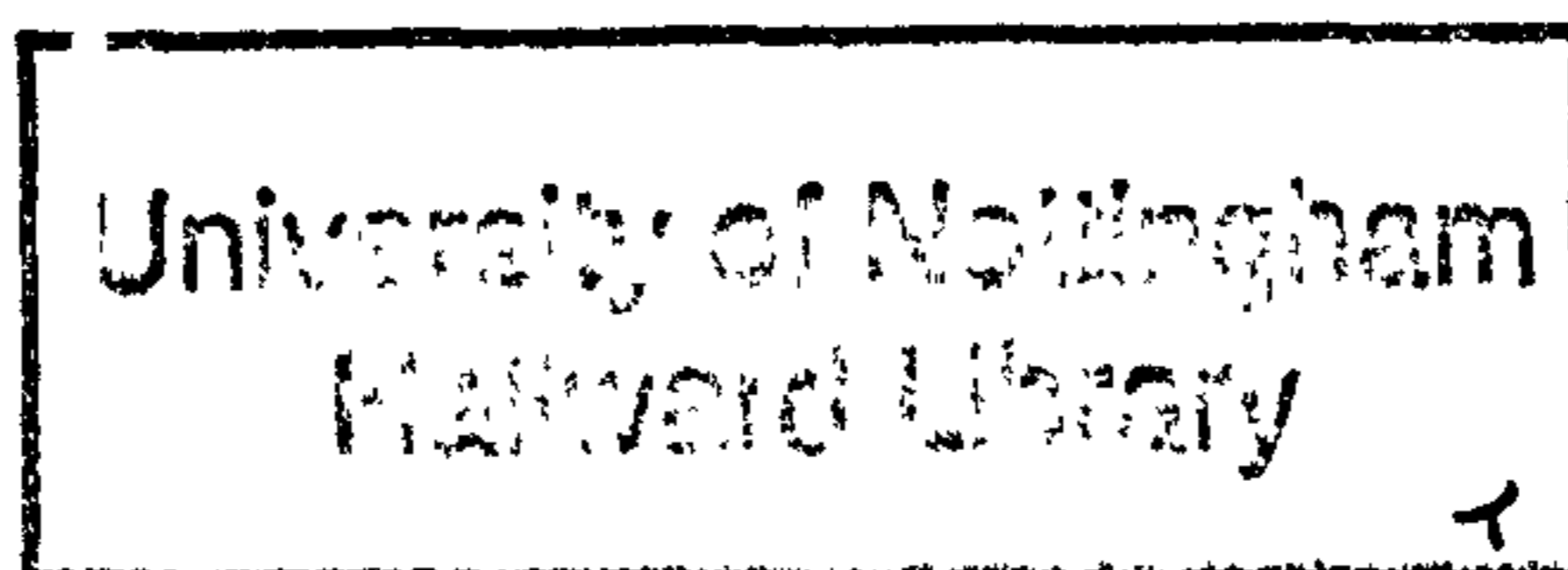


**MENTORS' PRACTICE:
THE ROLE OF LEARNING THEORY; AN ILLUMINATIVE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

The initial focus of this thesis is on mentors' professional knowledge base, and subsequently on the pedagogical strategies employed by mentors and their use, in so far as it occurs, of adult learning theories, which have been said to form the dominant conceptual framework for mentoring (Hansford *et al.*, 2003: 10).

These issues are considered important as, despite acknowledgement by the DfES in 2001 as to the relevance of theory in mentor training; in practice mentor training is often limited to familiarisation with government and Partnership requirements in order for them to undertake the assessment of student teachers. Consequently very little attention is given to learning theories within mentor training.

Whilst connections between mentoring and learning theories exist in literature my research highlights that there is a potential dichotomy between the literature and practice of mentoring. It therefore considers the extent to which adult learning theories are actually used in current mentoring practice. In addition my research also looks at the way mentor teachers' pedagogic strategies are shaped by the context and purposes they are working within, and the role ascribed to them.

My research is based upon an in depth Case Study of 20 mentors from one HEI Partnership. It utilises qualitative method tools, with the primary tools being observations and semi-structured interviews. These tools assisted in progressively developing my research questions and conclusions as part of an inductive process.

The results of my study show that the practice of mentors is largely influenced by their prior experience, primarily as teachers but also as student teachers; they see theory as having little

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influence on their practice. In addition my study indicates that few mentors are aware of learning theories or their principles. Nonetheless it indicates that the practice of most mentors includes the application of the principles of a number of adult learning theories. My research concludes that mentors use some of these principles through the development of their own personal construct theories, which in turn largely relies upon their prior experience, and through the framework provided by the HEI Partnership.

DEDICATION

IN MEMORY OF MY DAD

RONALD PAINTER

22nd JUNE 1920 – 6th JUNE 2003

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ABBREVIATIONS

BEd	Bachelor of Education
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CATE	Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
CNAA	Council for National Academic Awards
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPPD	Continuing Personal and Professional Development
DENI	Department of Education Northern Ireland
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment (from 1995)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (from 2001)
DES	Department of Education and Science (from 1964)
EBITT	Employment based Initial Teacher Training
GTC	General Teaching Council
GTP	Graduate Teacher Programme
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HMI	Her Majesty’s Inspector of Schools
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LEA	Local Education Authority
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education

Abbreviations

PCT	Personal Construct Theory
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SCITT	School Centred Initial Teacher Training
SOED	Scottish Office Education Department
TDA	Teacher Training and Development Agency
TP	Teaching Practice
TTA	Teacher Training Agency
TDA	Teacher Training and Development Agency (formerly the Teacher Training Agency)
TTRB	Teacher Training Resource Bank
UCET	Universities Central Council for the Education of Teachers
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States (of America)

GLOSSARY

Although many of the terms used in this Research Project are widely used within the area being studied, the following have been included to assist the reader.

Epistemology	The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, and its foundations, extent and validity.
Instructional Design	The process through which an educator determines the most appropriate pedagogic methods for learners in a specific context attempting to reach a specific objective.
Ontology	The theory of objects and their ties. Ontology provides criteria for distinguishing various types of objects and their ties.
Praxis	The practical application or exercise of a branch of learning.
Pupils	Those under the age of 18 attending schools or colleges.
Student Teachers	Those attending HEIs as part of a postgraduate Initial Teacher Training course of study.

INTRODUCTION

'There is scant evidence of work undertaken in relation to mentors' professional knowledge base and the way in which it enables them to assist trainees ... in their professional training.' (Jones et al., 2004: 4)

There have always been formal and informal helpers available to help others with their working life, often with the objective of improving the professional skills of new entrants into a trade or profession. Today this form of special relationship is found in several sectors, namely business, nursing and education, and one term used to describe this relationship is mentoring.

In the context of education, and the training of student teachers in particular, the term mentoring is frequently used to describe *'a combination of coaching, counselling and assessment where a classroom teacher in a school is delegated responsibility for assisting a pre-service or newly qualified teacher in their development in their profession'* (Fletcher, 2000a).

Within the teaching profession mentoring commonly involves a one-to-one relationship, wherein an experienced teacher, usually known as the *'mentor'*, can engage with a student teacher whilst the latter is on placement in a school as part of the process of gaining qualified teacher status. This engagement then has the potential to enable, enhance or empower the student teacher. The principal stakeholders in the process of mentoring are the mentor, the student teacher, the members of the Higher Education Institution Partnership and the Teacher Training and Development Agency, although others also share responsibility.

To mentor a student teacher whilst on teaching practice would seem a very important role to perform within the teaching profession. However, within primary and secondary schools

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in England and Wales there is no standard job description for a mentor. In addition anecdotal evidence suggests that within schools, management often select teachers to be mentors on the basis that they are '*experienced enough*' for the role. Alternatively, teachers apply to be a mentor in order to increase their experience or for continuing professional development.

In considering the student teacher as a learner in a mentoring relationship whilst on Teaching Practice, my research looks to the instructional design used by mentors, in particular the learning theories that support their pedagogical strategies. This is appropriate given that instructional design can be described as '*the entire process of analysis of learning needs and goals*' (Applied_Research_Laboratory: 2004).

Atherton (2003) suggests that instructional design is best built on a firm foundation of learning theory, with such theories allowing us further ways and possibilities to see the world, and states that '*whether we realise it or not, the best design decisions are most certainly based on our knowledge of learning theories*' (Atherton, 2003: 81).

Turning to the context in which mentoring occurs, I consider the single most important influence is the competence-based system of Initial Teacher Training. Boreham (2002) suggests that the model of competence-based education used in the UK is in fact mechanistic and reductionist, denying a role for '*human agencies*' in the learning process. Despite such criticism this model of education need not be synonymous with producing teachers to a formula, given the influence of mentors which extends to the development of individual student teachers' strengths, and maximising their professional and personal potential.

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It is also very important to realise that mentoring is a process that concerns both professional and personal issues that are ever changing and are constantly coming under the spotlight, whether it be by Higher Education Institution partnerships, the Teacher Training and Development Agency or the Office for Standards in Education.

One aspect which has been noted in the literature on mentoring of student teachers, but seldom developed, is that mentoring is based upon a relationship between two adults, and that '*Good mentorship involves helping teachers work effectively with adults*' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000: 54). Whilst not necessarily applicable in all mentoring situations, it is noteworthy that this view of mentoring in Initial Teacher Training corresponds with the literature, with Hansford *et al.* (2003: 53) describing adult learning theories as the '*dominant conceptual framework*' underpinning mentoring. However, I believe that little attention has been given as to whether this occurs in practice within Initial Teacher Training, and if so by what means.

In terms of my research, in particular the development of the connection between mentoring in Initial Teacher Training and the use by mentors of learning theories, especially those relating to adults, it is necessary to define what is meant by adult learning theories, and to state why they may be both relevant and significant to mentoring. In addressing the former my research has considered the theories of learning described in the literature on mentoring; whilst considering the latter I believe that it is highly relevant that Tusting and Barton (2003: 5) state that '*Theories of learning provide a starting point for principles of teaching.*'

I believe this view of the use of learning theories is applicable to the mentoring of student teachers. However, Tusting and Barton's analysis does not assist in identifying the source

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or nature of the theories of learning used by mentors, in particular whether these theories are derived from literature or from their experience of teaching children or mentoring student teachers or from the instructional design and framework provided to them by the HEI Partnership.

Accordingly, at the start of my research it seemed logical to ask the question '*What theories of learning do mentors use?*' Given that mentors and student teachers are adults, a further question arose, namely '*Do mentors use theories of learning developed out of the distinctiveness of adult learning?*' These constitute my initial research questions.

It is important to note that this research project has been undertaken from the perspective of an educationalist with experience of teaching and mentoring rather than that of a psychologist looking at theories of learning *per se*. In addition my research has an explicit focus on those theories of learning pertinent to the mentoring environment, and specifically those relating to adult learning.

In looking to determine if theories of learning are used by mentors, one of the means of analysis that I have used is the six principles of adult learning identified by Knowles *et al.* (1998); this methodology is similar to that carried out by Cox (2006) in her study into relevance of adult learning to coaching. However, by using these principles I am not taking an andragogical stance, rather I am using it as a model describing some of the principles of adult learning against which data can be simply and accurately compared, and appropriate conclusions drawn.

Whilst looking at literature that covers a span of approximately 15 years and a number of countries, including many outside the UK, it has become apparent that different writers and countries use different terms for very similar roles. For example the term '*trainee teacher*' is

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often used in North American literature instead of student teacher, as commonly used in the UK. Whist trainee teacher has more recently been used by the Teacher Training and Development Agency, most literature and mentors use the term student teacher. I have elected to use the latter term in my writing as it is used by the majority of sources. In addition I have chosen to use the term '*pupil*' to refer to those under the age of 18 attending schools and colleges, rather than the current usage of '*student*' in order to differentiate from student teachers.

In addition various sources, particularly Higher Education Institutions, use the term '*Initial Teacher Education*', whilst others, particularly government and its agencies, have consistently used the term '*Initial Teacher Training*'. For reasons of consistency, principally, with the regulations governing the area covered by this research project I have elected to use the term Initial Teacher Training.

In the same way I have chosen to use the term '*mentor*' rather than '*teacher educator*' which can also be used to cover the role of the Higher Education Institution based staff involved in Initial Teacher Training. This is consistent with the focus of my research being on the school-based teacher undertaking the role of mentor whilst excluding the role of the Higher Education Institution based staff. Where the context cannot be clearly identified in the literature I have used the more general term of '*teacher educator*.'

I have, in deciding to conduct my research project looked to its originality and the contribution to the body of knowledge. I therefore consider it is worth emphasising that in 2003 Lunenberg and Korthagen recorded that:

'In 1990 the results of a research project on teacher educators ordered by the European Council of Ministers of Education were reported. It concluded that there was "an almost absence of structured training and supervision of teacher educators"'

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(European Journal of Teacher Education, 1990), partly due to the fact that a knowledge base for teacher education was lacking. Ten years later ... there is still a lack of research, research-based knowledge and validated practices.' (Lunenberg and Korthagen, 2003: 4)

In addition Hawkey (1997) suggests that many studies on mentoring show a lack of research focus on the details of mentoring interactions in practical settings whilst Jones *et al.* (2004), as per the quote at the start of this introduction, note that little research had been undertaken in connection with mentors' '*professional knowledge base*' and how it enabled them to assist student teachers whilst undergoing professional training within the school environment. Accordingly, I consider this area of study worthy of forming the focus for this research project, and will add to the body of knowledge.

Turning to the main body of this thesis, this has been structured in four parts; the first focussing on a review of the literature, the second on my methodology, the third on my case study, with the final part setting out the conclusions of my research.

The first part is composed of:

Chapter 1 - The Structural Framework for Mentoring in Initial Teacher Training, which looks to establish the statutory basis for Initial Teacher Training, the role of the Higher Education Partnerships, the introduction and purposes of competences and standards within Initial Teacher Training, and the role of the mentor. Whilst this chapter sets out the concepts involved in mentoring, it does not include a detailed analysis of the Teacher Training and Development Agency Requirements. Instead this detailed analysis is set out within Chapter 5 as it is an integral part of the case being studied.

Chapter 2 - The Praxis of Mentoring, looks at the principal players in the mentoring relationship, i.e. the student teachers and the mentors, and the mentoring relationship itself. In addition it considers the role of the mentor in more detail than Chapter 1, and focuses on the practice of mentoring. In doing so, it explores the occurrence and use of learning theories within mentoring, as described by the literature on mentoring.

Chapter 3 – Learning Theories within Mentoring, considers in more detail those learning theories identified by the review of literature on mentoring within Chapter 2. In doing so it considers the learning theories derived from psychology, and considers the basis for competence-based education, which provides the conceptual framework imposed by government on Initial Teacher Training. It also considers in some detail adult learning theories.

Together these chapters look to establish the structural basis for mentoring, to understand the mentoring relationship and the key factors pertaining to it, and the learning theories described as underpinning mentoring in the literature. By this means I look to establish the context for my inquiry, and to provide assistance to the reader in the understanding of the data obtained through my research.

The second part is composed of Chapter 4 - Methodology, and addresses the methodology used in this research project to elucidate the features of mentors' pedagogical strategies and their use of learning theories. In particular it looks to justify the use of the case study as the format for my research. The sections of the chapter consider the theoretical framework for the proposed methodology, the basis for my research, the phases of my research, and ethics and access.

The third part is composed of:

Chapter 5 — Developing the Case, which sets out the initial phase of my research. This consists of my exploratory case study, the observation of mentors and student teachers in schools, an analysis of Teacher Training and Development Agency and Higher Education Institution Partnership documents, observation of mentor training within the Partnership and an interview with the head of the PGCE course within the Partnership being studied.

Chapter 6 – The Case in Depth, consists of interviews with mentors, and focuses on establishing whether learning theories illuminate the practice of mentoring, and if so, to what extent and by which learning theories. The first part of the chapter sets out the case being studied and the theoretical basis for it, whilst the second analyses the data obtained.

Together these chapters look to answer the research questions that I am posing. Looking to how these questions are to be answered it is important to recognise that the UK is only one site where debates about mentoring have taken place. Accordingly, whilst the first chapter focussed solely on the structural framework for ITT in England and Wales, and thus on literature originating in those locations, the balance of this project also considers relevant literature from other parts of the world.

The final part of my thesis is set out in Chapter 7 – Key Findings, Conclusions and Implications, and explains the findings of this research project and proposals for further research in this area.

1 The Structural Framework for Mentoring in Initial Teacher Training

1 THE STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR MENTORING IN INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

1.1 Introduction

'I have often wondered why teachers, as a body, in elementary and secondary schools alike do not demand a larger share in training. The trained teachers are to join their staffs, yet, in effect they are content to entrust the training to persons who, however skilled, are at the time outside the schools.' (H. Ward, Chief Inspector for the training of teachers 1928)

In looking to understand mentors' practice it is first necessary to consider what mentoring is, and the context and other factors that shape it. Accordingly, the first chapter of this thesis looks to examine the structural framework for mentoring in Initial Teacher Training [ITT] and the factors that have determined it.

During the course of the late 1980s and early 1990s there was considerable dissatisfaction within government over standards of educational attainment within state schools in England and Wales, and education became a contested area. Whilst government was principally concerned as to the quality of the outputs of the education system, and how they compared internationally, there were also concerns as to the nature of teacher training in universities and colleges of education, which were perceived to be centres of politicised educational theories (Partington, 1999).

In response to these challenges government looked to a model in which the outputs of the education system could be monitored and the institutions delivering them could be held accountable. Part of this process involved the removal of the monopoly of teacher supply from Higher Education Institutions [HEI]. This was a consequence of these institutions being seen by government to be part of the problem within the state education system, and

1 The Structural Framework for Mentoring in Initial Teacher Training

in which '*certain doctrines antithetical to educational achievement were deeply embedded*' (Partington, 1999: 6).

Changes to Initial Teacher Education [ITE], in particular Circular 09/92 (DES, 1992b), were seen as a means to achieve this end and were intended to provide the education system at large with effective teachers in order to deliver the improved standards that government desired. A key part of this process was that two thirds of a secondary student teacher's training was to be school-based. In conjunction with this the role of assessor of student teachers was passed from an HEI based supervisor to a classroom teacher selected by their school. These classroom teachers were initially called partners, subsequently mentor teachers and finally became mentors.

Concerns, principally on the part of HEIs, over the preparedness of schools to take a larger role focussed on classroom teachers lacking appropriate skills. However, when HEIs raised this issue their concerns were disregarded as they were seen to be vested interested groups protecting their own status and employment.

The significance of the changes brought about by Circular 09/92, and the subsequent enactment of many of its provisions in the 1994 Education Act, cannot be underestimated. The practical-theoretical balance prevalent within ITT for almost fifty years was set aside, as the theoretical aspect of teacher training was to be non-existent (Wilkin, 1993), thus allowing the student teacher to be trained under a competence-based model. This objective was in accordance with the belief '*that apprenticeship should take precedence over instruction and even when formal instruction is necessary it can never substitute for real practical training*' (Hillgate Group, 1989).

1 The Structural Framework for Mentoring in Initial Teacher Training

In issuing Circular 09/92 government gave extremely clear and specific directions as to how ITT was to develop into the 1990s. In particular it indicated that *'the full range of teacher-education provision was now to be centrally controlled, with both initial teacher education and continued professional development based firmly in the schools'* (Gilroy, 1994). As part of this process ITT was to be delivered through HEI Partnerships in which schools, and thus practicing school teachers, were to take a major role.

Following its election in 1997 the new Labour government introduced a number of new measures including Circulars 10/97 (DfEE, 1997) and 04/98 (DfEE, 1998). The former introduced a national curriculum for ITT, and as such represented a major change in expectations and requirements for new teachers. The latter, which incorporated and replaced Circular 10/97, added an exacting list of almost 100 competence-based assessment standards. This Circular was itself replaced when the Teacher Training Agency [TTA] issued *'Qualifying to teach: Professional Standards for Qualified Teacher Status and Requirements for Initial Teacher Training'* (TTA, 2002) [*Qualifying to teach* or *'the Requirements'*].

As one of the means of improving standards within the educational system agencies controlled by government, initially the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [CATE] and subsequently the TTA assisted by the Office for Standards in Education [Ofsted] were given strengthened powers in order to maintain control of the process. Such is the nature of these standards and the rigidity with which they are enforced that some, e.g. Hill (2001), consider that they are deliberately designed to limit the degree of interpretation available to the participants in the process of preparing student teachers.

1 The Structural Framework for Mentoring in Initial Teacher Training

Within the subsequent sections of this chapter I will develop these themes by looking at the regulatory basis for ITT, the HEI Partnership, standards and competences and the mentor teacher.

1.2 The Regulatory Basis for ITT

'Mentoring is a structured, sustained process for supporting professional learners through significant career transitions.' (CUREE, 2004)

Although DES Circular 09/92, entitled *'Initial Teacher Training (Secondary Phase)'*, (DES, 1992a) is now 16 years old and has been superseded by subsequent circulars and regulations, it is worth using as a starting point for this section as the reforms which it introduced still underpin many of the key aspects of the initial training of student teachers today.

Wallace (1991: 8) describes the model of teacher training prevalent from the 1960s until the introduction of Circular 09/92 (DES, 1992b) as the *'applied science model.'* He suggests that this model assumes that *'the business of learning to teach is that of learning what has been discovered by science about various aspects of human behaviour and applying this to various teaching problems.'* He considers that in this model the training institution is seen to be centre of expertise and the role of schools perceived to be merely a place where the trainees put the theories they have been taught into practice.

Circular 09/92 was precipitated by an announcement from Kenneth Clarke (1992), then Secretary of State for Education, which proposed handing responsibility for teacher training from HEIs to schools. This was to be matched by a reallocation of funds from the HEIs to schools in order to facilitate the development of a partnership between the two types of institutions. As part of his proposal Kenneth Clarke stated that eighty percent of each

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student teacher's time should be based in schools, although the subsequent 1994 Education Act only required two thirds of the student teacher's training to be school-based.

The Circular put paid to the '*teaching practice supervisor*' provided by the HEI, with the consequence that the role of assessor for the student teacher was passed on to a classroom teacher selected by their school. This meant that these selected classroom teachers needed to develop knowledge, understanding and skills to fulfil their new role, which was initially termed '*a partner*.'

