observations went more smoothly due to John being more relaxed and also that he had read some of the literature and teaching preparation notes I had given him. There were only seven observation comments from this lesson compared to the 26 from the last lesson. John displayed a self-confidence that he had not shown before in our discussions, as his comments below illustrate:

> *"I did much better in the second lesson. I felt more relaxed. By addressing the problems pointed out by Collette, I did not force participation and the class volunteered information. The class responded very well to visual aids. The lesson had better flow because the students understood the topics better and could move on to next points without needing constant explanations of the original point made."*

Even though there were more class observation comments today (12, as opposed to only 7 for the last lesson), John was much more relaxed and self-assured now that he was more aware of a variety of teaching strategies, which were a result of our feedback/discussion sessions, as well as the literature and hand-outs I had supplied him with. His comments after this lesson clearly show he is feeling much more comfortable with the teaching role:

> *"Today was the best of the three lessons. I focused on utilising the space and incorporating visual aids into my talk increasingly. Student participation was excellent and I could see they were enjoying the lesson. I also felt great satisfaction when I saw that they had fully understood the previous days' talks and were learning the subject matter. The task which I had set for their homework was not clear enough for them. A few students had trouble. Also, when doing group work, I should listen more then talk. This will give them a chance to finish the task at hand without interruption. If I do talk to them, it*

should be subtle hints to help lead them in the right direction. Overall, this was a successful day."

The last lesson observation was very rewarding for John. It was obvious he was enjoying the experience and he was benefiting from the range of teaching strategies we had discussed and he had read about. He was very happy that there were only 4 observation comments today:

> *"Today's lesson was excellent. I really enjoy the reward you get when the students start to show you that they are learning. Collette suggested that I develop strategies to handle late students and disruptive influences in the classroom."*

John's final comments on his views of the classroom observation lessons were very positive:

> *"The overall program went well. After the daily reviews from Collette, I was able to make changes to the program and the way I delivered the sessions which made vast improvements on the initial plan. I have learnt a great deal from this exercise."*

In conclusion, the questions I posed at the beginning of this summary were answered in a positive way. By maintaining a professional and personal camaraderie throughout this exercise, John was able to develop his teaching strategies and skills without too much stress. We had an extremely good working relationship and respected each others opinions and both felt we could be honest in our discussions together. From his comments, it was apparent that John felt he could be honest with me, either when he agreed or disagreed with me. In reviewing his comments, it was clear that although he took my comments on board, he also felt free enough to explore alternate ways of teaching. This showed that whilst he was open to suggestions, he could also employ other techniques that he had read about. I feel this was due to the open honest relationship we had built throughout this project. I could guide and advise John, but he also felt he was able to choose his teaching methods from other sources. In our discussions we addressed these issues and the benefits and drawbacks of methods he had chosen to implement during his lessons.

As a result of our open and honest mentoring relationship, we also both felt that it is extremely important that both the mentor and mentee be able to choose their partner in this type of relationship in order to achieve maximum results in a mentoring program.

Appendix O1

Journal Entry on "Introduction to Pest Control"

Session 1:	Introduction to Basic Pest Control
Venue:	IDP training room
Date:	28th November 2002
Time:	11:00 am – 12:00 pm
Target Group:	Nutri Bake Pastry & Bakery Supervisors

Trainee's Preparation: Trainees were given basic summary of course and what the expected outcomes would be and how they were to utilise the information gained in their work-related positions.

Strengths: I was comfortable and relaxed and my delivery to the trainees allowed them to relax and settle into the course. I spoke clearly and with confidence on the topics in the course, which gave the students confidence in the material.

Weaknesses: When asking questions, I directed them to individual students, instead of the group. If I had directed the questions to the group, the response would be more spontaneous because every participant would have needed to think of the answer, not just the individual. More movement when delivering the lesson might have drawn the quiet participants into the lesson and helped to control disruptive trainees. I did not utilise visual techniques enough to help overcome the language barrier. My lesson didn't flow smoothly; this was due to incorrect timing in the delivery of the lesson and not setting aside enough time for the completion of set tasks.

Learning Strategies: The target group being from an Asian culture had only limited understanding of English. To compensate for this, I need to use visual teaching strategies extensively. In future lessons I could use a variety of other teaching strategies such as:
1 – Role playing
2 – Use of diagrams and flip charts
3 – Simulated exercises

Identifying Individual Needs: As some trainees have only basic English skills, I need to use group discussions to help draw out the quiet participants. I also need to use visual teaching aids to help clarify topics better and reinforce main points. If any participants are having difficulties with the question, I should break the question down on the flip chart and work on the question as a group.

Improvements for next lesson:

- Direct questions to the group before asking an individual;
- Move around the class room area to help draw in more reluctant participants;
- Break down information on the board so that it is easier for the participants to digest;
- Use visual aids to reinforce points;
- Adjust timing so that lesson flows smoothly; and
- Reinforce main points and give better explanations.

Appendix O2

Journal Entry on "Understanding the Needs of the Pest"

Session 2:   Understand the Needs of the Pest
Venue: IDP training room
Date: 29th November 2002
Time: 11:00 am - 12.00 pm
Target Group: Nutri Bake Pastry & Bakery Supervisors

Trainee's Preparation: Summarised main points of previous lesson. Established the outcomes of the lesson and how it will correlate with the course in general and their own roles as supervisors.

Strengths: This lesson was a vast improvement over the previous lesson. I addressed the problems outlined to me by Collette in our lesson de-briefing of the previous day. The lesson flowed better and the participants volunteered the information more freely. The trainees enjoyed the lesson because it was better structured.

Weaknesses: Need to address strategies for disruptive students and late comers. When working in group discussions, let group talk without interruption, but offer guiding comments.

Learning Strategies: The target group, being from an English as a second language Asian culture, had only limited understanding of English. To compensate for this, I used visual teaching strategies extensively, such as:
1 – Role playing
2 – Use of diagrams and flip charts
3 – Simulated exercises

Identifying Individual Needs: When disruptive students arrive late or are causing problems I need to address the problem immediately. Some suggested techniques which were discussed with my mentor, Collette, after the lesson were:
- Don't continue with the lesson until the person talking out of turn is quiet.
- When people arrive late, make them wait while you explain in front of class the reason for punctuality.
- Call on them to explain a certain subject

Improvements for next lesson:

- Work on timing for discussions; and
- When asking question and reinforcing points, break them down for the trainees on the board.

Appendix O3

Journal Entry on "Identifying Problem Areas"

Session 3:   Identifying Problem Areas
Venue: IDP training room
Date: 30th November 2002
Time: 11:00 am – 12:00pm
Target Group: Nutri Bake Pastry & Bakery Supervisors

Trainee's Preparation: Summarised main point of previous lesson. Established the outcomes of the lesson and how it will correlate with the course in general and their own roles as supervisors.

Strengths: The lesson flowed well. Trainee participation was excellent.

Weaknesses: I need to explain the set task for completion better and reinforce its importance to the course and the penalties for failure to complete the set task.

Learning Strategies: When setting task to be completed outside lesson time frame (homework), write the task on the board and outline requirements and time frames. This visual technique will help reinforce the work needed to be done.

Identifying Individual Needs: I need to clarify work which needs to be done for the next day. I should write the task on the board and set clear guidelines and period for completion.

Improvements for next lesson:

- When asking question and reinforcing points, break them down for the trainees on the board; and
- Use board to reinforce set tasks.

Appendix O4

Journal Entry on "Identifying Problem Areas"

Session 4:   Preventive Measures
Venue: IDP training room
Date: 2nd December, 2002
Time: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
Target Group: Nutri Bake Pastry & Bakery Supervisors

Trainee's Preparation: Summarised main points of previous lesson. Established the outcomes of the lesson and how it will correlate with the course in general and their own roles as supervisors.