A major change proposed in the Circular, building on the licensed teacher scheme of 1988, was for the assessment of student teachers based upon a competency framework. This framework set out the '*specific knowledge, understanding and skills needed, by the newly qualified teacher*.' Following this principle the circular also stipulated that all courses for teacher education were to use competence statements in assessing, recording and developing student teachers' abilities to teach. The progressive development of these competences was to be monitored regularly during initial training, and their attainment at a level appropriate to newly qualified teachers was to be the objective of every student taking a course of initial teacher training. These changes to the competence-based model in ITT were instigated by a number of different agencies, in particular the National Council for Vocational Qualifications [NCVQ], the Manpower Services Commission, the Training Agency and the Further Education Unit.

It was in this context that Elliot and Calderhead (1993) stated that government's reconstruction of teacher education was to be through the measurement of competencies, with competency-based teaching being the basis for improvement of teacher performance in the classroom. Competence as a teacher was defined such that assessment could easily be

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made by Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools ['HMI'] and others involved with teacher education. As a consequence Gilroy (1994) presciently suggested that it indicated that teacher-education provision was to be centrally controlled.

However, these changes were not easily accepted by many, with Husbands (1997: 7) stating that *'ideological pressure, particularly from the New Right, has underpinned these policy developments towards workplace-based training for new teachers.'* Yet at the same time he also acknowledged that *'the advocacy of school-based ITE has not been confined to the New Right.'*

In contrast, and taking a contrary view, Wilkin (1992a) challenged the government to put in place a wholly school-based apprenticeship, whilst at the same time suggesting that the circular *'was an attempt to challenge the autonomy of the teaching profession.'*

Prior to the Circular, and indeed for much of the period following the Second World War, a grounding in *'theory'* which could be *'put into practice'* was seen as essential for teacher education (Husband, 1997). Jones *et al.* (2004: 3) suggests that this was because *'professional knowledge tended to be equated with propositional knowledge and high theoretical content, regardless of the relevance of such knowledge to practice.'* Indeed which for the purpose of this thesis theory can be defined as the philosophy of education including educational ideas, values, and policy issues.

However, by the early 1980s HMI (1983) were of the view that the teaching of educational pedagogy to student teachers should be restricted to what was required in the school classroom. Others took a more extreme view, for example Wilkin (1990) described theory within ITT as a *'disaster area'*, and suggested that, in fact, it was *'the practitioner who is expert since he or she is the owner of a personal theory.'*

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Such thinking supported the view that the theoretical/practical balance in ITT should be changed, with student teachers only being taught a limited significant amount of theory, and training being largely based in schools in partnership with these schools. Indeed such a partnership had already been accepted in principle by HEIs, with Universities Central Council for the Education of Teachers [UCET] (1979) having stated *'it is clearly the case that it is in schools that the vast majority of [training in practical skills] must be done, and that primarily under the day to day supervision of school staff.'*

A further consequence of the circular, and the re-routing of ITT, was the creation of the TTA in 1994, which ultimately replaced CATE, and led the development and promotion of a greater choice in teacher training for prospective entrants into the teaching profession. The TTA also became responsible to government for advice on the quality of education provided, policy, specialised criteria for teachers and funding allocation to establishments involved in teacher training. By the introduction of the requirement for all new teacher entrants to the state education system to have Qualified Teacher Status [QTS], as based upon its requirements, the TTA (subsequently the TDA) effectively controls the progression of students from ITT into the teaching profession.

As a consequence of these actions the autonomy of HEI Partnership schemes was seen as being under threat of government control through a process of *'inspection against harder-edged criteria.'* Arthur *et al.* (1997: 14) suggest this *'raises a potential threat to the teaching profession as a whole since the idea of the teacher-as-technician, ... [providing] a pre-packaged National Curriculum, does not sit well with the status of a profession.'*

Subsequently Circulars 10/97 (DfEE, 1997) and 04/98 (DfEE, 1998) were introduced by the new Labour Government following its election in 1997. These included a number of further

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changes. Geen *et al.* (1999: 59) noted that the latter, which incorporated many of the measures introduced by Circular 10/97 and included *'the substitution of a series of "standards" for the competences listed in circular 9/92, the implementation of core curricula for trainees ... and the creation of career entry profile (TTA, 1997).'*

In 2002 DfEE Circular 4/98 was in turn superseded when the TTA issued *Qualifying to teach* (TTA, 2002), which was in turn subject to revision (TDA, 2006b). The key changes in respect of ITT were that students' time in schools was to be split between at least two schools and that ITT was now the first in a number of phases of professional development for teachers. Whilst these reforms reaffirmed the requirement that the majority of the training undertaken by student teachers was to be in schools they also opened up new entry routes for would-be teachers. These routes included, amongst others, School Centred Initial Teacher Training [SCITT] and Graduate Teacher Programme [GTP]. Existing routes such as BEd courses were maintained.

More significantly within the reforms following on from Circular 09/92 mentor teachers were given a more powerful role in deciding the fate of student teachers within the context of the highly prescriptive competence based training.

1.3 The HEI Partnership

'The university provides the theory, the school provides the setting, and the student teacher provides the effort to bring them together.' (Wideen *et al.*, 1998: 152)

Particular emphasis within Circular 09/92 was laid on the partnership between schools and HEIs. Each school was to be given the opportunity to take part in one or more partnership, and thus be given substantial responsibility for the design and delivery of the training. Subsequently clause 12 of the 1994 Education Act stated that *'The governing body of any*

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county, voluntary or maintained special school, or of any grant-maintained school, may provide courses of initial training for school teachers.' The encouragement for schools to accept these new responsibilities came through the transfer of funds from HEIs to schools.

However, it has to be said that partnerships between HEIs and schools was not a new phenomenon, quite the opposite. As far back as 1972 the report '*Teacher Education and Training*' issued by the James Committee (1971) proposed that '*schools, and teachers in them ... be asked to undertake new roles in teacher training*' and that '*Teachers in schools ... be more closely involved in planning and supervising practical work.*' In addition the committee, with its insistence on greater immediate relevance of education studies to classroom teaching, took a view that teacher training courses should be functional and specialised.

Subsequently in 1982 the School Partnerships in Teacher Education Project, which was another key piece of research prior to Circular 09/92, undertook research in school-based Post Graduate Certificate in Education [PGCE] courses, and noted that HEI based '*tutors were clearly unwilling to give up their teaching practice responsibilities ...[and] disagreed strongly that school staff should take up the main responsibility for supervision*' (Patrick *et al.*, 1982).

At a similar point in time HMI (1983) proposed that the '*partnership between schools and initial training institutions should be strengthened at all levels and in all aspects of the student's training.*' HMI also stated that experienced teachers should become far more involved in the training of student teachers and that the teaching of educational pedagogy should be restricted to what might be required in the school classroom. Subsequently, the

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government stipulated for the first time, by way of Circular 03/84 (DES, 1984), that the training of teachers should be supported by partnerships between schools and HEIs.

Having identified that Circular 09/92 strengthened the principle of a partnership between schools and training institutions it is necessary to consider the HMI Report on school-based ITT in England and Wales (H.M.I., 1991), which provided the basis for the Circular. The Report was based on findings from regular inspections of ITT courses by HMI between 1986 and 1991.

When issuing the HMI Report for publication Kenneth Clarke (1992) emphasised that the report had found that:

'There are sufficient courses which provide successful school-based training in amounts significantly above the minimum to demonstrate that the principle of school based teacher training is sound and can be put into practice effectively.'

The report stated that *'what is increasingly apparent from inspection evidence is that a carefully planned balance of serial and block practice tends to improve the quality of training courses.'* This finding underpinned the move to the school centred ITT called for by Circular 09/92. Significantly the report also concluded:

'[T]he overall quality of training is not a direct product of the amount of time spent in schools or of a particular pattern of school experience, but rather of the quality of the teachers and of the relationship between schools and training institutions.'

Within the report HMI restated some of the requirements for ITT courses, namely that all courses, irrespective of their length, must include experience in more than one school. In addition HMI noted that no student could obtain QTS without passing teaching practice and that undergraduate training was required to combine general higher education, the development of specific subject expertise and professional preparation.

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However, HMI (1991) recognised the two assumptions lying behind these requirements as being, firstly, that teaching was a demanding activity that required the intellectual discipline and maturity through academic study. Secondly, it believed that teachers could not teach subjects they had no knowledge of, however good their general teaching skills might be.

The move of much of ITT from HEIs to schools initiated by Circular 09/92 was also seen by government to have additional advantages, principally through the reduction of costs within HEIs and speeding up the entry of new entrants into teaching, particularly mature entrants. Conversely HEI's resisted these changes, largely on the basis of quality of training, but also because of the impact on staff numbers (Partington, 1999).

Whilst it was envisaged that there would be a shared responsibility between HEIs and the schools for ITT, in reality HEIs maintained the leading role. In large part this is because HEIs were able to staff and administer the process, unlike the schools who, despite receiving some additional funds, introduced few additional resources into the elements of ITT for which they have responsibility. However, subject mentors saw that partnerships were only genuine when they were fully involved, with Maynard (1996) quoting an anonymous mentor:

'I don't want the college to say "you will do"...it's got to be mutually agreed. I'd like to be able to say "Well I feel I could do ... I am in a better position to explore this area and you are in a better position to explore the other." I think there has to be a greater liaison so school and college don't see each other as a threat.' (Maynard, 1996: 55)

Following the major upheaval created by Circular 09/92 the form of the HEI Partnerships became established, changing little subsequently. However, as with the other elements of ITT the detail of their activities altered with the requirements of subsequent instructions from government.

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Currently under the Requirements (TDA, 2006b) the HEIs produce a Partnership framework and handbook, collectively forming part of the instructional design used by mentors. Details of the specific requirements placed upon the HEI Partnerships are set out in the Handbook of guidance (TDA, 2006a). However, at Requirement R3 the handbook states (Ibid: 87) that *'The guidance does not recommend any single model for a partnership.'*

The Partnership handbooks in turn reflect the Requirements and explain how compliance is demonstrated by the Partnership. As part of this process HEIs also conduct mentor training, which is almost exclusively aimed at training mentors to be assessors, as identified by Requirement R2.2 of the Handbook of guidance, and on the structure of the HEI course, with little time devoted to mentoring (Youens and Bailey, 2004).

1.4 Standards and Competences

'In the 1990s there was strong pressure to make teacher training a more simple, direct, quasi-apprenticeship system, and to disengage it from the perceived high-flown and disturbing ideas and ideologies that came via HE.' (Bolton, 1994: 24)

Specific emphasis within Circular 09/92 was given to the development of a competency-led model of education begun years before in the USA. The introduction of the competence-based model into the United Kingdom ('UK') was driven by the NCVQ, which was, according to Fletcher (2000b: 7), responsible in the late 1980s for a *'new framework of qualifications based on new employment led standards of competence.'* As set out earlier in this chapter this framework was initially implemented within ITT in England and Wales through Circular 09/92. Subsequently, through Circular 04/98 the assessment of students became a major element of the National Curricula for ITT.

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Looking to the rationale for the use of competency-based education Elias and Merriam (1995: 93-94) consider that it reflects the desire of government that '*educational institutions and agencies be held accountable for their products, and the desire to make the educational process more effective.*' They also suggest that it reflects a desire for education to be seen to provide value for money to government and to meet the demands of disadvantaged groups.

Circular 09/92 contained five general areas of knowledge; subject knowledge, subject application, class management skills, assessment and recording of pupils' progress and further professional development. These areas contained a total of 27 more specific competences between them. Elliot (1993) describes the reconstruction of teacher education initiated by Circular 09/92 as being through a process of measurement of behavioural competencies. The guiding principle behind the advocacy for the adoption of competencies for ITT was the belief that the significance of theoretical knowledge in training was a purely technical or instrumental one.

According to Ginsburg and Lindsay (1995) the emphasis required by this circular was twofold, firstly the continued recognition of the importance of subject specialism whilst introducing competence based entry criteria. However, there was a complete absence of any attempt to define the '*contexts*' and '*levels of proficiency required of Newly Qualified Teachers' competences*' (Arthur *et al.*, 1997: 15). Such was the change in emphasis created by the Circular that McIntyre *et al.* (1994), stated '*that theory has been in danger of becoming a dirty word in relation to teacher education.*'

Looking to the application of this system of training, the Council for National Academic Awards [CNAA] (1992) identified two different models of competence-based education.

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The first one defines competence as *'performance'*, reflecting *'an ability to perform a task satisfactorily, the task being set alongside this.'* The second one involves a competence which includes *'intellectual, cognitive and attitudinal dimensions as well as performance. In this model, neither competences nor the criteria of achievement are so readily susceptible to sharp and discrete identification.'*

The performance model was seen to be very much the weaker of the two models, being too weighted towards behaviourism, taking the teaching performance out of context and separating performance skills from knowledge and understanding. In contrast the cognitive model was perceived to take a different stance entirely with regard to knowledge and understanding, i.e. prioritising performance in the context and overall experience gained by the student teacher during ITT.

Research based on the *'cognitive'* model of competence was undertaken by a working party of the Department of Education Northern Ireland [DENI] (1993). In this research they tried to apply the framework in practice, although much of the evidence was based upon secondary evidence. They concluded that although craft skills had to be learned by teachers they must also have knowledge and understanding of both the content of their teaching and of the processes which they were carrying out. This was said to be in order to evaluate and justify their actions.

In practice the use of a competence-led model by HEI Partnerships was supplemented by the reflective practitioner model. The term *'reflective practitioner'* was coined by Schön (1983) in his first book entitled *'The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action'* which describes the application of the principles of reflection inaction and on action.

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The use of reflection in ITT was subsequently strongly advocated by many educationalists. These principles are set out in more detail in Section 3.3.1 of this thesis.

Further changes to the form of ITT were introduced by Circular 10/97 (DfEE, 1997), which introduced a national curriculum for ITT, with Circular 04/98 (DfEE, 1998) introducing a list of almost 100 competence-based assessment standards in place of the competences listed in Circular 9/92. Satisfactory assessment against these standards became a necessary pre-requisite for the award of QTS to the student teacher on completion of their ITT.

Circular 04/98 was in turn superseded by the Requirements (TTA, 2002), which has the same status in law, and the associated Handbook of guidance (TTA, 2003). The Requirements, which are still in force, continue the use of standards which focus heavily upon content knowledge and understanding; pedagogy is not addressed. Instead the role of pedagogy in the training of student teachers is left to the associated handbook, where it is addressed in the section entitled '*Commitment to professional development*', in which the emphasis is on personal development by the student teacher. However, since 2006 the TDA has moved to subject knowledge through a teaching framework, thus recognising the inadequacy of the prior model. This has since been formalised by revised standards (TDA, 2007) for QTS and updated guidance to HEI Partnerships (TDA, 2008a, TDA, 2008b).

A key to Circular 04/98, and vigorously monitored by the TTA and subsequently the TDA, has been a requirement for mentor teachers to assess student teachers against these competence-based standards. As a result Burgess (2000) suggests that one of the most significant consequences of placing the assessment of practical teaching under the control of schools has been to develop mentored supervision, in which the school-based mentor acts as assessor.

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One aspect of the standards defined in Circular 04/98 and the Requirements was that assessment by Ofsted could be more easily carried out. Such is the strength of these standards and the rigidity with which they are enforced that Hill (2001: 143) suggests that the *'potential [of individual teachers] to co-produce, to subvert the intentions of these circulars is less potent than the power of the TTA and Ofsted to insist on their implementation.'* He goes on to state that some of the changes introduced by these bodies has been deliberately designed to limit the degree of interpretation available to mentor teachers. These constraints also apply to all other participants within the HEI Partnership involved in preparing student teachers.

Burgess (2000) considers that this rigidity was seen as essential by government in order that mentors were consistent in their assessment of student teachers on their subject knowledge, planning, teaching and classroom management, and assessment recording and reporting of pupil progress. As part of this process Ofsted inspections of ITT were extended to cover the accuracy of the assessment gradings given to students by mentors (Fletcher, 2001).

It is also worth noting that Elmore (1989) identifies the move to competence-based education as part of a broader, on-going movement by government which is founded on an assumption on its part that policy makers can and must control the organisational, political and technological processes that affect implementation of policies. In this view of policy:

'It begins at the top of the process, with as clear a statement as possible of the policy makers' interest, and proceeds, through a sequence of increasingly more specific steps to define what is expected of implementers at each level. At the bottom of the process one states, again with as much precision as possible, what a satisfactory outcome would be, measured in terms of the original statement of intent.' (Elmore, 1989: 245)

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As a consequence Moon (1998: 30) considers there is now an *'English imperative to centrally regulate and inspect'*, which has been complemented by *'the imposition of an orthodoxy that brooks no exception.'* He also considers (Ibid: 31) that as a consequence of the introduction of standards without values this could easily lead to the standardisation of ITT, which should be avoided in *'a vibrant and dynamic culture.'*

Whilst the TDA's drive for consistency across all ITT providers has been considered by some to be inflexible, there are others who consider that the National Curriculum for ITT has *'significantly raised standards of professional preparation for beginning teachers'* (Partington, 1999: 12) and that the HEI Partnerships have produced benefits, in particular the *'increased professionalism of students' training'* (London University Institute of Education, 1996: 105). This view is contested, indeed Partington acknowledges that there is a fear that these competences *'fail to provide student teachers with a balanced introduction to pedagogical problems'* (Ibid: 12).

1.5 The Mentor Teacher

'Teacher training for adult education is undoubtedly the element in the overall structure that is least adequately provided for. It would seem that the specific character of adult education is denied or given insufficient prominence in the planning of teacher education. In any event, special training for those who are responsible for teaching adults is rarely to be found.' (OECD, 2003: 177-178)

Rather than being introduced by Circular 09/92, the start of mentoring within ITT can, according to Benton (1990), be traced back to when the *'internship scheme'* was used at Oxford University's Department of Educational Studies, together with partner schools supported by LEAs. Benton justified this collaboration by suggesting that teachers in schools were *'best placed to assist the development of young teachers in training.'* These developments at Oxford also involved subject teachers becoming mentors and taking a

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greater part in the training of student teachers (Arthur *et al.*, 1997: 10). However, it is true to say that Circular 09/92 (DES, 1992a) was the basis for the full introduction of the mentor role into ITT in England and Wales.

However, whilst Oxford was developing its internship scheme, and following the introduction of the licensed and articulated teacher schemes in 1988 and 1989, CATE established arrangements for mentoring associated with these schemes. These requirements were subsequently formalised by Circular 24/89 (DES, 1989), which stated that mentors were to be prepared for their new role in teacher education with some training so that they could structure the training of student teachers. This was supplemented by a requirement that HEIs should have written statements on the roles of teachers involved with ITT.

A consequence of the requirement of Circular 09/92 that all courses for teacher education were to use competence statements in assessing student teachers', was the classroom teachers undertaking the mentor's role needed to be provided with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to fulfil this new role, which was initially termed '*a partner*'. Indeed the term '*mentor*' does not appear in Circular 09/92; rather there was a requirement for '*experienced practitioners*' within schools to act as instructors for student teachers, with the Circular stating at Annex A that '*students should be given opportunities to ... participate with experienced practitioners.*' This reflected a desire of various training bodies to bring education in line with the business world where similar practices had been in use for many years.

Looking to the experience and qualities demanded of these practitioners it was stated that '*staff concerned with subject application and educational and professional studies [should] have relevant experience of teaching in schools, and maintain and develop that experience.*'

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In addition to providing instruction the experienced teachers were also to play the part of co-enquirers, thinking critically about teaching and learning.

Notwithstanding that the term mentor was absent from the Circular the consequence was, according to Fletcher (2000c: 167), that *'When Kenneth Clarke ... announced that schools were to assume the role of teacher training that was previously organized, assessed and validated almost exclusively by lecturing staff in higher education institutions, he effectively created a new workforce – school mentors.'* The circular also established that schoolteacher mentors in England and Wales were to have an enhanced role in the initial professional development of student teachers (Adey, 1997: 123).

Within the reforms following on from Circular 04/98 and the Requirements, mentor teachers were given the powerful role of assessor in deciding the fate of student teachers within the context of the highly prescriptive standards required by the TDA. In contrast there was no explicit requirement within the Circular for mentors to act as instructors and/or role models for student teachers. Significantly, whilst major discussions took place in the wider sense of teacher professionalism the role of mentors' attitudes in professional formation was largely ignored (Smith, 2001b).

In Circular 09/92 the increased role of classroom teachers was to be underpinned by the development of knowledge, understanding and skills by teachers working as mentors. However, there was no explanation as to how this was to happen and what form it was to take: rather the emphasis was on content or subject knowledge, and an understanding of student teachers. As a consequence the development of the mentors, such as it is, was left to the HEI Partnerships and the mentors themselves.

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Neither the Circular nor its successors gave any guidance as to what an '*experienced practitioner*' was, or how skilled they had to be in order to mentor student teachers. However, the use of the term experienced practitioner, as opposed to mentor, within the Circular is consistent with the belief that only experience is necessary for the mentor, implicitly acknowledging the use of an apprenticeship model.

Post Circular 09/92 the General Teaching Council ['GTC'], together with Scottish Office Education Department ['SOED'] and DENI, set up various working parties to discuss the way forward in ITT. One of the working parties' agreed aims was '*the move towards a school-based model of teacher education and professional development ... to be supported by a thorough programme of planned mentor training.*' (Arthur *et al.*, 1997: 23)

This working group then developed a wide definition of the mentor, stating that:

'Traditional concepts of mentoring appear to suppose that all mentors are school teachers relating to their own school and that courses can be provided to train them. The Group proposes that this is not necessarily true in an, as yet unexplored mass system of school-based training and there will be need for flexibility, and the capacity for development. Consequently, the group has adopted the model of a mentor who is a teacher or tutor, school or institution based; a person with a new or developed role arising from school-based training.' (D.E.N.I., 1993: 25)

In respect to the mentoring of student teachers Ireson (1998) states that school-based mentors should be seen as '*collaborative teachers acting in the Aristotelian manner, as interpreters and role models.*' This view is complementary to the requirement of Circular 09/92 that mentors were to be seen in the role of instructor providing '*a more systematic approach to training*' and play the part of co-enquirers thinking critically about teaching and learning.