Strengths: The lesson flowed well. Trainee participation was excellent. This lesson was great fun; I enjoyed the atmosphere of the class because I could see they were gaining knowledge from the course, from the answers they were volunteering and their group discussions. Some trainees were actually beginning to apply the principles outlined in the course in their own work environment.

Weaknesses: I still have long way to go as an educator, but I feel I have made the right choice in entering this field. I have a lot of work to do to improve in various areas, but I know I will improve with time.

Learning Strategies: I need to research, in more detail, different techniques for helping to establish my lesson content.

Identifying Individual Needs: Identifying the personal needs of the individual is a very personal skill and requires knowledge on how to understand the various problems a trainee may pose for the trainer. I will improve in this area with more exposure to this environment, as well as from my studies.

Improvements for next lesson:
I will continuously improve my teaching practice as I learn more and more in this field. The more experience and academic knowledge that I gain, the more it will change the way I deliver a lesson.

Appendix P1

Lesson Observation on "Introduction to Basic Pest Control"

Date:	28/11/2002
Teacher:	John
Observer:	Collette Foster
Venue:	IDP Education Australia Office (Brunei)
Title of Lesson:	Basic Pest Control - Introduction
Time length of lesson:	1 hour
Number of students:	8
Time started:	11.15 am
Time concluded:	12.35 pm

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS:

1. You left squares of bread on the tables in front of each student. What was the point of the bread? You didn't explain to the students what it was until later. It was a good example, but not explained fully.

2. Try putting examples on whiteboard - you were too quick to write all the answers you wanted on the board. Ask the students for specific points – then write up their answers and discuss with the group. Don't give them all the answers – make them think.

3. Students were not given enough time to finish the task you set or discuss it – a good strategy would have been to write up the exercise on the board with an example, then discuss it with them before they commence. There was no explanation from you, so it was not apparent what the point to the exercise was. Why? Where to next? It was a dead-end. Then you realised your time was running out, so you stopped the exercise & moved on – no point of the exercise given or let the students have the time to finish what you asked them to do. Hence no gain to the students – only confusion.

4. Good explanation of topic in general.

5. Why did you get the student to read aloud from the notes? It may frighten the others. Not really any point as it was a handout. Better to have an overhead of the main points in the handout and discuss with the group. When you ask one student to read aloud, everyone else is scared thinking they will have to do it next, so they are not listening to the information. Can't take it in, then you didn't explain the information that had been read out.

6. Due to the culture and the fact that English is a second language to the students, notes in point form on flipchart would be advisable when you are explaining the concepts.

7. You tended to name a person, then to ask them a question. In doing that you make the rest of the class relax. They then don't have to think of an answer to the question you asked as you have put the onus on one particular person. It's a good idea to ask a question in general to the whole group, look around the room at everyone, then ask a specific person - not pick on one person in particular. To say a name & ask a question takes heat off everyone else, they didn't need to think of an answer.

8. Would be a good idea to put points on board even if the information is in the notes – reinforces the information in their minds.

9. When you introduced the "circles of influence", you just said it with no explanation about what you were talking about. You didn't explain properly how word of mouth works, just that it does. Later you did, but they were confused at the beginning.

10. Keep their interest - keep moving around the room periodically.

11. When you identified a problem area in the bakery, you only did it verbally, you didn't record it on the board - you talked about steps again, but didn't record it on the board – no visuals. The visuals can help to reinforce the information and give you the basis on which to build the information during the lesson.

12. Need to structure the practical classroom exercise - write down the problem & identify the factors. Too vague - again not written up on board. Bear in mind that visuals assist in teaching when you your accent and language is not familiar to them.

13. You started using the flipchart only at the end of the lesson – could have been used throughout to reinforce the information you were giving them.

14. When you were explaining the hierarchy of the company, you left them off – as they are the supervisors, it would have shown them where they fit in. Made them feel more important. Make sure your charts show all the links, adds to the whole picture being presented, and hence their understanding of the material being taught.

15. If you put points up on the board earlier - you can use those to summarise /comment the points later. Eg: before we finish… to tie up the loose ends…

16. At the end of the lesson you said one person's name & asked that person "any questions?" – Not directed to the whole group. You need to address the whole group.

17. Good explanation at the finish – but you need to comment all the way through. BUT… then you kept going! You need to stick to your lesson plan in order to time your lesson appropriately.

18. Handout is complementary to the lesson – not the actual lesson – it needs to be used as a tool, not the whole lesson. Draw from it – point form on board.

19. Exercise too long for lesson – unless you are doing something else with some of the participants – as it was, it was just a time filler with no real outcomes. Should have been set as homework to show understanding of what had been

taught during that lesson. You could have shown an example on the board explaining the purpose of the exercise with clear guidelines of what you expected from them. Far too vague.

20. Good class interaction amongst themselves while doing exercise.

21. Main problem during lesson was the picking on specific people not the group as a whole. You didn't give the others a chance to participate or for you to assess what the others knew.

22. Towards the end of the lesson you tried to reinforce the main points of the lesson which they needed to know – however as you didn't reinforce visually all the way through – they didn't know what the main points were. You need to make major points clear & reinforce all the way through, not say it verbally once & expect them to remember that at the end of a lesson.

23. Make it very clear what needs to be ready for the next lesson – write it up on the board so they can write it down, ask questions, etc. You verbally asked what they needed to have ready for the next lesson, but only 1 person answered. Ask yourself why – did they understand what was expected of them?

24. Your timing is crucial. Students may need to be at another lesson, they may have appointments at work, need to be at work on time, etc. Stick to the time limit of the lesson and your lesson plan. Try not to digress. You can't put too much information into each lesson; students need time to digest the information. You went far too over the lesson allocated time of 1 hour.

25. Question session was left too late – you only allowed 30 seconds for questions. You need to have at least 10-15 mins before end for questions/discussion.

26. John, you need to watch the video of today's lesson and write your own comments about your performance, strengths & weaknesses. When you have completed this we need to meet again to discuss this further.

Lesson observation layout – 28/11/02

Start: 11.15
Finish: 12.35

Flipchart

Teacher – John

Lido (M)
III*

Dorcas (F)
III

Ricky (M)
II

Ayu (F)
III

Haji (M)
II

Yagip (M)
IIIII

Premi (F)
III

Nani (F)
III
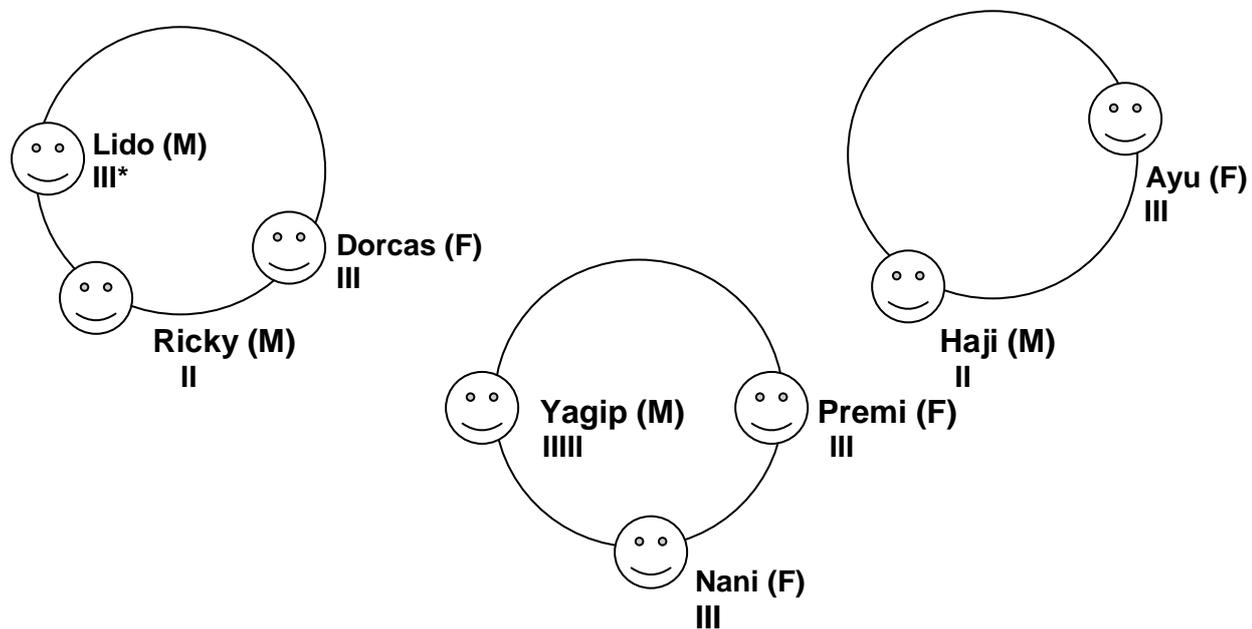
Note: III* = Number of times student spoke during lesson.