Wilkin (1992b) believes that this move towards the empowerment of teachers as equal partners in the education of student teachers was long overdue. They also consider that

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mentoring has the capacity to make the transition for student teachers into teaching less private and less isolated (Andrews, 1987, Bey and Holmes, 1992, Enz *et al.*, 1992, Gehrke and Kay, 1984, Neal, 1992, Taharally *et al.*, 1992). Thus mentoring is recommended as an effective means of easing new teachers' transition from pre-service programmes to the profession.

Post Circular 09/92 research was carried out into mentoring in ITT, and a trend was identified by McIntyre *et al.* (1994) that '*dangerously, there is evidence that many teachers experienced in supervising student teachers on conventional school practices anticipate little need for change or for new learning as they become mentors ... such complacency is profoundly misguided.*' This representation of mentor teachers may be put down to a break down of communication between policy and practice, in particular that classroom teachers were taking on the role of mentor without the necessary further training notwithstanding the express acknowledgement that this would be required. Indeed it was only in 2005 that a national framework for mentoring built on '*good practice within Initial Teacher Training*' (CUREE, 2004) was issued by the DfES (2005).

When considering the knowledge and training requirements for mentors in the period following the introduction of the circular, Glover and Mardle (1995) identified a lack of theoretical understanding by mentors as a shortcoming. In particular they suggested that there was the need for mentors to receive '*training in ... demonstrating the theories of learning ... and in explaining the relevance of psychological and sociological background to education*' (Ibid: 75).

However, it was not until significantly later that the DfES (2001) recognised the relevance of the use of educational theory by mentors within ITT in a document entitled '*Study Support*

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in Teacher Training and Professional Development.' Within this paper some educational theories relevant to practice and teaching are considered to be a useful source for design of course content and it is suggested study support offers '*valuable opportunities to relate theory to practice and to try out new ideas*' (Ibid: 31).

However, as '*study support*' is intended to describe those '*activities that schools do outside normal hours*' (Ibid: 5) and is by its nature voluntary, the development of mentors, such as it is, is left to the HEI Partnerships and the mentors themselves. Therefore despite the acknowledgement by the DfES as to the importance of theory, it has been suggested (Youens and Bailey, 2004) that the training provided by partnerships to mentors is often limited to familiarisation with the TDA's assessment requirements, as set out in Partnership handbooks. In this environment little or no attention is given to educational theories.

Within the framework of a competence-based system it is logical that attention should be given to the mentor's role of assessors. However, the corresponding failure to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of mentor teachers sits uncomfortably with the use of the cognitive model of competence-based ITT recommended by the CNAA (1992). This lack of specific training raises the question of how these mentor teachers are equipped to mentor student teachers in an environment that considers the intellectual, cognitive and attitudinal dimensions of this model along with performance, as well as context and overall experience.

1.6 Conclusions

'Mentoring has been employed as a key strategy in initial teacher training ... based on the belief that the development of professional practice is most effective and beneficial when it takes place in the professional setting and in collaboration with expert professional practitioners, i.e. experienced teachers.' (Jones et al., 2004: 3)

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The significance of the changes of Circular 09/92, and the subsequent enactment of its provisions in the 1994 Education Act, cannot be underestimated. The practical-theoretical perception prevalent for almost fifty years was set aside as the theoretical aspect was now to be non-existent. This was to allow student teachers to be trained under a competence-based model, with a focus on delivering observable outcomes.

The principles first set out in Circular 09/92 were taken further by Circulars 10/97 and 04/98, which changed competences to standards and introduced a prescriptive curriculum for ITT. The TTA Requirements for ITT (TTA, 2002), which apply to all teacher training programmes in England and Wales, were even more prescriptive. They set out a role for school based teachers as the assessors working within a competence-based model. Jones *et al.* (2004) conclude that:

'[D]uring the past decade the emphasis on practical experience in the development of professional competence and expertise is only too apparent in training curricula and assessment framework that focus on standards articulated in the form of observable, behaviour-oriented outcomes.' (Jones *et al.*, 2004: 3)

As a consequence Burgess (2000) considers that combined with the move to place the assessment of practical teaching under the control of schools and away from HEI's in the late 1980s resulted in the significant development of mentored supervision. This is reflected in Wilkin's (1996) observation that:

'By the end of the decade, the government had introduced a training system which in both structure and content reflected its ideology: its orientation was "practical", theory was disappearing, increased responsibility had been given to teachers, and teachers and tutors had been portrayed as inadequate professionals.' (Wilkin, 1996: 168)

In issuing Circular 09/92 government gave extremely clear and precise directions as to how ITT was to develop into the 1990s. Specifically it indicated that ITT was to be centrally controlled, with the training of student teachers based in the schools (Gilroy, 1994). The

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view that the teaching of educational pedagogy to student teachers in the HEI should be restricted to what is required in the school classroom was an intrinsic element of the Circular.

Given the scale of change required by the Circular it met with great resistance, although Ginsburg and Lindsay (1995) consider that large sections of it provided an impetus to training practice. The opposition was not just to the style, tone and emphasis of the document, but also due to its perceived ideological basis. ITT then became an area of ideological struggle between the government and educational interest groups (Furlong, 1992). Despite resistance to change from HEIs and schools following the issue of Circular 09/92, most of its objectives were firmly in place within five years, with Husbands (1997) stating:

'[T]he twin tracks of political change and professional dialogue have combined to alter, radically, the landscape of teacher education. Teacher education is largely school-based, distributed between higher-education-administered partnership programmes and a small number of school administered programmes.' (Husbands, 1997: 12)

He goes on to state that:

'The purpose of teacher education in all forms of programme is principally to develop student teachers' competence as classroom practitioners by providing them with extensive access to pupils in classrooms.'

The sum of the reforms initiated by Circular 09/92 has been to place key responsibility for the management of student teachers' learning on to school-based mentors. In some models of school-based training mentors play the leading role in planning, managing and assessing student teachers' learning. However, the desirability of basing teacher training in schools has been questioned by Partington (1999). He gives two reasons for this view, the first of which is that they are dominated by child-centred and skills based approaches. The second is that they use methods which are not proven to be beneficial.

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In addition others have suggested that there is more to teaching, especially if it is a profession, than competences or standards. Indeed Taylor (1991) and Tomlinson (1995) state that in order to ensure student teachers should not only get to know 'how' to teach, i.e. technique, but also through reflection the '*rationale*' behind it, thus '*why*' a teacher teaches in a certain way. As part of this process Burgess (2000: 408) suggests that the '*interplay between practice and reflection*', is essential to '*effective performance*'.

In Circular 09/92 the increased role of classroom teachers was to be underpinned by the development of knowledge, understanding and skills by teachers working as mentors. However, neither this nor subsequent Circulars or the Requirements (TDA, 2006b, TTA, 2002) explain how this is to happen or what form it is to take. Indeed it was not until the publication of the National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching by CUREE (2004) on behalf of the DfES that some formal guidance has been given to teachers as to what mentoring is or should be.

In addition no guidance was given in the Circular as to what constitutes an '*experienced teacher*', or how skilled the '*experienced teacher*' has to be in order to mentor a student teacher or what attributes they should have. Even though the original terms '*experienced teacher*' and '*partner*' has been dropped in favour of the term '*assessor*' in the Requirements no formal requirements for the selection of mentors or their training has been deemed necessary by government or its agencies.

In these circumstances the requirement for the development of the mentor's knowledge sits uncomfortably with the limited role of theory within the education of teachers in the post 1992 ITT courses under which many mentors have been trained. It raises the question of

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'How is the post 1992 qualified teacher, with their knowledge of theory limited to that required in the school classroom, equipped to mentor student teachers?'

The lack of theoretical understanding by mentors was identified as a shortcoming by Glover and Mardle (1995) relatively soon after the introduction of the circular. As a consequence the competence-based model approach adopted by government has been seen by Gilroy (1994) as leading to the '*de-professionalisation*' of teachers. Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003) state that in such circumstances teachers are seen to be technicians delivering a prescribed curriculum. Indeed it is their view that such pre-service programs continue to prepare teachers in ways that reinforce a transmission model of teaching as telling. In such circumstances they consider that teaching gives little credence to learning from or in experience (Schön, 1983, Schön, 1995) and serves to reinforce, rather than challenge, the dichotomy of theory and practice.

In this context it is not surprising that there has been some disquiet over the role and effectiveness of the mentor. Significantly the DfES (2001) has now recognised the relevance of the use of educational theory by mentors within ITT. However, despite this, it is left to mentors to obtain this training as part of their own professional development. This is emphasised by the TDA's focus on training '*the whole school*' through Continuing Professional Development ['CPD'], with the National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching (DfES, 2005) being part of this initiative. However, this framework is, according to its authors, only building upon what mentors are already doing.

It is therefore evident that mentoring is still founded on the assumption that an experienced teacher is sufficiently skilled to mentor a student teacher. As a consequence the development of the mentors, such as it is, is left to the HEI partnerships and the mentors

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themselves. In looking to explain this Kansanen (2006: 19) suggests that with the model of teacher training adopted in Britain resembling the apprenticeship model, there is an implicit belief that a teacher's work is practical in nature and *'is best learnt by working with experienced teachers.'* As a consequence he considers:

'It leaves the theory side open: perhaps this reflects the role and minimum importance of theorizing in the program. The model also leaves another direction open towards the integration of theory and practice.' (Kansanen, 2006: 19)

In contrast the role of the mentor teacher as an assessor within a competence-based model of teacher training is clear from the Requirements (TDA, 2006), as it was under Circular 09/92.

The key aspects of current process for training the student teacher and the role of the mentor vis-à-vis the student teacher, insofar as they relate to my research, are set out in Figure 1.1 below.

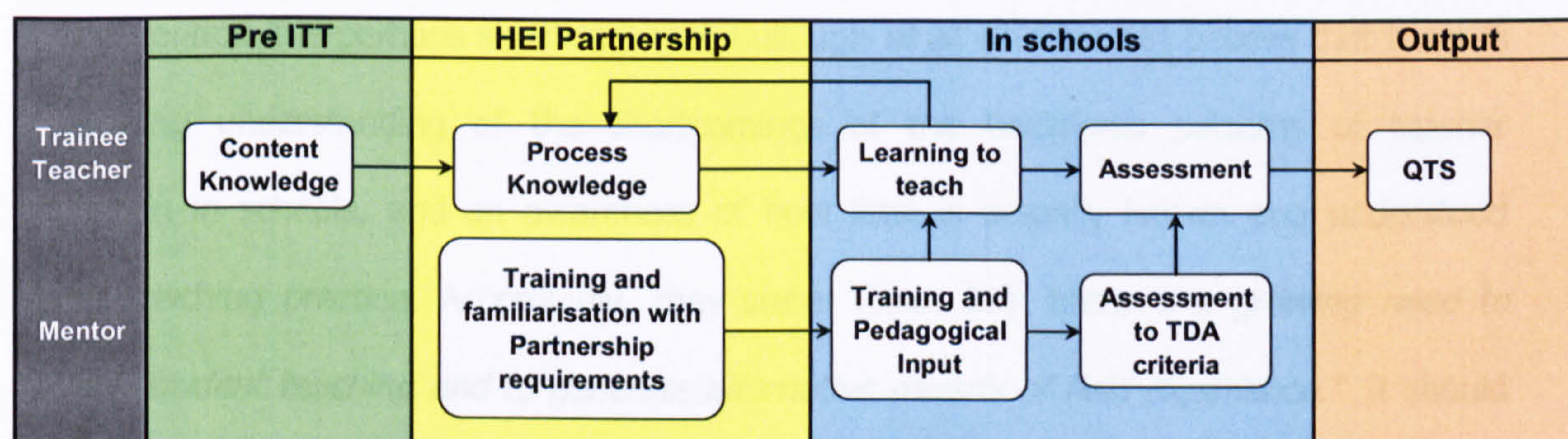


Figure 1.1 - Role of the Mentor vis-à-vis the Student teacher

The figure illustrates the process by which student teachers are trained; that student teachers are taught in HEIs and learn to teach in schools; that mentors are made familiar with the Partnership requirements for mentors; and finally that mentors act as assessors

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within a competence-based model of ITT. However, HEI Partnership tutors are still involved in this process, principally working within the HEI and in the moderation of mentor assessments.

As a consequence, more than 15 years after the establishment of this competence-based model of ITT being put in place, disquiet with this system of school based training still exists. For example, Kansanen (2006: 15) suggests that *'It is quite clear that tests using standards can yield only a superficial knowledge of teacher quality.'* In addition Cole and Knowles (1993: 469) suggest that whilst *'most pre-service programs concentrate almost entirely on teaching pre-service teachers to teach; little attention is placed on helping them to become teachers.'* Korthagen (2003) reaches similar conclusions and suggests that in reality there are many other factors involved in student teachers moving from an unskilled state to that of a competent practitioner, and certainly more than simply being placed in a school environment with a mentor teacher.

In this context it is perhaps significant that Bullough *et al.* (2003a: 58) believe that there is a growing understanding of the shortcomings of the traditional patterns of teacher education in schools, and an awareness of how little is actually known and understood about teaching practice. Accordingly, they state: (Ibid: 58) *'there is a growing need to rethink student teaching and to generate alternative models of field experience.'* It should be noted that recent research (Smith, 2001b: 145) suggests that the ideas of teachers, and thus mentors, as to what constitutes a good teacher have been heavily influenced by the prescriptive arrangements introduced by government. He considers that this may have a negative effect on the entry of students into ITT programmes.

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Nonetheless the mentor is probably the single most important factor, with the pedagogical strategies adopted by the mentor teacher being highly significant, as is the relationship between the mentor and the student teacher. Indeed Elliott (1995: 261) considers that *'such relationships will dominate over any externally mandated agenda for development.'*

Therefore, having set out the current landscape of mentoring in ITT in England and Wales, together with some contradictions and potential problems, the role of the mentor in ITT and the practice of mentoring, which are essential factors in my research, need to be considered in detail. These are addressed in the following chapter.

2 THE PRAXIS OF MENTORING

2.1 Introduction

'Good mentorship involves helping teachers work effectively with adults.' (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000: 53)

As set out in the introduction to this thesis my research questions, which look to the use of learning theories by mentors, have to be considered in the context of their practice. Accordingly, it is appropriate to consider in more detail exactly what mentoring is, and how it is applied in practice.

One definition of mentoring has been provided by Roberts (2000), who considers that:

'Mentoring appears to have the essential attributes of: a process; a supportive relationship; a helping process; a teaching-learning process; a reflective process; a career development process; a formalised process and a role constructed by or for a mentor.' (Roberts, 2000: 145)

In the context of education the term mentoring is frequently used to describe *'a combination of coaching, counselling and assessment where a classroom teacher in a school is delegated responsibility for assisting a pre-service or newly qualified teacher in their development in their profession'* (Fletcher, 2000a). Within the teaching profession mentoring usually involves a one-to-one relationship, wherein an experienced teacher, usually known as a *'mentor'*, can engage with the student teacher or *'mentee'*. This occurs whilst the latter is on placement in a school as part of a process of training in order to obtain QTS. This engagement has the potential to enable, enhance or empower the student teacher.

Many research studies investigating the effects of mentoring on student teachers have reported positive outcomes. In particular mentoring has been linked to a variety of

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consequences which include increased self-confidence and belonging within the profession. Indeed Hansford *et al.* (2003: 42) record that literature exists that suggests that: *'mentoring is a panacea for a variety of personal and societal ills.'*

The negative effects on student teachers of an absence of mentoring are also recorded. Torrance's (1984) research suggests those pre-service teachers that remain mentorless are more vulnerable than mentored individuals to a range of problems such as educational failure, lack of career goals or focus, lack of enthusiasm, frustrated creativity, unfulfilling jobs, emotional problems, alcoholism and drug abuse.

In addition many research studies dealing with mentoring in educational contexts have revealed many advantages not only for student teachers, but also for mentors, with CUREE (2005: 6) reporting that *'learning to be ... a mentor is one of the most effective ways of enabling teachers or leaders to become good and excellent practitioners.'* Mentoring has thus been seen as a way of providing teacher development for those teachers with more experience (Semeniuk and Worrall, 2000). However, CUREE (2005) suggests that current practice appears to concentrate the opportunity for development amongst those who already excel.

There is also common agreement that upon entering the school environment one of the most formative influences upon a student teacher's professional identity is the relationship with their mentor. Accordingly, Awaya *et al.* (2003: 1) note that the role of the mentor is increasingly viewed as important in the process of guiding student teachers' work in the field. The importance of mentoring to student teachers is also identified by Hobson (2001) who indicates that, prior to their actual experience of school-based training, students expect school-based mentoring to be pivotal to their learning of teaching. This may be because

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student teachers perceive mentors to be valuable sources of information because of their experiential knowledge, which is considered by student teachers to be more useful than the *'theories'* acquired at the HEI (Zanting, 2001: 1).

In considering the student teacher on placement in a school as a learner it is also necessary to look to the instructional design used by the mentor and its appropriateness or fitness for purpose. This is significant as Atherton (2003) suggests that instructional design is best built on a firm foundation of learning theory. In addition he further states (Ibid: 81) that *'the best [instructional] design decisions are most certainly based on our knowledge of learning theories.'* Accordingly, this chapter will also look to the instructional design described in literature as being used by mentors, in particular the learning theories that support their pedagogical strategies. Instructional design is defined as:

'The systematic development of instructional specifications using learning and instructional theory to ensure the quality of instruction. It is the entire process of analysis of learning needs and goals and the development of a delivery system to meet those needs. It includes development of instructional materials and activities; and tryout and evaluation of all instruction and learner activities.'
(Applied_Research_Laboratory: 2004)

Accordingly, the term encompasses the process through which an educator, such as a mentor, determines the most appropriate pedagogic methods for specific learners in a specific context, attempting to reach a specific objective.

Whilst the term *'instructional design'* originates in the USA and is not commonly used within British educational literature I have taken a conscious decision to use the term because of its use in contextualising the role of learning theories within mentoring. Although instructional design is often associated with competence-based education, and thus to have a basis in behaviourism (Saettler, 1990), the use of such terminology should not be taken as implying the adoption of a behaviourism as a stance for my research. Indeed Saettler (Ibid)

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suggests that it may also reflect a cognitivist or constructivist approach to learning. Accordingly, this term provides a useful conceptual umbrella for describing the materials, processes and analysis used by mentors in the competence-based system of ITT currently in place in England and Wales. It also allows all materials, particularly that provided by the HEI Partnership to be considered.

The context in which school-based teacher training takes place also plays a role in the student teacher's development process. Smith (2001b) suggests that there are indications that teachers' ideas about what makes a good professional have been influenced by the increasingly prescriptive formulae which government has introduced, with consequent difficulties in professional socialization and the development of practical competence experienced by new entrants to teaching.

In addition Awaya *et al.* (2003: 3) consider that in looking to clarify, and hopefully understand the mentoring relationship, it is necessary to critique the role of mentor, as mentoring is not something that just happens to the mentee. Accordingly, this chapter will look at the mentoring relationship as well as the role of the mentor.

It is also noteworthy that Jones *et al.* (2004: 3) suggest if mentors are to be trusted to have a place in the '*training and development*' of student teachers there has to be confidence that their '*practices are effective, consistent and underpinned by a knowledge base that can serve as a point of reference.*' I will therefore also consider the knowledge base of mentors within the section of this chapter looking at the role of the mentor. This section will also look at the mentor's pedagogical strategies.

Whilst looking at the mentor and the context of mentoring it is important to recognise that mentoring involves two parties, and as such the student teacher's part in the process also

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has to be considered. In addition it is important to recognise that mentors have to work with the '*material provided*', i.e. the individual student teachers with their unique identities, and take this factor into account when considering their pedagogical strategies. As part of this process it is also necessary for mentors to realise that student teachers come with preconceptions, and that this will impact upon the pedagogic strategies they choose to use.

For reasons of clarity I will first consider the student teacher, and some of the characteristics of the student teacher, and then the sections on the role of the mentor and the mentoring relationship.

2.2 The Student Teacher

'Student teachers are looked on as "learners" of teaching and not "performers" of teaching.' (Zanting, 2001: 20)

As has been stated in the introduction to this chapter two aspects of the student teacher are considered in this section. The first concerns the background and process of learning to teach, whilst the second concerns the prior knowledge and beliefs of student teachers.

I have consciously chosen to illuminate these two areas prior to the section on the role of the mentor, in particular the pedagogical strategies they adopt, so as to aid the understanding of that section. I consider that this is particularly important as Awaya *et al.* (2003: 3) state that whilst literature informs us of the privileged position of the mentor, no clear role is set out for the mentee. They suggest that this naturally results in training being focussed on the mentor and not the mentee, presenting a two tier relationship and thus the mentee taking the subservient role, highly dependent on the mentor throughout their teaching practice in school.

2.2.1 Learning to Teach

'[T]eacher training programs build basically on knowledge transfer or/and transfer of traditional how-to-do-concepts about what works in the classroom. That is why many teacher-training programmes have also two parts, namely a university based theoretical one and later a practical one outside or at least half outside in the field called school. The main idea behind this basic model is that teaching needs two sources, a theoretical or knowledge based one and a practical one.' (Oser et al., 2006: 1)

Despite the reforms in ITT over the preceding 10 years, in particular Circulars 09/92 (D.E.S., 1992) and 04/98 (D.f.E.E., 1998), and the Requirements (TTA, 2002) Bullough *et al.* (2003b: 57) state that *'the typical pattern of student teaching has remained little changed for 50 years.'* They also state that the usual scenario involves a student teacher being placed in a classroom with a day-to-day mentor for varying lengths of time. They assert that in this pattern of training it is hoped that over time the student teacher assumes complete responsibility for management within the classroom, and then, whilst going solo, *'practices teaching.'*

Having set out this overview, which is simplistic, in practice there are likely to be many other factors involved in student teachers moving from an unskilled state to that of a competent practitioner than simply being placed in a school environment with a subject teacher acting as their mentor. Indeed literature provides very many, often theoretically based interpretations as to how and why this may occur. For instance Brooks and Sykes (1997) consider that:

'Teaching is not a collection of relatively simple craft skills which one can refine with practice and then apply in a hard and fast, formulaic manner in the classroom. There is not a single or a best way of teaching anything; rather, there is a range of possibilities and alternatives, some of which are better per se and some of which are more suited to particular circumstances.' (Brooks and Sikes, 1997: 18)

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Looking to the development of teachers and their self perception during this period literature (Berry and Loughran, 2002, Conway and Clark, 2003, Kagan, 1992) states that there are a number of concerns common to most student teachers, and which vary depending on the stage they have reached in their training.

Kagan (1992) reviewed 40 research studies on professional growth among student teachers and NQTs, including a consideration of Fuller's (1969) study indicating that student teachers move outward from concerns about self to concerns about situation and task, and finally to concerns about the pupils they teach and the impact of their teaching. The review found that, in general, most student teachers appear to be intensely concerned with the image of self-as-teacher at the outset of their training, and that, as their most urgent self-related concerns are resolved, their attention tends to shift towards concerns about situation and task, and the impact of their teaching on pupils.

In addition Berry and Loughran (2002) note that student teachers are often concerned most, at least in the early stages of their training, with '*what*' they teach as opposed to how they might teach it, and, as a consequence, their teaching is often focused on '*in front of the class*' delivery. They therefore propose that one of the roles of teacher educators is to assist student teachers move beyond such concerns, for example, by acknowledging dilemmas in their own practice. They stress, however, that this is a risky strategy because student teachers' self-esteem and teacher educators' credibility may be at stake. In this context it is worth noting that Kagan (1992) suggests that the initial focus on the self by student teachers appears to be a necessary element in the process of teacher development, and that any attempts to shorten or abort it may be counterproductive.

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A number of studies have suggested, however, that it is important to be wary of generalizing about student teachers' concerns. For example, Guillaume and Rudney (1993) developing the work of Fuller (1969) found that while student teachers' concerns could be broadly categorised, for example, concerns about lesson planning and evaluation, the exact nature of student teachers' concerns within each area of practice changed as they developed greater independence in the classroom. For instance, in a classroom situation, student teachers' concerns might shift from concerns about sticking to their lesson plan, to concerns about getting a favourable assessment from their mentor.

In this context Hayes (1999a: 350), writing before the introduction of the Requirements, suggests that supervising tutors from the HEI partnership have the responsibility of helping and advising the student teacher on how to incorporate their insights into their practical teaching. He proposes that this should continue until the student teachers have moved beyond a purely intellectual appreciation of their significance, and the concepts have been taken on board by their sub-consciousness. Hayes concludes that this all seems to rest on the student teacher's willingness to accept advice from their tutor and experienced teachers, and *'their mental aptitude for assimilating new thinking into their present understanding.'* Given that the role of the supervising tutor has now disappeared it falls to the mentor, if to any one, to undertake this responsibility.

In the early stages of training, both in the HEI and the school environment, Furlong (2000) considers that student teachers appear unable to understand how concepts are understood by learners, and so have to break them down in appropriate ways. He suggests that this may be because they need to develop their own more practical theories on teaching and learning, and that their comprehension of concepts cannot take place until they enter the

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classroom. He also suggests that at this point many student teachers begin by copying the routines and teaching strategies they have encountered in classroom observation and collaborative teaching, which enables them to *'get by.'* It is also clear that at this stage student teachers often feel challenged by mentors' long term learning objectives for them as *'survival appears uppermost in their minds, with risk taking being minimal and the need for a good grade essential'* (Wideen *et al.*, 1998: 156).

Lortie (1975: 62) notes that in this stage of their development student teachers are *'not privy to the [mentor's] ... private intentions and personal reflections on classroom events ... [and] they are not pressed to place the [mentor's] ... actions in a pedagogically orientated framework.'* However, it is only having completed this stage that Furlong (2000) considers that they can then go on to develop their own practical theories, a process enhanced when they participate in *'focused and specific'* conversations with their mentors, producing reflection-on-action. As a consequence he sees the opportunity to learn through the apprenticeship of collaborative teaching as one of the strengths of school-based teacher education programmes.

Turning to the development of student teachers' practical theories, Entwistle *et al.* (2001) through their research provide evidence of a developmental trend concerning *'good teaching.'* They consider that this progression begins with strong, but unexamined, beliefs about *'good teaching'*, developing through a guiding, but intuitive image to consciously constructed conceptions. However, Grossman (1990) warns that once practitioners have established stable classroom routines, they may be reluctant to question them and begin the move towards a higher state of competence. Instead he suggests that practitioners may *'plateau'* at a lower level. In addition concern with the impact of exit competences has

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led Burgess and Butcher (1999: 35) to argue that the mentor role becomes a vital one if students are going to develop beyond a bare competence framework.

In looking to how student teachers develop Winter (1989) suggests that it should be a student teacher's aim to get better at teaching and to progress towards becoming an effective practitioner through reviewing their own practice as teachers. He considers that this can be achieved through intelligent reflection on past experiences initiated by working with their mentor on a day-to-day basis. As part of this process of development Elliott (1993) states that student teachers gradually move from an analytical mode of making conscious decisions, to one of intuition, which he describes as an '*unselfconscious appreciation of the situation*', and then finally to '*whole situation recognition*.'

If Elliott's (1993) analysis is correct, then the issues he raises will have an impact on student teacher's decision-making for at least three reasons, firstly they may not have a grasp of the extrinsic or '*non-situational*' factors influencing pupils' behaviour. Secondly, if the external factors are known to the student teacher they may not be able to take account of them when making classroom decisions. Finally, a tentative classroom manner due to lack of non-situational information may undermine the student teacher's authority and discipline. In all of these areas the mentor's contextual knowledge can be of assistance to the student teacher.

Hayes (1999a) considers that if decision-making is central to effective teaching, it is essential that student teachers gain a firm grasp of the factors influencing it, the way in which decisions are taken and refined, and the relationship that exists between decisions and effective teaching. If effective decision-making is an essential component of getting better at teaching it is important to consider the factors that combine to influence the

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process. However, Hayes (Ibid: 347) recognises that the demands made by exit competences on student teachers on the factors that influence the role of decision-making add to the difficulties facing those who assess competence.

Pollard (1996) suggests that as the student teacher becomes more aware of areas for development in their classroom practice due to regular discussions with their mentor and other teachers, plus their own '*reflective thinking*', they can persevere with improving their skill levels until they reach a point at which they feel, or are helped to recognise, that mastery has been achieved. He suggests that a mentor's role might then be to point out what has, and has not been achieved by the student teacher and that this cycle of awareness-striving-attainment-spontaneity will be repeated many times in a teacher's career. Hayes (1999a: 353) concurs and suggests that these dimensions of effective teaching can only be gained through '*intelligent reflection on practice*' that gradually leads to a subconscious '*just knowing*' and concomitant, spontaneous decisions. A very important element of this process is the freedom for student teachers to think expansively about teaching and learning, and to make discussion of this with their mentor on a regular basis.

This emphasis on reflection by student teachers and mentors will reoccur and be developed in subsequent sections of this chapter and in the following chapter.

In looking to the student teacher entering the school environment the impact of its culture and language upon them has also to be considered. Levine and Moreland (1991) perceive '*cultural knowledge*' as a set of thoughts shared by members of a group, which guide the actions of the members, and provide a common interpretative framework for their experiences. They consider these thoughts can be demonstrated through the use of routines or the use of common language.

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In looking to the impact of cultural knowledge on the student teacher Maynard (2000), closely following Lave and Wenger (1991), considers that it is:

'[I]mportant to emphasise that cultural knowledge is not a domain of knowledge distinct from teachers' practical professional knowledge. Rather, it is the lens through which such knowledge is viewed and interpreted and which gives order, significance and meaning to teachers' – and student teachers' – experiences.' (Maynard, 2000: 18)

These views also coincide with those of Schutz (1967), who states that given the multiple ways of interpreting experience, common means of interpretation and disparate worlds are vital in trying to establish a common language for talking about a meaning. For without that common understanding it is impossible to acquire and test knowledge, which is the basis of learning. Thus for the student teacher as an entrant into the profession of teaching this has to be newly learnt (Lortie, 1975), additionally it has to be sustained by both individuals involved.

This relationship is thus reliant on interaction between the two parties involved; it inherently involves creativity, in particular in the use of language. The development of the mentee is therefore well set out by the analysis that:

'My knowledge of the ... world ... changes as I do different things in relation to other people. The difference is that other people also have their own meaning concepts, their own knowledge of the ... world and the development of that knowledge becomes a joint enterprise.' (Benton and Craib, 2001: 87)

In addition when looking at the student teacher entering the school environment it is also important to recognise the work of (Wandersee *et al.*, 1994) who suggest that the learners' prior knowledge is a major influence on how they construct new knowledge. Accordingly, this area will be considered in more detail, and the balance of this section will now look to student teachers learning to teach, their prior knowledge and beliefs.

2.2.2 Prior Knowledge and Beliefs

'Previous research into ... student teachers' ideas about teaching has produced a confusing plethora of terms, with "belief", "implicit theories", and "conceptions" all being commonly used, apparently interchangeably.' (Pajares, 1992)

It has been stated by Lortie (1975) that many student teachers enter ITT without a detailed or extensive knowledge of the school environment from the perspective of a practicing teacher, though they have had a long apprenticeship of observation. He also considers that this apprenticeship is from the limited perspective of a learner, not of a teacher, which may distort the way in which they understand the processes of learning to teach. The consequence of this is that student teachers may not be well prepared cognitively or intellectually for what they experience, although they may have a detailed and coherent theoretical understanding of classroom pedagogy.

Kagan (1992) suggests that in order for student teachers to move from a '*novice*' state to one of competence, they need to spend time on inward focus and a reconstruction of their self-image. This requirement is also identified by von Glaserfeld (1996: 7), who observes that '*students perceive their environment in ways that may be very different from those intended by the educators.*' He also considers that:

'[T]his emphasizes the teacher's need to construct a hypothetical model of the particular conceptual worlds of the students they are facing. One can hope to induce changes in their ways of thinking only if one has some inkling as to the domains of experience, the concepts, and the conceptual relations the students possess at the moment.' (von Glaserfeld, 1996: 7)

Duit (1996: 457) concurs and suggests that learning will also be influenced by '*students' conceptions about the aims of instruction ... and the purpose of a particular teaching event.*'

As a corollary Sugrue (1997: 214) proposes that '*by deconstructing student teachers' lay*

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theories ... insights are gained into the most formative personal and social influences on their professional identities.'

Taking this approach the mentor is required, as one of their initial steps, to obtain some understanding of the student teacher's knowledge of teaching, which Sugrue considers (Ibid: 214) will *'yield both the form (socio-historical situatedness) and the content (beliefs, attitudes, dispositions, and behaviours) of their teaching identities.'* Duit (Op Cit) agrees that it may also be beneficial for school-based mentors to gain insight into the perceptions and evaluations of student teachers.

However, when looking to the student teacher's beliefs Korthagen (1993: 5) suggests that they are often established before students begin training as teachers and *'can be quite resistant to change.'* Indeed after interviewing student teachers Pendry (1997) saw that they have:

'[S]uch powerful preconceptions, that ... [their learning was] significantly shaped by the histories they brought with them ... [However, their] preconceptions were far from simplistic; [they] often included thinking about pupils as learners, ... the complexities of classrooms and ways of learning - conceptions which may derive from the range of experiences which they bring with them to initial teacher [training].' (Pendry, 1997: 93)

As a consequence Watson (1994) considers that mentors have to engage in a process of helping the student teacher unpick their beliefs, as it is *'the baggage they bring with them'* that has to be turned into practice. McIntyre and Hagger (1996: 146) agree and consider that there *'seems to be widespread although perhaps not universal, belief that mentoring means both providing constructive and critical advice challenging practices and preconceptions.'*

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Entwistle *et al.* (2001) have also drawn on previous research findings distinguishing between beliefs and conceptions about '*good teaching*', to explore their possible origins. They consider that evidence has been provided of a developmental trend in student teachers concerning good teaching, and that this progression begins with strong, but unexamined, beliefs about good teaching and moves through a guiding, but intuitive, image to consciously constructed conceptions. This, they suggest, implies that teachers may, to some extent, be born rather than made.

Having identified some of the challenges facing mentors as a consequence of student teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs the next section will look at the role of the mentor and their pedagogical strategies.

2.3 The Role of the Mentor

'Mentoring is an active process; it demands more than simply supporting students up to the level of minimum competence, challenging though that is.' (Maynard and Furlong, 1993: 195)

To mentor a student teacher whilst on TP would seem a very important role to perform within the teaching profession. It can also be said with some certainty, as it has already been established in the previous chapter, that a major element of the mentors' role has been determined by the Requirements, i.e. as an assessor working within a competence-based model. However, this is not the only role of a mentor, as I will describe below by reference to appropriate literature; the details of the Requirements are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Within the environs of primary or secondary schools in England and Wales, there is no standard job description for a mentor. Rather it is for each HEI Partnership to define the

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role of the mentor, albeit working within the constraints set by the Requirements. As a consequence the mentor's role may vary from Partnership to Partnership. In addition various interpretations of the mentor's role have been described in the literature on mentoring by researchers, teacher educators and mentors (Daloz, 1986; Wilkin, 1992; Furlong, 2000; Roberts, 2000; Entwistle, 2001; Hansford *et al.*, 2003).

As a consequence despite the plethora of models in literature the concept of mentoring remains '*an elusive one which resists simplistic labels*' (Roberts, 2000: 148). Entwistle *et al.* (2001) concur. Indeed when researching the area of mentoring and coaching preceding the introduction of the National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching CUREE (2005: 6) noted that '*the language is confused overlapping and sometimes involves 100% reversal of key terms.*'

In addition to the lack of unanimity in literature as to the role of the mentor Elliott and Calderhead (1994) report that mentors also have differing views as to their role, albeit noting that they are not mutually exclusive. In considering the role of the mentor they note that some mentors see their role as being a guide or leader, others see it as being a good listener or friend, whilst a third role they identify is that of an organiser of experiences for the student teacher. They state that most mentors adopt the latter approach as they:

'[A]ppeared to perceive the mentoring role more in terms of nurturing or supporting the [student teachers] so that they can learn by whatever works, in their school or their classroom.' (Elliott and Calderhead, 1994: 197)

In contrast Awaya *et al.* (2003: 7-8) see mentoring as a relationship rather than a role with a set of preconceived duties, and therefore suggest that mentoring should be conceived as a journey that describes a unique relationship between mentor and student teacher. They

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consider this journey involves the building of an equal relationship characterised by trust, the sharing of expertise, moral support, and knowing when to help and when to sit back.

The influences on mentors, as practicing teachers, also have to be taken into account when looking to the role mentors shape for themselves. This is particularly important as it is considered that history-based personal beliefs are important influences in learning to teach (Bullough, 1991, Elbaz, 1983, Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Elliott and Calderhead (1994) consider that such personal beliefs, far from being specific to mentoring, operate on a more general level. However, others (Abell *et al.*, 1995) consider that mentors bring their own particular orientations and conceptualisations of their role to their mentoring task.

At the same time Jones *et al.* (2004: 3) consider that the *'multiple demands of mentoring, reflected in the diversity of roles to be performed, raise quality issues in terms of consistency, differentiation and progression.'* In this context Geen *et al.* (1999: 62) have identified a number of factors which act as constraints upon mentors. Time is reported as the main constraint upon mentors fulfilling their role and meeting the expectations of all the participants in the process. In addition a lack of resources within schools hosting student teachers is seen a major factor, whilst a third significant factor is thought to be *'the failure of central government to implement any coherent system of in-service training in the field of mentoring.'*

Given this lack of certainty as to the role of the mentor Jones *et al.* (2005) suggest that whilst the term mentor commonly occurs in practice and in official publications, and thus generates the impression of a general understanding of mentoring, given the lack of agreement as to the role of the mentor and how it is performed, this may in fact not be the case. Whilst there is no agreement on the mentor's role it is important in the context of the

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research questions underlying this research project to consider in more detail the literature on the mentor's role. As very little of this literature describes the mentor's role in terms of learning theories this section initially considers those aspects which implicitly determine their use, if any, of learning theories. These aspects are the mentor's professional knowledge and their pedagogic strategies.

2.3.1 The Mentor's Professional Knowledge

'[The] key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching lies at the intersection of content and pedagogy, in the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he/she possess into forms that are pedagogical powerful.' (Shulman, 1987: 18)

Whilst more attention has been given to the functioning of teacher educators, research into the profession of '*teacher educators*' is still scarce (Ducharme, 1993, Korthagen and Russell, 1995). Indeed Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003: 4) record that there is still '*a lack of research, research-based knowledge and validated practices*' in teacher education. In the context of this research project it is significant that this is '*partly due to the fact that a knowledge base for teacher education ... [is] lacking.*' In addition Jones *et al.* (2004: 4) suggest that '*there is scant evidence of the codification of mentors' knowledge.*'

If mentors were merely acting as assessors of student teachers under a competence-based model and observing behaviour orientated outcomes the boundaries of their knowledge base might be able to be defined relatively simply. However, as I have already shown in the preceding section of this chapter there is extensive literature (Elliott and Calderhead, 1994; Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Butcher, 1999; Roberts, 2000; Entwistle *et al.*, 2001; Jones *et al.*, 2004) showing that mentors perform many others functions than just assessors. These include '*nurturing or supporting*' (Elliott and Calderhead, 1994: 197), and instead do '*more than simply supporting students*' (Maynard and Furlong, 1993: 195). Indeed others

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suggest that mentors provide *'a supportive relationship; a helping process; a teaching-learning process; a reflective process'* (Roberts, 2000: 145), as well as *'a combination of coaching, counselling and assessment'* (Fletcher, 2000a).

This suggests that the boundaries of any exercise looking to codifying mentors' knowledge should be widely drawn. At this point it is worth considering what this knowledge ought to be, might be and its sources.

Stephens (1996: 97) suggests that as a mentor's primary professional role is that of a teacher, it is the knowledge derived from this activity that forms the basis for their knowledge as a mentor. It is therefore necessary, briefly, to consider a teacher's knowledge.

Taking a broad view of the mentor's professional knowledge DENI (1993) consider that *'in order to teach satisfactorily certain craft skills have undoubtedly to be learned ... teachers must in addition to this have knowledge and understanding both of the content of their teaching and of the processes which they are carrying out and be able to evaluate and justify their actions.'* They thus suggest that teachers should possess a combination of practical skills, content knowledge and theoretical knowledge of pedagogy, although they do not identify the source of this knowledge or its extent. Moon (1998: 17) also suggests that this pedagogy has to *'take cognisance of context ... [and the problems which this] poses for teachers complex professional tasks.'*

Examining this knowledge in more detail Shulman's (1986: 9-10) model identifies four main categories of teacher knowledge, namely content knowledge, i.e. the subject matter to be taught; general pedagogic knowledge, i.e. knowledge of how to teach in general terms; pedagogical content knowledge, i.e. knowledge of how to teach that is specific to what is

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being taught; and knowledge of context, i.e. knowledge about the community, students and school where teaching occurs.

In further clarifying the nature of teacher knowledge it is worth noting that Wilkin (1990) suggests that the practitioner is the owner of a personal theory; indeed each mentor could be the owner of one or more personal theories. This proposal is supported by Personal Construct Theory [PCT] (Kelly, 1955), which provides a psychological constructivist process that explains and links critical thinking to the constructing of one's learning experiences. The primary concept of PCT is that the world is '*perceived*' by a person in terms of whatever '*meaning*' that person chooses to apply to it and the person is able to choose a different, and possibly unique, '*meaning*' of whatever they are considering. In other words, as suggested by Kelly (Ibid) any person has the '*freedom to choose*' the meaning that they prefer or like. He called this '*alternative constructivism*'. Complementing this perspective von Glaserfeld (1991: 37) suggests that '*knowledge is the result of an individual subject's constructive activity, not a commodity that somehow resides outside the knower and can be conveyed or instilled by diligent perception or linguistic communication.*'

Following this proposition any person is considered capable of applying their own constructions or meanings to any events in the past, present or future, and that these constructions or meanings will be different from those of all other persons.

Of particular importance to the concept of PCT is Kelly's emphasis on '*communality*' (or the social reality) and '*individuality*' (or the personal reality) that need to be considered together for developing an understanding of the psychological processes. Eraut (2004) suggests that personal theories are not stored in isolation by individuals, but instead derive their meaning and richness from their interaction with ideas of others and through association

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within different situations. In the mentoring process these realities are respectively represented by the world of teaching and education, and the personal theories of the mentor or student teacher.

The extent of teachers' beliefs and their importance to their practical knowledge has been identified by Beijaard *et al.* (2000) who state that:

'Teachers' beliefs play a very important role in building practical knowledge. As parts of practical knowledge, both beliefs and knowledge are closely interwoven, but the nature of beliefs makes them the filter through which new knowledge is interpreted (Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). This filtering effect of beliefs then shapes thinking and learning. Beliefs, therefore, play a central role in organizing knowledge and defining behaviour (Richardson, 1996).' (Beijaard *et al.*, 2000: 262)

At this point the work of Argyris and Schön (1974) also needs to be considered. They recognise that theory and practice are closely intertwined, but note that a distinction can be drawn between '*espoused theories*' and '*theories in use*.' Argyris *et al.* (1985: 82) define espoused theory as '*The world view and values people believe their behaviour is based on*' and theory-in-use as '*The world view and values implied by their behaviour, or the maps they use to take action*.' The former is explicit in the way in which theories are expressed in the form of explanations or justifications, whilst the latter is considered to be implicit in professional practice and thus may be difficult for the individual owners of these theories to articulate. As personal constructs, and following Kelly (1955), mentors' own theories fall into the latter category.

In addition Elliott and Calderhead (1993) suggest that teachers are influenced by their beliefs and by guiding metaphors or images. This would suggest that mentors as teachers have both practical knowledge of teaching and their own theories of how these skills are used, i.e. their own pedagogic theories, with these two aspects of the mentor's professional knowledge being closely linked. In addition each mentor will have their own espoused

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theory, the exact extent and nature of which will vary according to the individual. This espoused theory, including that knowledge drawn from sources in the public domain such as literature, would in turn become part of the mentor's personal theories. However, the nature and source of mentors' personal theories need to be considered, as does the difference between what they actually do based upon their own theory-in-use, and what they say they do, that is their espoused theory.