Appendix P2

Lesson Observation on "Understanding Pest Control"

Date:	**29/11/2002**
Teacher:	John
Observer:	Collette Foster
Venue:	IDP Education Australia Office (Brunei)
Title of Lesson:	Understanding Pest Control
Time length of lesson:	1 hour
Number of students:	8
Time started:	11.20 am
Time concluded:	12.20 pm

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS:

1. Some students were late – How can you handle / address the problem? You need to look at various strategies. You told them off outside and didn't mention it to the other students. One strategy you could try is to explain in front of all the students that by people being late they inconvenience the rest of the students and disrupt the class. Peer pressure often works in that way to your advantage.

2. You could have asked all the students to say out loud what their pest problems were, for example: "I want each of you to tell me ……" (Go around the room asking each of them).

3. Due to more visuals & explanation you got 100% more participation rate today (see class map below). They took notes, were showing that they were interested and getting the message. You got more enthusiastic answers. More responses when they were not being asked directly. You did revert a couple of times to asking one person, but were aware quickly of your oversight and corrected it – and it worked!

4. To get more participation from everyone, maybe you need to think of other strategies to employ. Seating? Activities?

5. They were uncomfortable when you asked them a question directly - strategies? For example: Write the question on the board? Say it twice? Is it their lack of English making understanding difficult? Jokes are good - relaxed everyone.

6. Write assignment /homework or board to reinforce understanding.
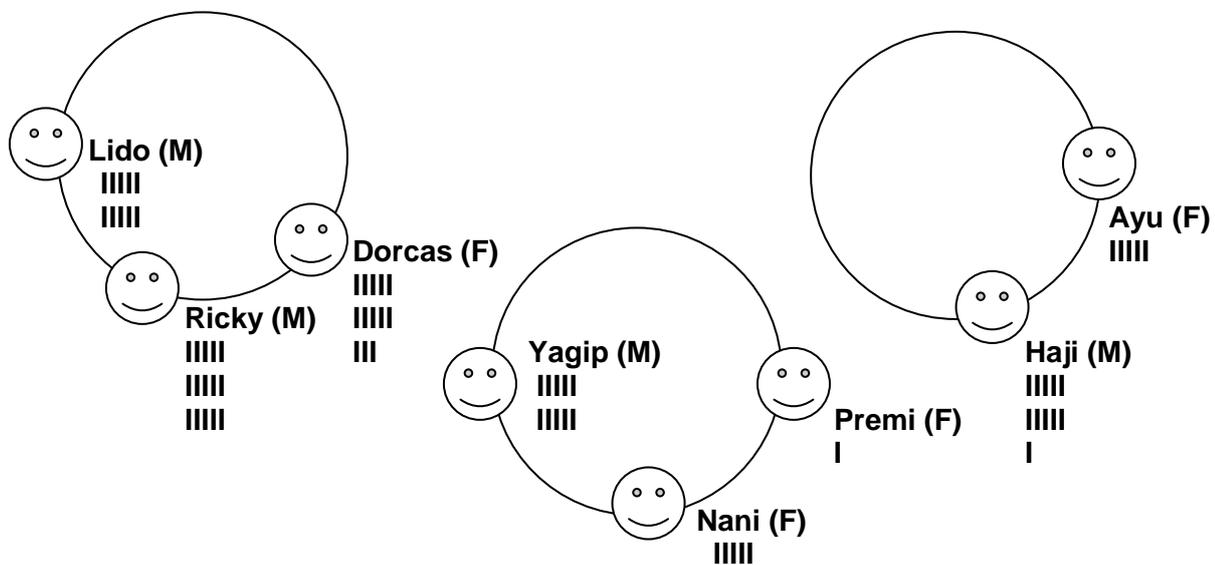
7. Lesson timing better today.