Whilst the extent to which literature in general, and learning theories in particular, contribute to mentors' espoused theory is uncertain Glover and Mardle (1995), writing shortly after the introduction of Circular 09/92, suggest a lack of theoretical understanding by mentors as a shortcoming in the knowledge base of mentors. They therefore suggest that mentors should receive '*training in ... demonstrating the theories of learning ... and in explaining the relevance of psychological and sociological background to education*' (Glover and Mardle, 1995: 75).

The more recent research of Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003: 23) reaches a similar conclusion. They also found that '*none of the teacher educators explained their pedagogical and didactical choices systematically.*' They consider that this is particularly important as '*Wubbels, Korthagen, and Broekman (1997) emphasize that a lack of explicit attention to pedagogical and didactical choices may hinder any significant change in the pre-conceptions about learning and teaching that student teachers already possess.*' Thus they suggest that a lack of theoretical knowledge on the part of the teacher educators, which include mentors, may negatively impact upon student teachers' learning.

Jones *et al.* (2004:3) suggest a number of reasons as to why there is a lack of theoretical knowledge amongst mentors. The first is the strong trend to anti-intellectualism in the

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training of teachers, which started in the 1980s. The second is a failure to properly recognise the relevance of *'theory in use'*, as referred to by Argyris and Schön (1974). The third and final reason given is a lack of understanding by mentors as to how theory is used, transformed, interpreted, personalised and integrated into the individual conceptual frameworks of student teachers.

In considering the knowledge and use of learning theories by mentors, a question can be posed, namely, *'Why do they need to have knowledge of learning theories and their use?'* In reply Ertmer and Newby (1993: 51) consider that *'learning theories are a source of verified instructional strategies, tactics, and techniques. Knowledge of a variety of such strategies is critical when attempting to select an effective prescription for overcoming an instructional problem.'* They go on to state that such learning theories *'provide the foundation for intelligent and reasoned strategy selection.'* They therefore suggest that the designers of instructional material must therefore have *'an adequate repertoire of strategies available, and possess the knowledge of when and why to use them.'* They conclude by stating that it is critical that the selected strategy is integrated within the particular instructional context. As identified in the introduction to this chapter knowledge of appropriate theory is fundamental to instructional design (Applied_Research_Laboratory, 2004).

Another reason as to why knowledge of theory should be important to mentors is suggested by Jones *et al.* (2004: 3), who observe that the *'theory-practice gap is frequently cited as one of the main challenges to overcome in managing the transition from training to professional practice, one which is frequently highlighted by trainees and newly qualified teachers.'* They go on to state that *'in spite of this apparent dichotomy, a characteristic of*

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professional, and in this case, mentoring practice seems to lie in the skilful combination of the two by knowing what knowledge to access and how to access it.' By following this approach they suggest mentors would be bridging the theory–practice gap identified by Eraut (1994) which is symbolically represented by the separation of the institutions in which ITT takes place, where practice takes place in schools and theory in HEIs.

The DfES now also recognises, albeit in a limited way, the relevance of the use of educational theory by mentors within ITT in the paper entitled '*Study Support in Teacher Training and Professional Development*' (DfES, 2001). The paper identifies some learning theories relevant to practice and teaching, and is considered to be a useful source of design for course content. It is suggested (Ibid: 31) that study support offers '*valuable opportunities to relate theory to practice and to try out new ideas.*'

However, as study support is intended to describe those '*activities that schools do outside normal hours*' (Ibid: 5) and is by its nature voluntary the development of mentors, such as it is, is left to the HEI partnerships and the mentors themselves. Therefore, despite the acknowledgement by the DfES as to the importance of theory the training provided to many mentors is often limited to familiarisation with TDA assessment requirements, which are set out in Partnership handbooks, with little attention being given to relevant educational theories.

Looking to the importance to student teachers of mentors being able to explain their knowledge Zanting *et al.* (2001) consider that extracting:

'[A] mentor's practical knowledge can help student teachers understand a mentor's lessons. Also, student teachers can better understand their mentor's feedback on their lessons when they are aware of the mentors' knowledge, beliefs, and values.' (Zanting *et al.*, 2001)

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They consider this also affects a mentor's consideration of what good teaching is all about and ultimately a mentor's evaluation of a student teacher's lesson. Awaya *et al.* (2003: 11) concur and consider that *'sharing practical knowledge with students is a matter of professional dialogue'* thus a two-way conversation between mentor and mentee on an equal basis would be the ultimate representation one could hope for.

However, Zanting (2001: 11) believes that *'the explication of practical knowledge has been somewhat neglected by mentor teachers, teacher educators and educational researchers.'* She states (Ibid; 10) that whilst this practical knowledge is seen as being *'valuable'* it generally *'remains implicit.'* Accordingly, Zanting *et al.* (2001: 58) conclude that the lack of articulation of practical knowledge represents the mentor's *'missing role.'*

If this is correct it follows that mentors, as distinct from non-mentoring teachers, have to change their understanding of pedagogic knowledge and activity. Shulman (1987) suggests that as teachers mentors should be able to:

'[C]omprehend subject matter for themselves, to becoming able to elucidate subject matter in new ways, reorganize and partition it, clothe it in activities and emotions, in metaphors and exercises, and in examples and demonstrations, so that it can be grasped by students.' (Shulman, 1987: 13)

This inability of mentors to explicate either their practical or pedagogical knowledge is thus a very negative aspect of mentoring. As a consequence it is not surprising that there has been some disquiet over the role and effectiveness of the mentor. Bullough *et al.* (2003a: 58) believe that there is a growing understanding of the shortcomings of the traditional patterns of teacher education in schools, and an awareness of how little is actually known and understood about teaching practice.

2.3.2 The Mentor's Pedagogic Strategies

'Teaching is not, or at least in a democratic setting should not be, a matter merely of transmitting knowledge to the next generation. If there is more to teaching than that, then there is more to the preparation of teachers than merely providing them with the knowledge—content to transmit and the methodological skills to transmit it most effectively, more to being a teacher than being a carrier of knowledge with transmission skills.' (Kelly, 1995)

Based upon the preceding parts of this section it should not be contentious to say that educational literature suggests that a mentor's role is not just how to elucidate their pedagogic knowledge. Indeed given that the mentor is, amongst other things, a teacher educator it would not be unreasonable to consider their role should be informed by some pedagogical theory.

Having already established in the preceding chapter that mentors are not working in a context free environment it is also clear that ITT programmes usually employ strategies of systematic training. These programmes usually involve a number of phases. Thiessen (2000) has identified programmes as typically involving:

'[T]hree pedagogical phases: (1) studying about practice, (2) observing and trying out practice under simulated or actual classroom conditions, and (3) comparing and elaborating practice in classrooms.' (Thiessen, 2000: 515)

In England and Wales the first phase is typically conducted in an HEI, whilst the latter two phases normally take place in schools with mentors leading that process. Thiessen (2000: 516) goes on to state that these *'phases combine strategies in schools and universities in ways that facilitate the development of skills [that] teachers require to function in classrooms.'* He goes on to note, unsurprisingly, that:

'The most successful programmes designed to promote the development of teaching behaviours have ... strategies that equally attend to and connect all pedagogical phases.' (Thiessen, 2000: 519)

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In the conduct of the phases Thiessen (2000: 516) identifies that teacher educators adopt three pedagogical orientations, namely *'impactful behaviours, reflective practices, and professional knowledge.'* He states that these orientations *'have different conceptions of the skills needed to teach effectively, different notions of how these skills develop, and different methods for utilizing and interrelating the three pedagogical phases.'* Whilst considering the *'impactful behaviours'* orientation to be historically significant, Thiessen states that reflective practices have become the dominant orientation in recent years but interest is now growing in the development of professional knowledge.

Work on phase specific mentoring has also arisen as the focus in ITT has shifted from generic mentoring skills (Edwards and Collison, 1996). As part of this process Maynard and Furlong (1993), who were some of the earliest researchers in this field in the UK, looked at the stages of development which a student teacher typically moves through in learning to teach and developed reciprocal models of mentoring to support such development. These models move from apprenticeship and competency models, through to the reflective model. Maynard and Furlong suggest that at the start mentors often use the apprenticeship model. Within this model student teachers observe their mentors, who act as interpreters and role models. Subsequently, as student teachers become progressively more experienced and develop teaching skills through training by mentors under the competency model. Finally the reflective model is used by mentors, with the emphasis being on reflection on the student teacher's teaching experiences and the mentor acting as co-enquirer.

It is not too surprising that such models allow mentor teachers to have a great deal of control, influence and power over the student teachers' learning. In addition they allow mentors a considerable amount of autonomy on a day to day basis, albeit within the context

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of a framework in which the instructional design is largely set by HEI Partnerships, which in turn reflect the TDA Requirements for ITT. Indeed, as will be set out in Chapter 6, much of this framework is provided through the appropriate Partnership handbook and the assessment criteria set out within it. This suggests that mentors may in fact be providing only part of the instructional design they use whilst mentoring, which is a field in which they may have little specialist training or preparation.

From this, one would expect that mentors would use a range of strategies which reflect the framework imposed by the competence-based model prescribed by the TDA whilst varying according to the context, i.e. the situation and circumstances in which the individual mentors are working. Indeed the use of a number of different strategies by mentors is endorsed by the OECD (2003: 176). They suggest that in considering the use of a pedagogical strategy with adults one of the most important considerations is its '*ability to be adapted to the participants. It must be compatible with the participants' level, their personality, their motivation, their aptitudes and their expectations.*' In addition, following Thiessen (2000), it is suggested that the strategies adopted by mentors should reflect the student teacher's phase of training.

Looking to the use of particular strategies by mentors, research by Jones *et al.* (2004: 8) identifies the use of 13 different strategies. This research is based upon a sample of 102 mentors in primary, secondary and post-16 education, and 54 GTP student teachers. It also suggests that mentors use different strategies according to their sector. Given the focus of this research project only those results relating to the secondary sector will be considered.

Jones *et al.* (Ibid) found that the dominant strategies employed by mentors in secondary schools, and which were used by over 99% of mentors, were modelling good practice,

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feedback and discussion, observation of experienced teachers and self evaluation by student teachers. The next group of strategies reported as being used were collaborative practices and challenging student teachers. These were identified as being used by approximately 80% of mentors. The third group of strategies, which were used by approximately 70% of mentors, were team teaching and setting demanding tasks. The final strategies identified were setting student teachers problem solving tasks and referring to theory, albeit the level of use of these strategies was described as 'low'.

Constructive feedback followed by critical discussion has been cited by Jones *et al.* (2004: 3) as an example of how theorising forms a key component in the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of professional knowledge for both mentors and student teachers alike. Similarly Tomlinson (1998) states:

'The acquisition of practical capability requires cycles of plan-attempt-feedback-replan, a process which when done with the same action unit tends to produce a gradual tuning... that makes it accurate, economical and intuitive.' (Tomlinson, 1998: 13)

As part of this process of feedback and discussion, reflection, both by the student teacher and mentor, are seen as being important. Indeed Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003: 7) go so far as to state that they consider *'teaching student teachers to reflect regularly and variedly on different aspects of the teaching profession to be a ... principle in promoting a shift from teacher educator-directed learning to student-directed learning.'* The cultivation of the capacity to reflect, specifically for student teachers to reflect on their own actions, is clearly seen as an important strategy.

Looking in a broader context Schön (1983) identifies it as an important feature of professional training programmes, and as such this suggests that its encouragement is a vital aspect of the mentor's role in developing the student teacher as a beginning

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professional. The use of reflection is also recommended by Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003: 7), who suggest that mentors need to reflect on their own *'teacher education practice.'* The ability of student teachers to analyse and reflect on their own work is also a requirement of the Requirements, as is explained in more detail in Chapter 6.

Challenge as way of getting student teachers to move from their preconceived ideas is also seen as an important strategy for mentors, indeed McIntyre and Hagger (1996:146) state that *'there... seems to be widespread although perhaps not universal, agreement that ... mentoring means both providing constructive and critical advice challenging practices and preconceptions.'* In their research Burgess and Butcher (1999: 36) considered the rationale for challenge as a mentor strategy and appeared to provide an answer to the question: *'Why challenge?'* Their view was that the *'use of challenge as a mentoring strategy may help to trigger the active mentoring through which learner needs can be confronted and met.'* This strategy therefore envisages mentors being proactive.

In reconciling these various views setting out why one factor or other is important to learning it is worth considering the work of Eraut *et al.* (2004: 3), who when taking a holistic view to learning, consider that a number of factors are important for *'mid-career learning'*, namely confidence, support and challenge. In addition they consider whilst confidence is the single most important factor its significance depends upon the interaction between the various factors.

Developing on this concept they suggest that *'early career professionals'*, a term which is applicable to student teachers, are different, with three main factors being important. They describe these factors as:

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*'[F]eedback because of its huge importance at this career stage, the **value** of the work (both for clients and to the individual) as an additional motivating factor and **commitment** to learning, which together with confidence affects the extent to which early career professionals are proactive in taking advantage of the learning opportunities available to them.'* (Eraut *et al.*, 2004: 3)

The interaction of these factors, as set out by Eraut *et al.* (Ibid), is set out below in Figure 2.1

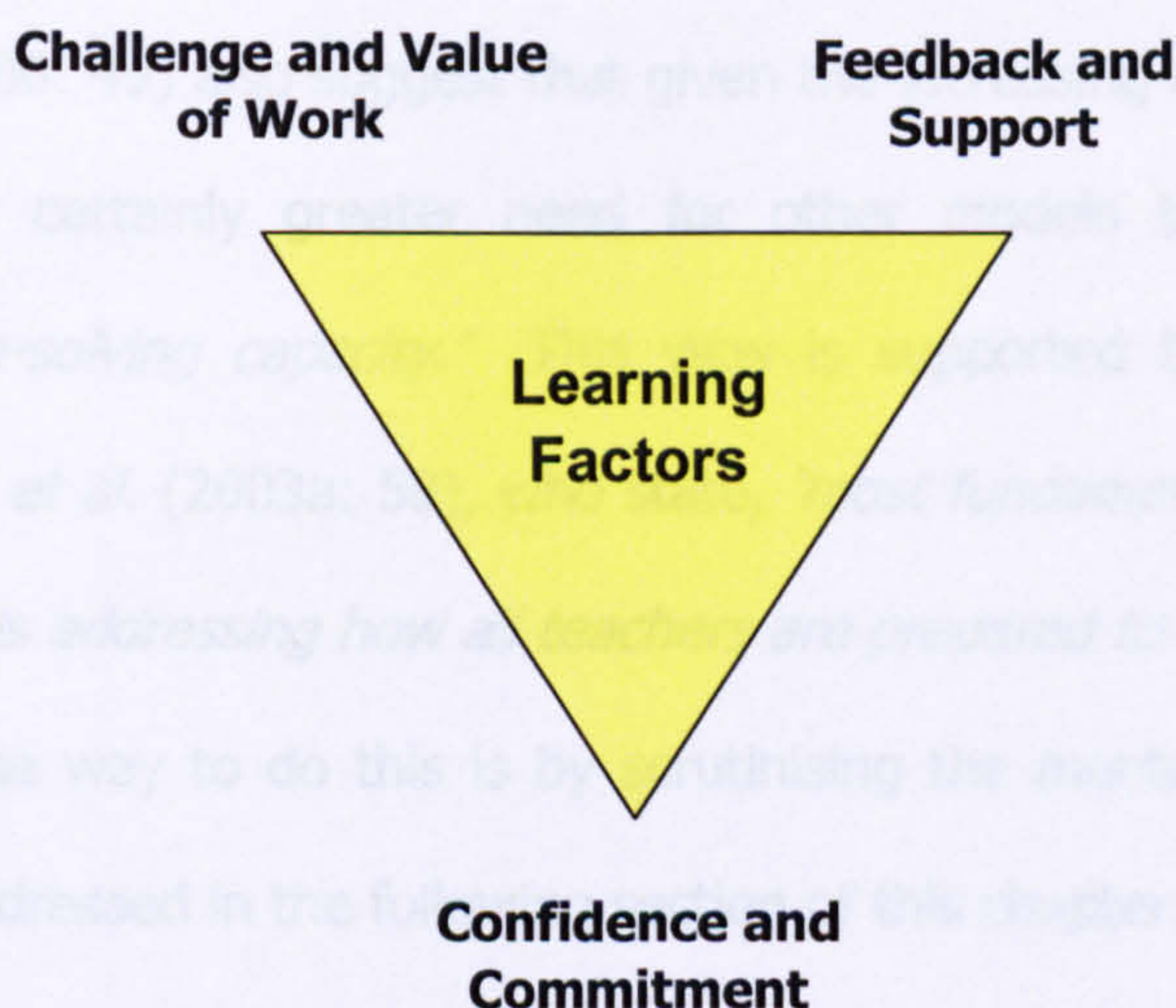


Figure 2.1 - Factors Important to Early Career Learning
(Eraut *et al.*, 2004: 3)

They conclude (Ibid: 3) that *'both confidence in one's ability to do the work and commitment to the importance of that work are primary factors that affect individual learning.'* They also suggest that *'confidence depends on the successful completion of challenging work'*, and that this is dependent upon support from colleagues, echoing the work of Daloz (1986) in the recognition of support and challenge. Commitment is seen as being important and *'generated through social inclusion in teams and by appreciating the value of the work ... for themselves'* (Eraut *et al.*, 2004: 3) In addition Eraut *et al.* (Ibid)

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consider that *'inadequate feedback of a normative kind can weaken motivation and reduce commitment.'*

Clearly multiple factors have to be taken into account by mentors in developing their strategies and reflecting the need of individual student teachers. However, Eraut *et al.* (Ibid) suggest that for early career professionals confidence based upon support from their colleagues within their work environment to be the most important factor.

Buchberger *et al.* (2000: 49) also suggest that given the increasing difficulty and complexity of teaching there is certainly greater need for other models that *'enhance teachers' collaborative problem-solving capacity.'* This view is supported by Howey and Zimpher (1999), and Bullough *et al.* (2003a: 58), who state, *'most fundamental to the improvement of teacher education is addressing how all teachers are prepared to work with one another.'* They suggest that one way to do this is by scrutinising the mentee, mentor relationship. This relationship is addressed in the following section of this chapter.

2.4 The Mentoring Relationship

'The mentor/student relationship is perceived as a sensitive one.' (Burgess and Butcher, 1999: 34)

According to Elliott (1995: 261) there is some empirical evidence which points to the centrality of the mentoring relationship as a source for student teacher learning about teaching. Kwo (1994) considers this relationship *'relies not only upon possessing certain skills and strategies, but also upon maintaining a certain student teacher relationship.'*

There is also agreement within literature (Awaya *et al.*, 2003, Butcher, 2002, Grimmer and Mackinnon, 1992) on the important characteristics of the mentoring relationship. Particular

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emphasis is given to the quality of the relationship and the discourse between mentor and student being *'real talk'*, and *'not the discourse of instruction or the didactic talk'* (Cochran-Smith and Paris, 1995: 189).

It has been suggested (Grimmett and Mackinnon, 1992: 429) that learning how to teach and learning about teaching relies greatly on the empathy, close professional understanding and common language built up between the subject mentor and this *'relies not only upon possessing certain skills and strategies, but also upon maintaining a certain student teacher relationship.'*

In agreeing Awaya *et al.* (2003: 11) emphasise *'sharing practical knowledge with students is a matter of professional dialogue, thus a two-way conversation between mentor and mentee on an equal basis would be the ultimate representation one could hope for.'* Butcher (2002) concurs, believing challenge should be used in the context of a supportive and trusting training relationship. He goes on to state (Ibid: 198) *'a relationship established on trust allows the mentor to introduce challenge, through which preconceptions can be peeled apart and tacit assumptions questioned.'*

In looking at the use of challenge as mentor strategy Martin (1996: 51) notes that *'different student teachers will develop at different speeds and in different contexts.'* As a consequence she suggests that in advocating challenge this can only be fostered if based on friendship and trust. Thus a direct link can be established between mentors strategies and the mentor/student teacher relationship. However, Feiman-Nemser *et al.* (1993) report that there is a tendency for more challenging or confrontational interactions to be avoided by mentors. Edwards and Collison (1995: 45) suggest that the cause of the *'mentors' reluctance to criticise students' practice [is] for fear of discouraging'* them.

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Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003) report that Ten's (1995) work in the Netherlands found that *'the cognitive and social images'* of students and the extent to which these images correlate with the images the teachers have of the students, influence the learning process. Examples of cognitive characteristics are eagerness to learn, independence and concentration, whilst examples of social characteristics are openness, trust and carefulness. They suggest that a discrepancy between the teacher's and student's perception both decreases the student's self-esteem and increases the dropout risk. They conclude (Ibid: 5) that for promoting student-directed learning, *'the images teacher educators have of student teachers have to match with the images student teachers have of themselves.'*

However, Hayes (1999b: 352) identifies that one of the problems that can occur between a mentor and mentee relationship is where the mentor dominates the teaching style of the mentee. This can result in the student teacher compromising their own values for the sake of a harmonious relationship and of course successful outcomes in their teaching practice.

Given the level of control that mentor teachers can exert Maguire (2001: 103) suggests that this dominance could be taken to an extreme and *'many students were concerned that teachers had too much power in relation to trainee assessments - and that the process of reporting could encourage a form of bullying.'* She also reports (Ibid: 104) that many students *'suggested that mentor training needed to take more account of these inter-personal aspects of mentoring in schools.'* As a consequence Hayes (1999b) suggests that final decisions about a student teacher's teaching ability may only be fully understood by the mentee, mentor and university tutor, and this may well be the outcome of significant tensions or disagreements between the three.

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Looking to mentors' practice Zeichner and Gore (1990) identify a variety of factors that appear to be influential. They suggest that these include the influence of school or departmental culture, and the mentor's status in the school. In addition gender may be a factor in the mentoring relationship, with Daloz (1986) noting that female mentors use more open strategies such as listening, providing structure, expressing positive expectations of what is possible and making the relationship special. In contrast he found that male mentors appeared to find challenge easier.

Having established that mentor teachers play a large role in the professional development of student teachers, acting both as role models and instructors, there are unanswered questions as to how student teachers perceive the effectiveness of mentor teachers in this development.

2.5 Conclusions

'[Mentoring is] a formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced knowledgeable person.' (Roberts, 2000: 162)

Whilst there is agreement within the literature set out above that mentoring is used within education to assist in the transition of student teachers from trainees to professional practice as qualified teachers there is, however, no agreement as to the role of the mentor. Rather it is left for each HEI Partnership to define the mentor's role according to the context within which the mentors operate within that partnership.

As a consequence Jones and Straker (2006) consider that whilst the term '*mentor*' commonly occurs in practice and in official publications, and thus generates the impression of a general understanding of mentoring, given the lack of agreement as to the role of the

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mentor and how it is performed, this may in fact not be the case. This would suggest that within education the term '*mentor*' is a sliding signifier, having different meanings in different environments and different contexts.

Literature (Awaya *et al.*, 2003, Butcher, 2002, Elliott, 1995, Kwo, 1994) is also clear as to the importance of the relationship between the mentor and the student teacher to the student teacher's professional identity. Whilst the mentoring relationship is considered to be important there is little recognition in the literature that the relationship between the mentor and student teacher is one between two adults. Instead the roots of mentoring are seen by some to be firmly within an apprenticeship system, with an emphasis on the '*power-dependency status*' of this model, if only because of the higher level of expertise that mentors' possess.

Looking to how student teachers develop their practical skills, literature (Kagan, 1992; von Glaserfeld, 1996; Sugrue, 1997) suggests that as a part of this process they also need to construct their own model of the world they are facing. As part of this process their existing '*lay theories*' have to be deconstructed (Sugrue, 1997: 214). Watson (1994) and Duit (1996) consider that mentors therefore have, as one of their roles, to engage in a process of helping student teachers deconstruct their prior beliefs, and that to help them construct their own professional practice and theories. Korthagen (1993) suggests that these prior beliefs can be resistant to change.

In order to facilitate this process Sugrue (1997) states that mentors should therefore take steps to obtain an understanding of student teachers' knowledge of teaching. In addition Duit (1996) proposes that mentors should obtain insight into the perceptions and evaluations of student teachers. This corresponds with recent work on adult learning which

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looks to develop an understanding of the context and cultural assumptions of the learner (Tusting and Barton, 2003).

As part of the process of learning to teach Furlong (2000) considers that student teachers develop their own practical theories of teaching; a process which he believes is enhanced through dialogue with their mentors, and leading to reflection-on-action. He thus sees the opportunity for students to learn through this process to be one of the key strengths of the school-based ITT programme, but notes that whilst schools are at the centre of ITT they do not see the training of student teachers as their primary objective.

In looking to the ways in which mentors carry out the role of mentor, which has been established to be much wider than merely that of an assessor, their professional knowledge and the pedagogical strategies they use, have to be considered. It is suggested (DENI, 1993) that mentors should possess the craft skills of a teacher, and of knowledge and understanding of both the content of their teaching and the processes they carry out. Stephens (1996) suggests that this knowledge is derived from mentors' experience as teachers. It also proposed by Wilkin (1990), following the work of Kelly (1955) on PCT, that teachers are owners of unique personal theories which are derived from their experiences. However, Beijaard *et al.* (2000) notes that teachers' beliefs act as a '*filter*' through which their thinking and learning are shaped.

The interaction of these different types of knowledge that the mentor possesses is set out in Figure 2.2 below. The figure looks to describe both the inputs to and outputs of the mentor's knowledge; where possible the literature defining these inputs and outputs is identified and shown in red type. In this figure the key inputs to this knowledge, i.e. the teacher's knowledge (Shulman, 1986), practical knowledge, and theoretical knowledge are

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colour coded blue. In contrast the outputs are colour coded tan. Other subsidiary data relevant to the inputs is colour coded white.

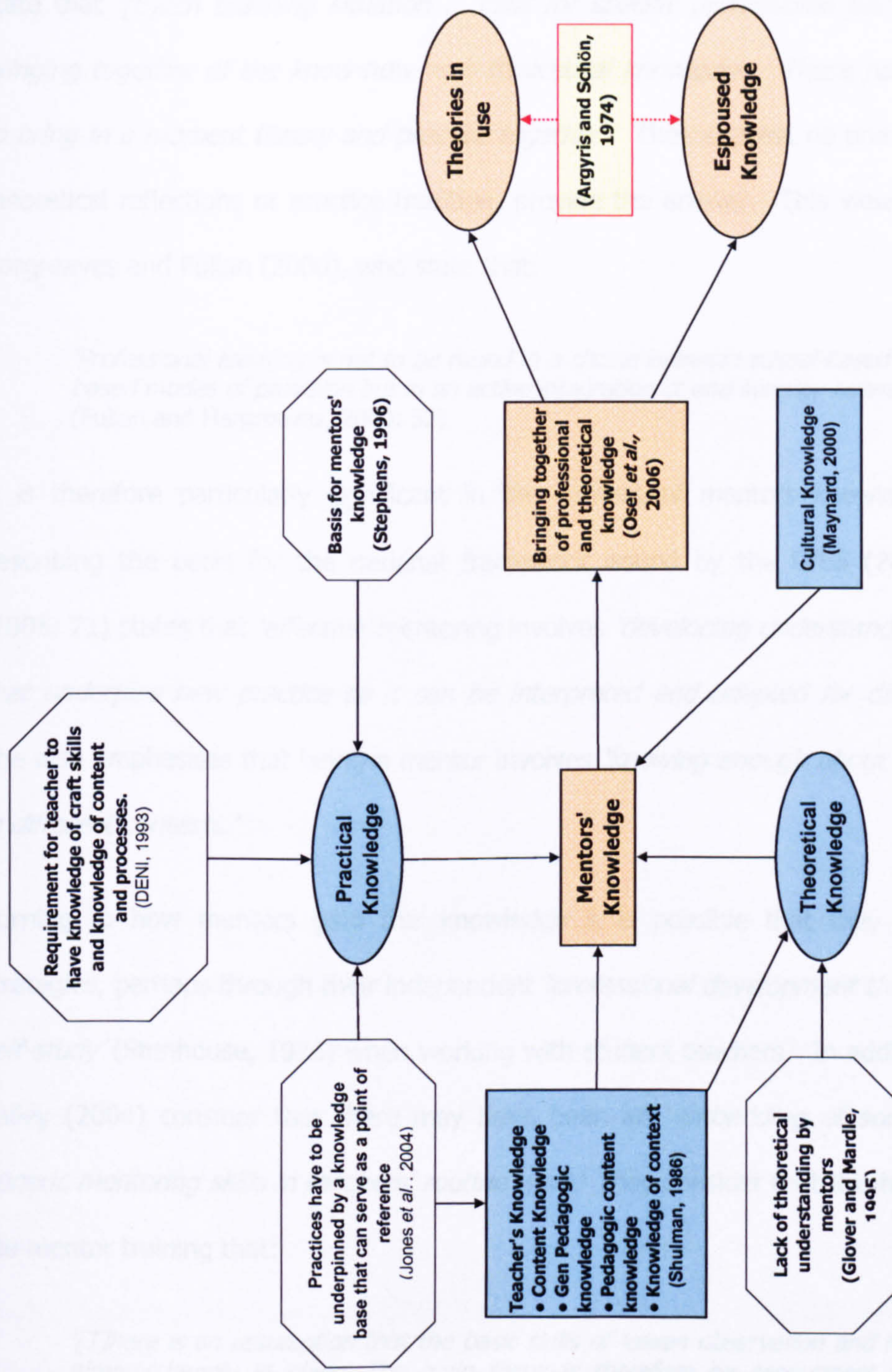


Figure 2.2 - The Mentor's Knowledge

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Looking to explain this combination of different types of knowledge Oser *et al.* (2006: 1) state that *'[E]ach teaching situation ... calls for specific professional performances and a bringing together of the know-how with theoretical knowledge. These performances have to bring in a moment theory and practice together.'* They suggest no one source, whether theoretical reflections or practice tradition, provide the answer. This view is supported by Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), who state that:

'Professional learning is not to be found in a choice between school-based and course-based modes of provision but in an active integration of and synergy between the two.'
(Fullan and Hargreaves, 2000: 52)

It is therefore particularly significant in the context of mentors knowledge that, when describing the basis for the national framework issued by the DfES (2005), Cordingley (2005: 71) states that *'effective'* mentoring involves *'developing understanding of the theory that underpins new practice so it can be interpreted and adapted for different contexts.'* She also emphasises that being a mentor involves *'knowing enough about why things work in different contexts.'*

Turning to how mentors gain this knowledge it is possible that they develop distinct strategies, perhaps through their independent *'professional development through systematic self-study'* (Stenhouse, 1975) when working with student teachers. In addition Youens and Bailey (2004) consider that there may have been an *'embedding of some of the basic, generic mentoring skills in teachers' routine work.'* They consider that this has meant that in the mentor training that:

'[T]here is an assumption that the basic skills of lesson observation and feedback are already largely in place. The main focus is therefore on assessment and how to facilitate professional learning.' (Youens and Bailey, 2004)

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It must also be remembered that the practice of the mentor is not a singly defined phenomenon but has to be considered within the context it exists. Therefore it has to be considered in the context of mentors' interactions with the training provided by the HEI Partnership, their knowledge and understanding of the role, portrayed in the pedagogic practices they employ whilst mentoring within schools, as well as their personal perceptions of the role.

Indeed it is recognised that upon entering the school environment the student teacher is exposed to the culture of that environment, and the knowledge of that culture becomes important to the student teacher in his/her professional development. This is because cultural knowledge provides the *'lens through which ... [teachers' practical professional] knowledge is viewed and interpreted'* (Maynard, 2000: 18). However, Lortie (1975) suggests that student teachers enter ITT without knowledge of the school environment from the perspective of a practicing teacher. As a consequence he considers that they may not be well prepared for what they experience.

Furlong (2000) sees the fact that the mentor is *'rooted in one particular context'*, which is both a strength and a limitation. He identifies two aspects which, in comparison with the HEI tutor, he sees as a weakness. These are a lack of working knowledge of a range of contexts and practice, and an inability to draw on knowledge based on research and theory. He also suggests that they may not subscribe to a culture of self-examination and challenge which can and should stimulate student teachers to justify their approach, confront other ways of working, and engage with other forms of professional knowledge that might lead them to review their practice, and so enable them to develop a deeper understanding of what they do and why they do it.

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Literature (Ertmer and Newby, 1993; Applied Research Laboratories, 2004) suggests that learning theories should be used to support pedagogical strategies and that instructional design Atherton, (2003) should be founded on learning theory. However, what seems to work best for student teachers is instructional design based on a fusion of learning theories, with Schwier (1995) indicating that:

'We must allow circumstances surrounding the learning situation to help us decide which approach to learning is most appropriate. It is necessary to realise that some learning problems require highly prescriptive solutions, whereas others are more suited to learner control of the environment.' (Schwier, 1995: 119)

Having identified that mentoring is important to the professional development of student teachers, and a firm foundation of learning theory is essential to the instruction design used by mentors, concern has been expressed (Glover and Mardle, 1995, Jones *et al.*, 2004) as to the knowledge base of teachers. These concerns are focussed on the knowledge base of mentors, in particular their lack of training in learning theories. As stated previously Jones *et al.* (2004) suggest that one of the main challenges to overcome in managing the student teachers transition into professional practice is frequently cited as *'the theory-practice gap.'*

However, mentors appear to be left very much to themselves, particularly if there is no mentoring framework within a whole school policy, with variable support from others, with the school co-ordinators seldom having a significant role in practice, and instead preferring to concentrate on their role as school managers. As a consequence this lack of focus on the development of the mentor teacher's knowledge, understanding and skills in Circular 09/92 and subsequent regulations on ITT sits uncomfortably with their key role in the training of student teachers. It also raises the question of how these mentor teachers, with their knowledge of theory often limited to that required in the school classroom, are equipped to mentor student teachers.

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Significantly the DfES (2001) has now also recognised, albeit in a limited way, the relevance of the use of educational theory by mentors within ITT. This recognition occurs in the context of study support for teachers engaging in teacher training and professional development. It is suggested study support offers '*valuable opportunities to relate theory to practice and to try out new ideas*' (DfES, 2001: 31). In addition some educational theories relevant to practice and teaching are considered to be a useful source of design for course content.

From the literature review set out in this chapter a case has been made as to why mentors should possess knowledge of learning theories. However, the nature of these theories remains to be considered. Accordingly, this will be established within the next chapter which looks at the conceptual framework provided by the learning theories underpinning mentoring. Particular attention will be given to the use by mentors of adult learning theories, which are said to form the dominant conceptual framework for mentoring.

3 LEARNING THEORIES WITHIN MENTORING

3.1 Introduction

'Theories of learning provide a starting point for principles of teaching. Any curriculum or training course has views of learning built into it and any teaching plan is based upon a view of how people learn.' (Tusting and Barton, 2003: 5)

Tusting and Barton's (2003) proposition as to the importance of learning theories to teaching is supported in literature (Atherton, 2003, Ertmer and Newby, 1993, Glover and Mardle, 1995). It also reinforces the conclusions of the previous chapter that mentors, as teachers and participants in the process of training student teachers, should possess knowledge of learning theories. Furthermore it crystallises the underlying rationale for my research project, namely that mentoring within ITT does not exist in a vacuum in relation to learning theories.

In terms of my research the proposition also suggests that mentors working on a course of training such as ITT are likely to be using instructional design with views on learning theories built into it, as suggested by Atherton (2003: 81), particularly as they are working within a competence-based system of ITT, as explained in Chapter 1. If this is correct the unanswered question then becomes one of *'What learning theories do mentors use?'* rather than one *'Do mentors use learning theories?'*

Accordingly, on the basis that Tusting and Barton (2003) are correct and their analysis is applicable to mentoring, within this chapter I will look to identify those learning theories described in literature as underpinning mentoring. As such my research has set itself clear and precise limits; describing learning theories per se is not part of its scope and as such any omissions from the literature on learning theories as a whole are deliberate.

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In addition, as set out in the introduction to this thesis, my work is being undertaken from the perspective of an educationalist rather than that of a psychologist looking at theories of learning. As a consequence the purpose of this chapter is solely to provide me with the tools to interpret what I have found from my field research, as described in Chapters 6 and 7 of this thesis.

The identification of learning theories within the literature on mentoring has not been a simple exercise as literature acknowledges definitional problems associated with mentoring (Healy and Welchert, 1990) and a lack of theoretical basis, with Gibb (1999) stating that '*a substantive theoretical analysis of mentoring has been absent, implicit, limited or underdeveloped.*' Entwistle *et al.* (1999) believe that one of the reasons why mentoring theory continues to have definitional problems is due to the failure of researchers to ground it in appropriate theory.

Despite these definitional problems Hansford *et al.* (2003), through an extensive review of the literature on mentoring, are able to identify elements of different learning theories. Whilst they identify 13 different theories the most frequently occurring are adult development theory, developmental stage theory of adults, cognitive development theory, adult learning theories and social capital theory. That mentoring appears to be underpinned by material written on the education of adults should be no surprise as the individuals concerned are adults.

The first section of this chapter will therefore look at the models of mentoring, with a specific focus on the competence-based model of education, which provides the current conceptual framework for ITT. The second section will consider in more detail those theories identified in the literature on mentoring, including adult learning theories.

3 Learning Theories within Mentoring

3.2 Models of Mentoring

'Any theory presupposes a more general model according to which the theoretical concepts are formulated.' (Reese and Overton, 1970: 117)

As established in Chapter 1 the mentoring of student teachers in England and Wales occurs within the framework for mentoring first formalised by Circular 24/89 (DES, 1989) and subsequently developed by Circular 09/92 (DES, 1992b) and its successors. The key element of this framework is a competence-based model of education, which has inherent assumptions of learning built in to it. This model is therefore an essential starting point for a study of the learning theories within mentoring given that by its very nature it forms a key element of the instructional design used by mentors.

In addition other models of mentoring have developed within ITT in parallel with the official framework. These models have generally been developed from research into practice in the field of mentoring.

Reflecting on these different models this section is divided into two parts, with the first looking at the competence-based model of ITT and the second looking at the models of mentoring described in literature as being relevant to ITT, albeit not unique to ITT or limited to use with adults.

3.2.1 Competence-based Model

'Competence-based education tends to be a form of education that derives a curriculum from an analysis of a prospective or actual role in modern society and that attempts to certify student progress on the basis of demonstrated performance in some or all aspects of that role.' (Grant et al., 1979: 6)

Elias and Merriam (1995) consider that the competence-based model is *'well suited to education'* for a number of reasons. These reasons include: it allows for individuals to start

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at different points, thus reflecting their differences; the timescales for students to master competences can be flexible and dependent upon the ability of the individual; the method of learning the competencies can vary; *'criterion referenced'* evaluation is not seen as threatening by the student; and it is seen as a very good means for *'self-directed individual learning.'*

Whilst acknowledging that the use of the term *'competency-based education'* covers a range of activities they describe it (Ibid: 94) as a *'program in which required performances are specified and agreed in advance to instruction'*. They go on to state that such programmes *'specify, in behavioural terms, the goals and objectives to be met, the learning experiences to be engaged in, the method of evaluation used to demonstrate achievement of the predetermined goals.'* They conclude that this model is implicitly behaviourist, with its emphasis upon arranging the programme of learning and then *'measuring the changes in behaviour.'*

Looking to competence-based education specifically within ITT Fletcher (2000b: 24) considers that the element of assessment, with its focus on *'the collection of sufficient evidence of workplace and/or personal performance to demonstrate that individuals can perform or behave to the specific standards'* is critical to the process as a whole. She also states that:

'With competence-based systems, we have the opportunity to introduce training and assessment which focus on actual performance. It also provides a framework in which evaluation of training effectiveness, as well as assessment of individual performance can operate.' (Fletcher, 2000b: xii)

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Fletcher also considers the nature of assessment in the competence, or workplace based, model to be different from that in the traditional or course-based model. These differences are set out in Table 3.1 below.

	Traditional (Course based)	Competence-based (workplace)
Concept	Assessment of learning ability or achievement.	Assessment of actual performance in a work role.
Foundation	Curricula, defined centrally by teaching staff/divisional boards.	Explicit standards of required performance defined by industry (UK) or by research using 'excellent' performers (USA).
Assessment requirements	Assessment is an integral part of learning programmes	Assessment is independent of any learning programme.
Evidence	Assessment evidence drawn from course assignments/ exams. Assessment is norm-referenced.	Types of evidence governed only by rules for quality of evidence. Assessment is criterion-referenced (UK), criterion - validated (USA), and individualised.

**Table 3.1 - Traditional v Competence based Assessment
(Fletcher, 2000b: 11)**

The concept for competence-based assessment described by Fletcher clearly matches that described by Grant *et al.* (1979) in respect of its focus on performance on a previously identified role. The figure also illustrates the unique aspects of competence-based assessment, in particular that it should always take place in the work place.

Given the location of competence-based ITT in schools and the use of practising teachers to carry out the role of assessor Fletcher (2000b: 81) considers that appropriate training

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should be given to these teachers. This training should, she asserts, cover the principles of competence-based assessment; what makes it different from other forms of assessment; using standards of competence; the rules of evidence; and the methods of assessment.

Looking to the basis of the evidence based approach to assessment within competence-based ITT Delandshere and Arens (2001) consider that:

'The presumption of performance-based licensing is that, while preparation programs may differ in how they organize courses and other learning experiences, all entrants must demonstrate on common assessments that they have mastered the essential knowledge and skills necessary for responsible practice.' (Delandshere and Arens, 2001: 9)

Hills (2001) suggests that the use of explicit standards of required performance, which Fletcher describes as '*criterion referenced*', reflects the desire of government to ensure that all student teachers are evaluated according to the same standards of knowledge and performance. By this means differences in standards that might emerge due to the location of student teachers within different HEI Partnerships can, it is hoped, be eliminated.

Looking to how this is achieved in practice Fletcher (2000b) identifies the quality control regime imposed by the DfES, with HEI tutors within the Partnerships being used to moderate assessment by school-based mentors, as being a key tool. This is supplemented by Ofsted inspections to validate the accuracy of the gradings given to students by mentors.

Competence-based ITT has not been without criticism. For example, Jones and Straker (2006)., suggest that its disadvantages are as a consequence of it being:

'[R]eductionist, decontextualised, and atomistic, in that teaching and learning is directed towards predetermined, narrowly defined performance criteria, which neither indicate the scope for further development, nor include any reference to the context within which they may have been achieved.' (Jones and Straker, 2006: 168)

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This view is supported by Boreham (2002), who considers that the model of competence-based education used in the UK is in fact mechanistic and reductionist, denying a role for human agencies in the learning process. In addition Biemans *et al.* (2004) state that:

'Modularisation often goes along with competence-based curricula. This reinforces the disintegrative approach to job analysis. The same argument applies to the use of behavioural assessment techniques: these tend to measure only the overt, routine aspects of tasks.' (Biemans *et al.*, 2004: 528)

They therefore conclude (Ibid: 532) that there has been *'an over-reliance on standardisation of competencies, whereas the power of competence-based education lies in its context-embeddedness.'* Schön (1973) supports this view of learning and is quite clear that the primary opportunity for it to take place is *'not in the nexus of official policies at the centre.'* Instead (Ibid: 166) he considers that the centre's role should be *'as facilitator of society's learning, rather than as society's trainer.'*

Whilst Biemans *et al.* (2004) consider the UK model to be inherently behaviourist other writers (Westera, 2001) identify strong links between competence-based education and the cognitivist orientation to learning. Indeed Kolb (1984) states that competence-based education is one of the contemporary applications of experiential learning theory and follows from work by Dewey (1933), Lewin (1952) and Piaget (1971). He also suggests (Ibid: 17) that all three theorists share a common tradition of emphasising *'development toward a life of purpose and self direction as the principle for education.'* He further suggests (Ibid: 18) that within competence-based education *'experiential learning offers the theory of learning most appropriate for the assessment of prior learning and for the design of competence-centred curricula.'*

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Developing Kolb's view of cognitive orientated competence-based education Wesselink *et al.* (2003) suggest that its aim should be to '*develop integrated performance-orientated capabilities*' in learners. They consider that one of the underlying principles of this approach is critical reflection and state (Ibid: 12) that this '*has to be done between ... students and coaches. The principle can be completed by stating that critical reflection has to be practised in personal conversations.*'

However, whilst the cognitive approach within the competence-based model is seen as desirable by many, its application in practice is not seen as simple, with Westera (2001: 78) recognising the complexity of testing cognitive skills other than by provoking '*observational behaviours that can be directly linked to the skill.*' He goes on to state:

'For this reason, learning objectives for cognitive skills are usually described in operational (behavioural) terms. Clearly, this linkage creates confusion. Observational behaviours, like crossing a street, are easily mistaken for cognitive skill.' (Westera, 2001: 78)

These features of Competence-based ITT, together with those identified in the preceding narrative, are summarised in Figure 3.2 below. A key point illustrated in the diagram is split between the behaviourist and cognitivist orientations, each with its own characteristics. Characteristics common to both orientations are colour coded light green. In contrast characteristics relating to the behaviourist model have been colour coded ivory, whilst those relating to the cognitivist model are colour coded turquoise. In all cases the sources of these characteristics are referenced to the literature identifying or proposing them. For ease these references are in red font.