Lesson observation layout – 29/11/02

Start: 11.20
Finish: 12.20

Flipchart

 Teacher – John

Lido (M)
IIIII
IIIII

Dorcas (F)
IIIII
IIIII
III

Ricky (M)
IIIII
IIIII
IIIII

Yagip (M)
IIIII
IIIII

Nani (F)
IIIII

Premi (F)
I

Ayu (F)
IIIII

Haji (M)
IIIII
IIIII
I

Appendix P3

Lesson Observation on "Identifying Problem Areas"

Date: 30/11/2002

Teacher: John

Observer: Collette Foster

Venue: IDP Education Australia Office (Brunei)

Title of Lesson: Identifying Problem Areas

Time length of lesson: 1 hour

Number of students: 8

Time started: 11.10 am

Time concluded: 12.15pm

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS:

1. When you asked if they had completed their homework, it would have been wise to have gone around & looked at each person's work. You asked if they did it – but didn't check it or use it as the base for today's lesson, which would have been a good starting point. It would also have shown you if they had understood the work set as homework, according to how (or if!) they had completed it. Especially as they have been having trouble with understanding the subject/English.

2. It was a good strategy for you to talk to the rest of the group whilst the student was drawing her plan on the board – it took the heat off her and she was relaxed and able to complete her diagram.

3. They responded very well to the visual aids.

4. The questions you asked while drawing the plan on the board prompted results from the class – great!

5. Good analogies.

6. Very good group responses when questions were asked.

7. When you were talking about external & then internal inspections, you mentioned drawing a map – which would have been a good time to look at their homework maps & tell them if they were good or what was needed to improve them. You mentioned their maps – but didn't look at their maps.

8. Due to the students' answers – it was evident that they learnt what you had been teaching. Good way to gauge their understanding of what you have taught.