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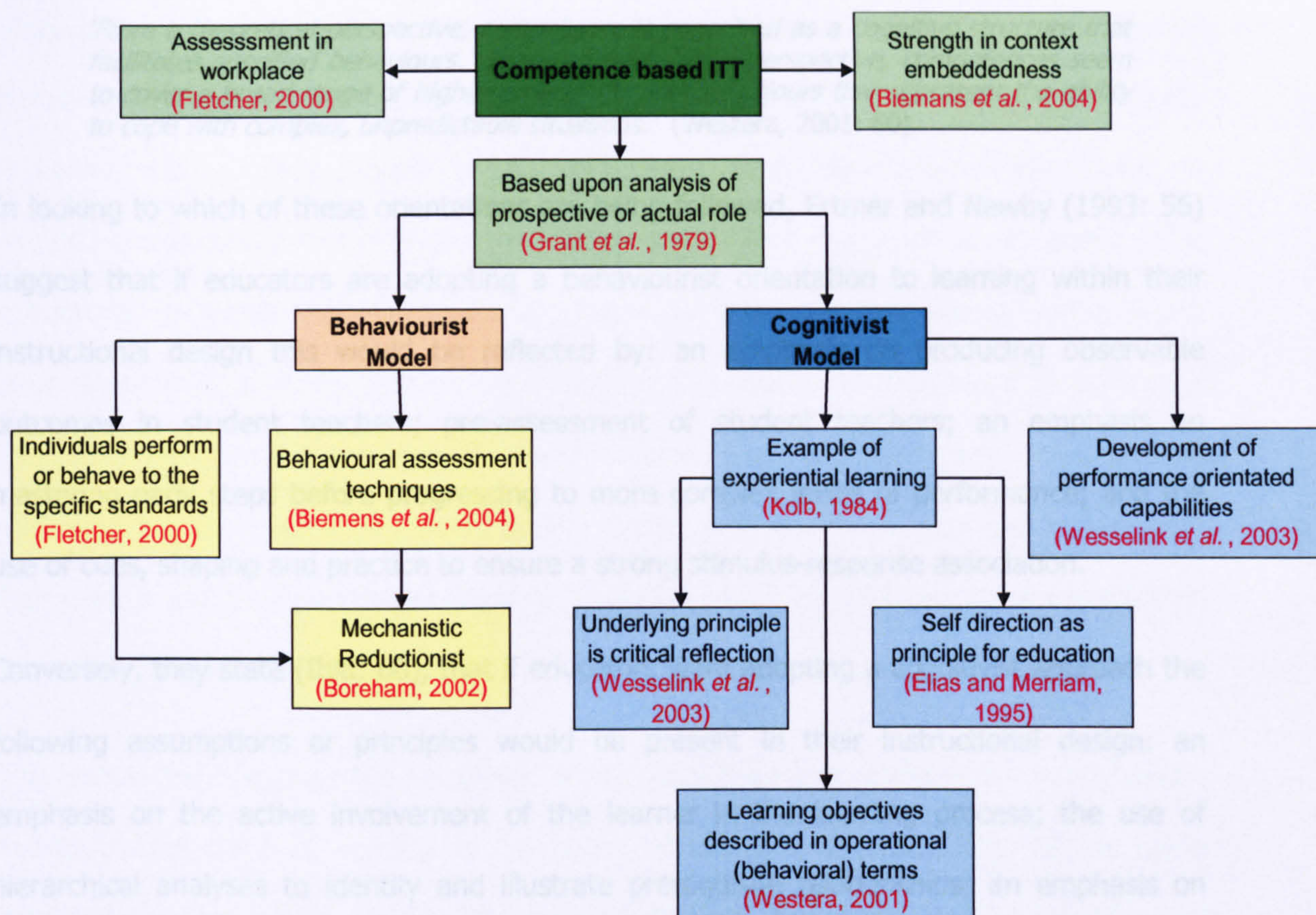


Figure 3.2 - Characteristics of Competence-based Education

The dichotomy in literature regarding the basis of competence-based education, as illustrated in Figure 3.2, has already been identified in Chapter 1, with the CNAA (1992) recognising two different competence-based models, one which defines competence as performance, whilst the second includes cognitive dimensions. Like Elias and Merriam (1995) they also consider that the performance model has a behaviourist orientation.

In looking to explain the differences between these two views of competence-based education Westera (2001) suggests that:

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'From a theoretical perspective, competence is conceived as a cognitive structure that facilitates specified behaviours. From an operational perspective, competences seem to cover a broad range of higher-order skills and behaviours that represent the ability to cope with complex, unpredictable situations.' (Westera, 2001: 80)

In looking to which of these orientations are being followed, Ertmer and Newby (1993: 56) suggest that if educators are adopting a behaviourist orientation to learning within their instructional design this would be reflected by: an emphasis on producing observable outcomes in student teachers; pre-assessment of student teachers; an emphasis on mastering early steps before progressing to more complex levels of performance; and the use of cues, shaping and practice to ensure a strong stimulus-response association.

Conversely, they state (Ibid: 60), that if educators were adopting a cognitivist approach the following assumptions or principles would be present in their instructional design: an emphasis on the active involvement of the learner in the learning process; the use of hierarchical analyses to identify and illustrate prerequisite relationships; an emphasis on structuring, organising, and sequencing information to facilitate optimal processing by student teachers; and creation of learning environments that allow and encourage student teachers to make connections with previously learned material.

3.2.2 Models in Literature

Brooks and Sykes (1997) identify a number of models of mentoring in ITT. These include *'the apprenticeship model'* in which the mentor is seen as a *'skilled craftsperson'* (Ibid: 17); the competence based model in which the mentor is seen as a trainer, as described previously; mentoring in the reflective practitioner tradition; the mentor as a reflective coach; and finally the mentor as co-enquirer.

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Looking at the apprenticeship model Brooks and Sykes consider that it represents the *'first formal attempt to train systematically'*, and was used in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. They suggest (Ibid: 17) that its principal features are firstly training on the job, and secondly that it involves a *'trainee and trainer in a pupil-master craftsman relationship'* in which observation and emulation are essential components, and trial and error learning is a major feature. In addition this model is considered to contain a *'dichotomy between the pupil-teacher's own academic study and the acquisition of teaching skill'*, with the latter being dependent on the ability of the individual pupil-teacher to make their own *'sense'* from their observation and practice. They suggest that the unreliability of this form of preparation of student teachers has led to its abandonment.

One reason they propose for the failure of the apprenticeship model is the inappropriate nature of this mode of training in education, which they describe (Ibid: 18) as being *'intellectually demanding'* and a *'higher-order profession'*, as opposed to a *'lower-order craft skill'* in an industrial environment. As a consequence they suggest that *'unquestioning and slavish imitation of established practices does not give the learner access to the knowledge, understanding and judgement which underpin those actions and decisions.'* They consider that as a consequence this model is *'conducive to professional stasis'*, as established professional practices are not challengeable, with few chances for alternatives to be identified and tested.

Whilst they note that the Licensed Teacher Scheme of 1988 was seen as a reincarnation of the apprenticeship model, and a threat to the professionalism of the teaching profession, they recognise that:

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'Although there are few educationalist who would accept a pure apprenticeship model as the principal or the only form of ITE, the value of apprenticeship as one strategy amongst others now recognized (e.g. Maynard and Furlong, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994; Tomlinson, 1995).'' (Brooks and Sykes, 1997: 19)

Other models of mentoring identified (Maynard and Furlong, 1993, Tomlinson, 1995) arise out of the *'reflective practitioner tradition'* (Brooks and Sikes, 1997). These models, which are influenced by the work of Schön, have been extremely influential in education even though Schön's studies of various professions did not include teaching. As the details of reflection are considered in more detail in the following section of this chapter I will only address the essential elements affecting mentoring at this point.

In looking to explain how professionals acquire the working knowledge appropriate to their profession Schön (1983) challenges views that professionals acquire skills through training and then simply practice them. Instead, he suggests that they acquire these skills through a process of reflection, both *'reflection-on-action'* and *'reflection-in-action'*, with the former being subsequent to the action and the latter being a contemporary action. Significantly a key requirement for reflection is a pool of relevant knowledge derived from prior experiences supplemented by appropriate knowledge of the context, which supplements the knowledge gained through training.

Subsequently various models of mentoring in ITT incorporating reflection (Edwards and Collison, 1995, Gibb, 1999, Tomlinson, 1995) were developed. The role undertaken by the mentor in these models is noteworthy. Brooks and Sykes (1997: 22) describe the mentor as a *'reflective coach'*, and envisage that *'[T]he coach helps the student teacher to use reflection as a tool for self-development.'* They emphasise that this is a proactive role:

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'[W]hich depends on the mentor making planned and systematic interventions into the students' reflections in order to make them more meaningful and analytical.' (Brooks and Sykes, 1997: 23)

Models of Mentoring

Stones and Morris (1972) suggest that the first model of ITT is the '*craft model of professional education*' in which teaching is seen as '*a craft*' which can be learnt by watching and copying experienced teachers. In addition learning from suggestions from that practitioner's own experience is seen as having the potential to be useful to student teachers. A significant feature of this model is the process of teacher training can be carried out entirely within a school by the school. They conclude this model is plagued with problems which have been catalogued in literature. However, Wallace (1991: 7) considers that '*This model assumes training capabilities [with]in classroom teachers which most of them do not possess.*'

Turning to the particularised models of mentoring described in literature one of the earliest models is that provided by Anderson and Shannon (1988). They suggest that mentors are generally considered to be more experienced and older than the person being mentored, and that the objective of the mentoring process is to promote the development of the mentee. This development is both personal and professional.

Anderson and Shannon (Ibid) also identify that mentors carry out a range of functions. These include teaching, counselling, guiding, developing, advising, sponsoring, protecting, promoting, supporting, challenging, modelling and befriending. They suggest that mentors carry out these functions as part of an on-going and caring relationship with their mentee. At the same time they consider that mentors also act as role models, teachers, sponsors, providing encouragement and counselling, whilst befriending the mentee.

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These five functions of mentoring form the heart of Anderson and Shannon's model. Whilst not being empirically based some of the elements of their model, such as the provision of feedback, can be seen within the learning theories described in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Looking to subsequent models of mentoring developed after the introduction of Circular 09/92 (DfES, 1992) Maynard and Furlong's (1993) work is highly influential. Their work is based on research into the stages of development through which student teachers move in learning to teach and has led to the development of reciprocal models of mentoring. Furlong and Maynard were not alone in taking this approach, others such as Edwards and Collison (1996) also carried out work on phase specific mentoring as the focus in ITT shifted from generic mentoring skills.

Maynard and Furlong's (1993) identify three models of mentoring, which they describe as the start apprenticeship, the middle competency and the end reflective. The use of the terms '*apprenticeship*' and '*reflective*' in their descriptions of these models is significant, and may well relate directly to the prior work of Clutterbuck (1985) and Lave and Wenger (1991) on apprenticeship models of learning, and Schön (1987, , 1983) on reflection.

Their view of the apprenticeship phase of mentoring is supported by the prior work of Lunt and Monaghan (1992: 138), who locate the roots of mentoring firmly within the apprenticeship system, which has previously been described as the '*craft model*' by Stones and Morris (1970). However, Kwo (1994: 125) suggests that the apprenticeship model of teacher training has generally been discarded as outdated because of its '*simplistic assumptions about learning and its narrow adherence to the transmission mode of teaching.*'

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Tomlinson (1995) appears to implicitly support Kwo's view, describing two, rather than three, major roles of the mentor. These roles are, firstly, that of a reflective coach developing teaching and reflective skills, and secondly that of an effective facilitator with a counselling role. The use of reflection by learners, which is described by Schön (1983), and considered earlier in this section, is also expressly recognised within the Guidelines (TDA, 2006: 48). Facilitation follows Brookfield's (1986) model of learning, and is seen as a *'teaching-learning transaction.'*

A common thread between the work of Maynard and Furlong (1993), and that of Elliott and Calderhead (1994) is that they both lead back to the earlier research of Daloz (1986) in the United States. Drawing on his experiences in adult education, Daloz focuses on the need for support and challenge in mentoring, and suggests that developmental theory can help the mentor.

Daloz's model of mentoring, and its use of developmental theory, follows from the work of Dewey (1959) and Piaget (1971), suggests that where support is low there is little opportunity for any challenge to occur and the student teacher may withdraw from the mentoring relationship. Conversely, if support is high new knowledge and images of teaching become possible for the trainee. It is noteworthy that this model is one of the works identified by Hansford *et al.* (2003) as providing a theoretical basis to mentoring through adult learning theories.

Today the requirement for mentors to give support to student teachers, as advocated by Daloz, forms part of the requirements for ITT, with the Guidelines specifically requiring student teachers be *'given the support they need to succeed'* and *'given the time and support to prepare them for assessment against the standards'* (TDA, 2006: 76).

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Daloz's work is also underpinned by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) in which conflict is seen as a means of ensuring continuous improvement. Through the use of dissonance Daloz envisages the mentor questioning the student teacher's thinking, and critiquing their preconceptions and tacit assumptions. This approach links to the belief that learners' preconceptions and expectations are a major influence on their subsequent learning (Ausubel, 1960).

Burgess and Butcher's (1999) research considers that the rationale for challenge as advocated by Daloz (1986) as a mentor strategy appears to provide an answer to the question: '*Why challenge?*' Their view (Ibid: 36) is that the '*use of challenge as a mentoring strategy may help to trigger the active mentoring through which learner needs can be confronted and met.*' However, in order to achieve this they consider that a new model of mentoring might be required.

Their model (Ibid; 42) has four dimensions. In the first dimension, that of the student teacher, there needs to be a willingness on the part of the student teacher to extend their subject or base competence. In the second, which is that of the mentor, there is a requirement for the mentor to be orientated to adult learning, to be a reflective articulator of competences and willing to challenge. In the third dimension, that of the school, there must be an institution supportive of professional debate, open to challenge and a place of learning without barriers. In the final dimension, that of the ITT course, there is a requirement for effective mentoring within the programme. They note, '*One significant change in this model is that the learner, the mentor and the school need to recognise the school as the site for learning. Here there is a conceptual shift from what is taught to what is learned.*'

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Looking to the models of mentoring described above it is noteworthy that literature (Brooks and Sikes, 1997, Butcher, 2000) suggests that there is no one model of mentoring that has superseded all others. Rather it proposes that mentors are encouraged to select strategies, and implicitly the models of learning, that are appropriate to the context they are working in and the requirements of the student teacher.

It is also worth noting that Ertmer and Newby (1993) believe that the strategies used by individual learning theories overlap. They suggest that this is due to these strategies being concentrated along different points of the same continuum, with the focus of the strategies varying according to the aim of the learning theory being employed by the educator and the level of cognitive processing required by the learning task. This is illustrated in Figure 3.3 below.

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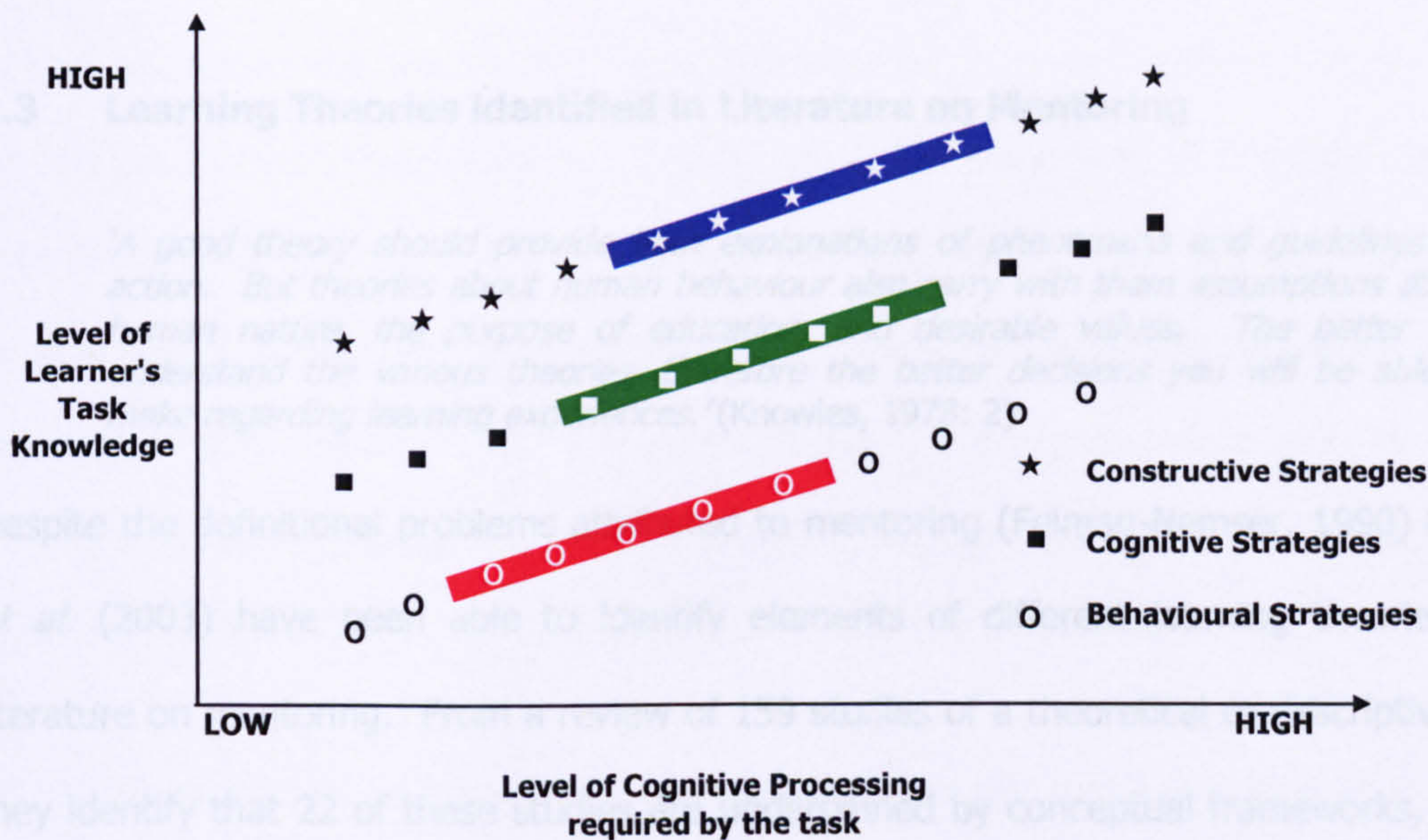


Figure 3.3 - Levels of Cognitive Processing Required by Task (Ertmer and Newby, 1993)

In looking to explain the application of different theories Ertmer and Newby (1993) stress that instructional strategy and content addressed depend on the level of the learners. As a consequence they consider that the educator must match the learning theories being used with the content being learned and suggest that:

'A behavioural approach can effectively facilitate mastery of the content of a profession (knowing what); cognitive strategies are useful in teaching problem-solving tactics where defined facts and rules are applied in unfamiliar situations (knowing how); and constructivist strategies are especially suited to dealing with ill-defined problems through reflection-in-action.' (Ertmer and Newby, 1993: 68)

Thus an understanding of the level of task knowledge being undertaken by a learner allows the designer of instructional material to make the best use of all available practical

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applications of the different learning theories. Taking this approach the designer is able to draw from a large number of strategies to meet a variety of learning situations.

3.3 Learning Theories identified in Literature on Mentoring

'A good theory should provide both explanations of phenomena and guidelines for action. But theories about human behaviour also carry with them assumptions about human nature, the purpose of education, and desirable values. The better you understand the various theories, therefore the better decisions you will be able to make regarding learning experiences.' (Knowles, 1978: 2)

Despite the definitional problems attributed to mentoring (Feiman-Nemser, 1990) Hansford *et al.* (2003) have been able to identify elements of different learning theories in the literature on mentoring. From a review of 159 studies of a theoretical or descriptive nature they identify that 22 of these studies are underpinned by conceptual frameworks, with the frameworks varying from very detailed works to brief references. More significantly they identify 13 '*seemingly different*' theories or frameworks. The theories they identify are adult development theory, developmental stage theory of adults, cognitive development theory, adult learning theories, social capital theory, role model theory, theory of possible selves, models of mentoring, constructivist/socio-cultural theories, coaching/skill development models, social exchange theory, contingency theory and change theory.

They further identify the dominant framework in 8 of these studies is provided by adult learning theories provided by Brookfield (1986), Daloz (1986), Kolb (1984), and Schön (1987). They state (Op cit: 53) that '*The basic tenet of these theories is that learning will be facilitated if learners are supported and challenged by their educational environment*'.

The next most significant conceptual framework they identify is provided by the developmental stage theory of teachers, with six studies being adopted from Fuller's (1969)

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Stages of Concern. The basic tenet of these studies is that mentoring proves to be more effective if mentors have an understanding of the stage of development of their mentee.

Of the balance of the studies five make reference to cognitive development theories and four to adult development theories. The former refer to the work of Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall (1983) on cognitive development and Vygotsky's social interaction theory, and suggest that it is important for mentors to appreciate the way adults construct and make meaning of their experiences. The latter studies are centred on the work of Levinson (1978) and Sheehy (1976), and view mentoring as an appropriate means of assisting adults in their transition from one stage of their professional life to another.

Within this section these frameworks are considered in order of the frequency that Hansford *et al.* describe them as occurring in literature.