9. Teamwork good during group activity (inspection report). You need to walk around each group & listen & add little comments – this will assist you in gauging their knowledge.
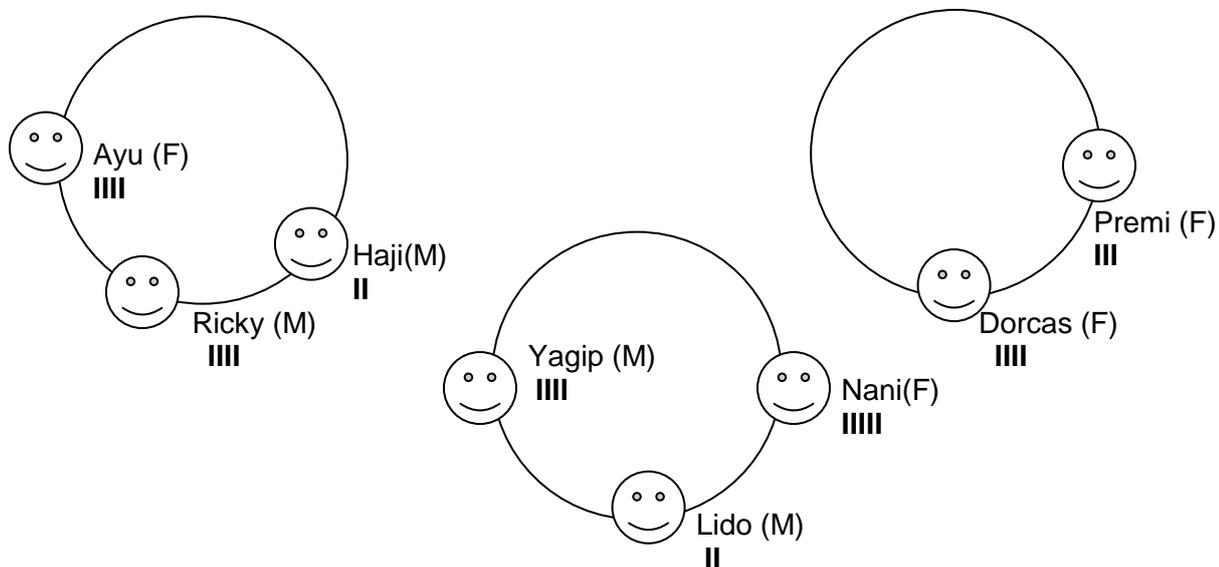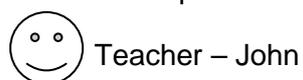
10. Good explanation by you all through this exercise.

11. Watch your timing. People have other things to move onto – work, other classes, appointments etc. – timing is crucial.

12. Write tomorrow's exercise on the board – did they understand what was expected?

Lesson observation layout – 30/11/02

Start: 11.10am
Finish: 12.15pm

Flipchart

Teacher – John

Ayu (F)
IIII

Haji(M)
II

Ricky (M)
IIII

Yagip (M)
IIII

Nani(F)
IIIII

Lido (M)
II

Premi (F)
III

Dorcas (F)
IIII

Appendix P4

Lesson Observation on "Preventative Measures"

Date: 2/12/2002

Teacher: John

Observer: Collette Foster

Venue: IDP Education Australia Office (Brunei)

Title of Lesson: Preventative Measures

Time length of lesson: 1 hour

Number of students: 8

Time started: 11.40 am

Time concluded: 12.35pm

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS:

1. Good lesson today – not much interaction from students – but that was due to the nature of the lesson.

2. Always check the spelling in your handouts and overheads – goes to your credibility.

3. Look at strategies for disruption. For example: "My job is to teach you, your job is to learn – if you are talking, you can't hear me – hence you are not learning – so neither of us are doing our jobs."

4. Good homework and assessment explanation.

Lesson observation layout – 2/12/02

Start: 11.40am
Finish: 12.35pm

Flipchart

 Teacher – John

Lido (M)
II

Haji (M)
I

Ricky (M)
II

Yagip (M)
II

Ayu (F)
I

Nani (F)

Dorcas (F)
I

Premi (F) II
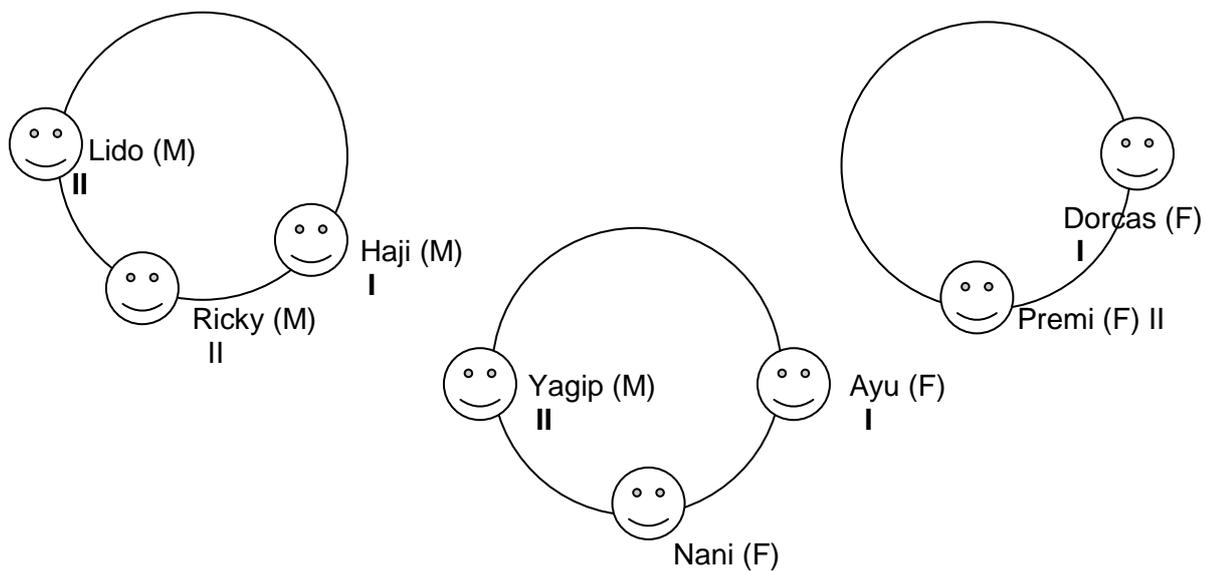
Appendix Q

Questions for Critical Reflection
(Dick, B. 2002)

This is a resource file which supports the regular public program "areol" (action research and evaluation on line) offered twice a year beginning in mid-February and mid-July, by Southern Cross University and the Southern Cross Institute of Action Research. For details, email Bob Dick bdick@scu.edu.au or bd@uq.net.au
It has been my experience that reflection after the event is helped by careful observation during the event. In turn, this is helped by good planning, and in particular the surfacing of assumptions, before the event.

There should be a set of questions for planning before the action and review afterwards. The purpose is to become aware of the assumptions guiding the actions and determine if the outcomes support or disconfirm the assumptions.

Before the action

The "a" questions lead to practice. The "b" questions lead to theory:

1a: What do I think are the salient features of the situation which I face?

1b: Why do I think those are the salient features? What evidence do I have for this belief?

2a: If I am correct about the situation, what outcomes do I believe are desirable?

2b: Why do I think those outcomes are desirable in that situation?

3a: If I am correct about the situation and the desirability of the outcomes, what actions do I think will give me the outcomes?

3b: Why do I think those actions will deliver those outcomes in that situation?

After the action

0a: Did I get the outcomes that I want? Or, more realistically, what were the outcomes that I got, and how well do these accord with those I sought?

0b: To the extent which I got them, do I still want them? Why, or why not?

0c: To the extent which I didn't get them, why not?

This final question then returns in more details to the earlier planning questions:

1a: In what ways was I mistaken about the situation?

1b: Which of my assumptions about the situation misled me?

1c: What have I learned? Why different conclusions will I reach about similar situations in future?

2a: In what ways was I mistaken about the desirability of the pursued outcomes?

2b: Which of my reasons for favouring those outcomes misled me?

2c: What have I learned? What outcomes will I try to pursue when next I'm in such a situation?

And notice that 3a takes a somewhat different tack:

3a: Did I succeed in carrying out the planned actions? If not, what prevented or discouraged me? What have I learned about myself, my skills, my attitudes, and so on?

3b: If I did carry out the actions, in what ways was I mistaken about the effect they would have? Which of my assumptions about the actions misled me?

3c: What have I learned? What actions will I try next time I am pursuing similar outcomes in a similar situation.

An earlier version of these questions was developed in conversation with Stephanie Chee, Alan Davies, Goh Moh Heng, Richard Kwok, and Shankar Sankaran. The questions are based on the "theory of action" approach of Argyris and Schön, for instance in *Theory in practice* (Jossey-Bass, 1974) and also in subsequent books.