3.3.1 Adult Development Theories

'Many theories of human development understand humans as developing in terms of a series of stages, and suggest that the sorts of learning that occur and the forms of learning that occur and the forms of instruction that are most appropriate are qualitatively different in each of those stages.' (Tusting and Barton, 2003: 10)

Looking to literature on mentoring Hansford *et al.* (2003) identify Brookfield's theory of adult learning (1986), Daloz's theory of adult learning (1986), Kolb's theory of experiential learning (1984), and Schön's theory of reflection on learning (1987) as being significant. Accordingly, I will consider these areas as well as looking at andragogy through the work of Knowles (1970, 1980), which Daloz and Brookfield use to develop their work.

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Development Theory - Daloz

Through his work in adult education Daloz (1986) uses development theory to provide the theoretical underpinning for his research on mentoring, in particular the use of support and challenge. In defining his stance Daloz (1986) looks to the work of Loevinger (1980), Kohlberg (1981), and Gilligan (1977, , 1982), who suggest adults as learners move through three stage of development. The three stages of development are described as:

'[A] "pre-conventional" stance, in which our personal survival is paramount, into a "conventional" orientation, in which our main concern is to fit into and be accepted by society, and later (if development continues) into a 'post-conventional' position, in which we derive our decisions from broader considerations than personal survival or a wish to conform.' (Daloz, 1986: 46)

Explaining his personal position Daloz suggests that developmental theories *'can help the Mentor guide, challenge, support and illuminate the way ahead'* (Ibid: xviii) as they provide a context for growth. In addition a number of theories of adult learning, in particular Knowles (1970), Rogers (1969) and Maslow (1970) can be identified in Daloz's work, with Knowles being highly influential.

A basic tenet of Daloz's work is that learning will be facilitated if learners, i.e. mentees in the context of my research, are both supported and challenged by their educational environment (Hansford *et al.*, 2003: 53).

The use of challenge within Daloz's work is underpinned by cognitive dissonance theory, as set out by Festinger (1957), which suggests that conflict can be seen as a means of ensuring continuous improvement. In terms of a mentoring relationship the application of this principle envisages mentors questioning the thinking of student teachers and critiquing their preconceptions and tacit assumptions.

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Looking to the application of Daloz's model within adult education, and into ITT in particular, Elliott and Calderhead (1994) suggest that the mentor can no longer be simply regarded as a '*critical friend*'. Rather they consider a student teacher needs a relationship with their mentor which varies according to the level of experience they possess. Accordingly, they believe that the model of support/challenge/vision proposed by Daloz provides a framework to help mentors identify student teachers' needs, thereby benefiting both of them and increasing the student teacher's confidence.

Elliott and Calderhead (Ibid), as set out in Figure 3.4 below, develop Daloz's model highlighting the affects of the interaction between the mentor and student teacher.

High Challenge/Low Support Attempts initiatives/career progress without reflecting on teaching/pupil needs	High Challenge/High Support Confident reflective practitioner progressing up the organisation
Low Challenge/Low Support Lacks confidence, disillusioned with teaching/establishment	Low Challenge/High Support Personal loyalty to colleagues and pupils. Remain entrenched in existing practices, little career progress.

**Figure 3.4 - Model of Support and Challenge
Elliott and Calderhead's extension of Daloz's model
(Elliott and Calderhead, 1994: 134)**

In this model Elliott and Calderhead suggest that any assessment should be open and able to be easily understood by both the mentor and the student teacher. They consider that this approach will reduce the likelihood of conflict and increase the chances of the relationship becoming both '*positive and developmental*.'

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The critical aspect of Daloz's approach, as illustrated in the figure, is therefore finding the right balance between support and challenge. Looking to its application Gipe and Richard (1992) suggest that non-challenging field experience may provide few opportunities for reflective thought, because there are few problems to solve. Conversely they also suggest that an overly threatening field placement may promote negativism and stagnation.

It is interesting that Daloz noted that female mentors use more open strategies such as listening, providing structure, expressing positive expectations of what is possible and making the relationship special whilst male mentors allegedly find the use of challenge easier.

Development Theory - Brookfield

'[I]t is naive to assume that simply because adults are under the direction of a teacher that learning is being facilitated. What is important to consider is the nature of the teaching-learning transaction itself and the extent to which features of mutual respect, negotiation, collaborativeness, and praxis are present.' (Brookfield, 1986: 9)

Brookfield (1986: vii) considers that the facilitation of learning, which he describes as *'assisting adults to make sense of, and act upon the various aspects of the environment in which they live'* to be *'an important and profound activity for facilitators and learners.'* Accordingly, his work proposes a *'concept of facilitation that incorporates elements of challenge, confrontation, and critical analysis of self and society'* (Ibid: viii). He considers the aim of facilitation to be the nurturing of self-directed, empowered adults who see themselves as:

'[P]roactive, initiating individuals engaged in a continuous re-creation of their personal relationships, work worlds, and social circumstances rather than as reactive individuals, buffeted by uncontrollable forces of circumstance.' (Brookfield, 1986: 11)

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He argues that such facilitation is a '*transactional drama*' between learners and facilitators, reflecting their continuous interaction and the influences of the context in which they are working. However, he emphasises that this concept rejects the notion of facilitation being '*nondirective*' and a resource for learners who are in control of their own learning. Instead he considers that it is the facilitator's responsibility to take the lead, which he believes to be one of the facilitator's most demanding tasks, stating that they should:

'[A]ssist in the development of a group culture in which adults can feel free to challenge one another and feel comfortable with being challenged.' (Brookfield, 1986: 14)

Describing the rationale for his work Brookfield states that effective facilitation of learning is central to the development of powers of critical reflection within learners. In addition he suggests that the concept of facilitation he espouses:

'[C]ontain[s] features that are familiar to humanistic psychology - a respect for participants in the teaching-learning transaction, a commitment to collaborative modes of programme development, and an acknowledgement of the educational value of life experiences.' (Brookfield, 1986: 285)

However, he also states that within his model there is the additional and, in terms of humanistic psychology, not so familiar element of critical analysis which requires facilitators to prompt learners to '*consider alternatives on their personal, political, work, and social lives*' (Ibid: 286). As part of this process he suggests that learners will be challenged to examine their previously held values, beliefs and behaviours; they may also be challenged or '*confronted*' with ones they might not want to consider.

Thus, when describing the elements of facilitative learning, he identifies six '*central principles*', namely voluntary participation, mutual respect, collaborative respect, praxis, critical reflection and self-direction. Looking to the interaction of these principles he

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suggests that praxis is placed at the heart of effective facilitation. He justifies this on the basis that:

'Learners and facilitators are involved in a continual process of activity, reflection upon activity, collaborative analysis of activity, new activity, further reflection and collaborative analysis, and so on. Activity can, of course, include cognitive activity; learning does not always require participants to "do" something in the sense of performing clearly observable acts.' (Brookfield, 1986: 10)

Brookfield emphasises that this facilitative learning-teaching relationship is inherently collaborative and should take place in a non adversarial manner. He also proposes that the most effective facilitator is one who can encourage adults to consider rationally and carefully perspectives and interpretations of the world that differ from those they already hold. He notes that whilst this experience may produce anxiety it should be accepted as a normal component of the learning process.

Brookfield (1985) considers that adult students should have *'alternate ways of interpreting the world'* if they are to make enlightened decisions regarding their circumstance and state of being. He also suggests (Ibid: 14) that self-directed learning is based on adults' awareness of their separateness and on their consciousness of their personal power. As a consequence he believes that when learners begin to consider their *'personal and social worlds as contingent and therefore accessible to individual and collective interventions'* that the necessary dispositional changes necessary for self-directed action by the learner exist. Thus, he considers that when adult learners take action to acquire skills and knowledge in order to affect these changes they are exemplifying principles of self-directed learning.

The process of engagement he describes is complementary to his aim of encouraging critical reflection, indeed he suggests that it is the increased insight provided by critical reflection

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that makes the facilitation of adult learning most effective. Significantly he believes that the learner as much as the educator could be the instigator of this critical reflection.

Looking to the role of self-direction in learning, Brookfield suggests that it should be one of the means, rather than the end or goal, of adult education. In addition he provides a rationale for the educator to be more than a passive fixture who allows the learner total academic license:

'If the educator is restricted from presenting the adult with alternative ways of interpreting the world or of creating new personal and collective futures, then the educator becomes a kind of master technician who operates within a moral vacuum.'
(Brookfield, 1985: 6)

In defining his stance, both the informal basis for adult learning in general, and self-directed learning in particular, Brookfield follows in the footsteps of Knowles (1975). However, Brookfield (1986: 58) also suggests that a pre-requisite for personal construction by a learner is their achievement of a level of autonomy through which they possess *'an understanding and awareness of a range of possibilities.'* In addition to being influenced by the work of Knowles, Brookfield is also influenced by Dewey's (1933) conception of reflection as a trigger for a learning activity.

Looking to summarise the nature and impact of Brookfield's work Tennant (1997) considers that Brookfield provides a thoughtful analysis bringing together the concept of self-directed learning through three distinct schools of thought, namely of critical insight, independent thought and reflective analysis.

Whilst Brookfield's work has been extremely influential within adult education Smith (1996, 1999: 5) suggests that a problem associated with the concept of the self and of reflection is that it is culturally bound and *'refers to a particular set of debates and concerns that*

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characterised North American discourse.' Brookfield himself implicitly accepts this may be the case when he acknowledges that adult education is primarily a construct of the *'sociocultural context'* from which it evolves.

Experiential Learning - Kolb

'Tell me, and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand.' (Confucius)

Whilst experiential learning theory has also been described as a *'cycle of adult learning'*, and thus may be described as an adult learning theory, Kolb (1984: 15) looks to the work of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget to provide the intellectual basis for experiential learning, as do some of the major cognitivist theorists. Kolb's work and that of other cognitivist theorists are linked through their common view of looking at learning as a *'process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience'* (Kolb, 1984: 38).

Kolb's model is heavily influenced by Lewin's *'Experiential Learning Model'*. In describing Lewin's model Kolb (Ibid: 21) states that in:

[L]earning, change and growth are seen to be facilitated best by an integrated process that begins with here-and-now experience followed by collection of data and observations of that experience. The data is then analyzed and the conclusions are fed back to the actors in the experience for their use in the modification of their behaviour and choice of new experience.' Kolb (1984: 21)

He describes this as a *'four stage cycle'* and goes on to state that:

'[I]mmediate concrete experience is the basis for observation and reflection. These observations are assimilated into a "theory" from which new implications for action can be deduced. These implications or hypothesis then serve as guides in acting to create new experiences.' Kolb (1984: 21)

In his analysis Kolb (Ibid: 21) identifies two noteworthy aspects, firstly an emphasis on *'concrete experiences'* to validate and test abstract concepts. The second is on *'feedback'*

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processes,' which he considers to be a *'social learning and problem-solving process that validates information to assess deviations from a desired goal.'* This concept for the development of a theory by the learner has resonance with Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory, as discussed in Chapter 2.

From Lewin's model, as well as his analysis of those of Dewey and Piaget, Kolb suggests (Ibid: 30) that *'learning is by its very nature a tension and conflict process. New knowledge, skills or attitudes are achieved through confrontation among four modes of experiential learning.'* From this he concludes that learners need four kinds of abilities, namely concrete experience abilities (CE), reflective observation abilities (RO), abstract conceptualization abilities (AC) and active experimentation abilities (AE). He goes on to state that learners must:

'[B]e able to involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences (CE). They must be able to reflect on and observe their experiences from many different perspectives (RO). They must be able to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories (AC), and they must be able to use these theories to make decisions and solve problems (AE).' Kolb (1984: 30)

Kolb therefore concludes (Ibid: 40) that *'the process of experiential learning can be described as a four-stage cycle involving four adaptive modes - concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.'* A simplified version of Kolb's model is set out in Figure 3.5 below.

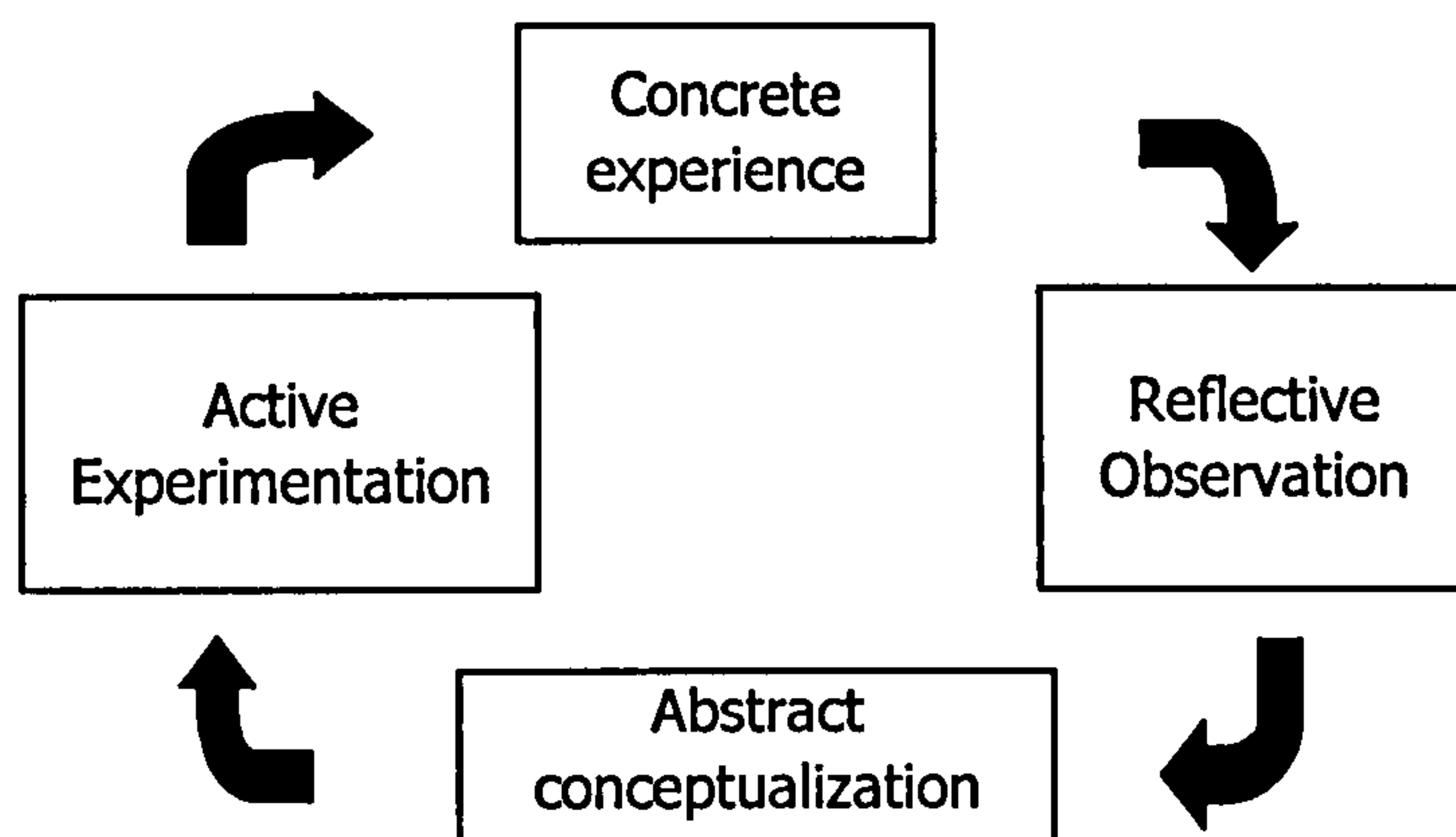


Figure 3.5 - Process of Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984)

It is noteworthy that the stages of concrete experience and reflective observation are unique to the learner whilst the stages of abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation are '*public*' and thus can be seen by others.

Considering the application of this cycle Kolb (1984: 133) suggests that the learner can enter the cycle at any point, and, following Dewey, that the cycle should be considered to be a '*spiral, filling each episode with the potential for movement.*' However, he considers that significant neglect by the educator of any one of the stages in his model can prove to be a major obstacle to learning.

Looking to the way learning occurs during Kolb's cycle Smith (2001a) considers that:

'[T]he learning process often begins with a person carrying out a particular action and then seeing the effect of the action in this situation. Following this, the second step is to understand these effects in the particular instance so that if the action were taken in the same circumstances it would be possible to anticipate what would follow from the action. In this pattern the third step would be understanding the general principle under which the particular instance falls.' (Smith, 2001a: 3)

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Turning to the timescales over which this cycle occurs Atherton (2005b: 1) believes that this process *'may happen in a flash, or over days, weeks months, depending on the topic, and that there may be a "wheel within wheels" process at the same time.'*

In terms of its use within a learning environment Healey and Jenkins (2000) suggest that the theory provides a way of organising a course utilising a *'learning cycle'* in which each of the stages have their own individual learning cycle. Atherton (2005b: 1) suggests that this *'often means the Mentor has to "chase" the learner around the cycle, asking questions to encourage reflection, conceptualisation and ways of testing ideas. The concrete experience may happen outside the mentoring session.'*

In parallel to the development of his model of experiential learning, Kolb (1984) also developed a typology of learning styles, each of which is mirrored by individual preferences for each stage of his model. He suggests that these different learning styles mean that there is need for adjustment between learner and teacher/mentor as the different preferences are complementary, antagonistic or collusive.

However, Kolb's model has been subject to a number of criticisms. For example, Boud *et al.* (1985) suggest that insufficient attention is given to reflection, or that *'the idea of stages or steps does not sit well with the reality of thinking'* (Smith, 2001a: 6). A further criticism (Jarvis, 1987) is whilst Kolb demonstrates that learning and knowledge are related, he does not address the nature of knowledge in detail. In addition it is suggested that he does not consider the situatedness of the learner or their interaction with others. Atherton (2005b) also suggests that Kolb fails to acknowledge the distinction between the public and private stages of his model.

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It can therefore be said that, in common with many other models, whilst Kolb may have identified many valid aspects of learning in his model it may well be too simplistic to reflect the full complexity of the learning process.

Nonetheless Kolb's work has had a significant impact within education and has been used and applied by others. For example Brookfield (1983: 16) suggests that the term experiential learning describes the situation in which learners gain and apply knowledge, and skills and feelings are gained in an *'immediate and relevant setting.'* It is therefore highly relevant that Korthagen (1997) considers that learning during ITT is a form of experiential learning.

Whilst experiential learning may be seen as cognitivist in its orientation I also recognise that it is often *'sponsored by an institution and might be used on training programmes for professions such as social work and teaching'* (Smith, 2001a: 1) and thus may also be considered to fall within the area of adult learning theory, as suggested by Hansford *et al.* (2003). Again any precise classification would be dependent upon the usage and context being examined.

Theory of Reflexivity - Schön

'The work of Donald Schön (Schön 1983; Schön 1987) has had a significant bearing upon approaches to teacher professional learning and the design of professional development programs. The recent literature on teacher professional development, and teacher induction in particular, makes frequent reference to reflective practice as an essential aspect of teacher competence and professional learning.' (Ferraro, 2000: 1)

Reflection has long been recognised as an important element of ITT (Ferraro, 2000), with Jay *et al.* (2002) stating that:

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'[I]ts value has become generally accepted, for teaching preservice teachers to reflect is in many ways teaching them to "think like a teacher".' (Jay et al., 2002: 74)

Ferraro suggests that in reflecting student teachers are expected to adopt an inquiry-oriented approach to their teaching. An integral part of this process is the use of personal knowledge by student teachers in order to develop their own personal theories and strategies.

However, Zeichner and Liston (1996) suggest '*reflection*' is an ambiguous term, and its use does not always have the same connotations. Furlong (1995) considers that two approaches to reflection can be identified, the first being based on the work of Dewey (1933), whilst the second is derived from the ideas of Schön (1983, 1987).

Turning to the work of Dewey first, reflection is considered to be the:

'[A]ctive, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends.' (Dewey, 1933: 9)

Looking to education in particular he considers that through the use of reflection, educators:

'[C]an look back on events, make judgments about them, and alter their teaching behaviors in light of craft, research, and ethical knowledge.' (Dewey, 1933: 70)

As such his conception of reflection is as a trigger for a learning activity. Kolb (1984), as described earlier, concurs in the use of reflection, and sees it as part of a process of experiential learning. However, McIntyre (1983) challenges the Deweyian definition of reflection and its application to ITT, suggesting that as reflection is a '*systematic enquiry into one's own practice*' it can have only a small role in ITT. He justifies this on the basis that at this very early stage of their professional development student teachers are learners,

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and as such have comparatively little experience to '*reflect on*', and therefore reflection is of limited value to them.

In contrast reflection as advocated by Schön (1983) focuses on the difficulties and importance of overcoming the natural tendency to resist new learning which challenges existing mental schema from prior experience. In explaining his model Schön divides learning into '*knowing-in-action*', i.e. learning that fits prior learning, and '*reflection-in-action*', i.e. learning that does not fit the learner's prior experiences. In the latter situation learners must change their schema quite drastically.

Schön describes knowing-in-action as being where a professional draws on their understanding and experience of a previous situation which to some degree mirrors their current situation. He considers that the sophistication of their action is not dependent on whether or not they can articulate and justify their behaviour. Rather their competence should be measured by their ability to work effectively in their current situation. He considers that with an experienced practitioner this action may seem to be intuitive.

Turning to reflection Schön suggests that professionals acquire skills through a process of reflection, both '*reflection-on-action*' and '*reflection-in-action*'. He describes reflection-on-action as being a retrospective action where learners move on from knowing-in-action to reflection on their previous actions with the objective of gaining control of their developing professional skills. He differentiates this from reflection-in-action, which he considers to be a contemporaneous event. He suggests this may occur when a professional faces an unknown situation and they are able to bring aspects of their working knowledge to their consciousness, to reflect on it and reshape it without interrupting the flow.

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It is significant that a key requirement for reflection is a pool of relevant knowledge derived from prior experiences supplemented by appropriate knowledge of the context, which supplements the knowledge gained through training.

In looking to the application of his work to professional training Schön also distinguishes between '*technical rationality*' and the '*reflective practitioner*' paradigms. Schön argues that the model of professional training which he terms '*technical rationality*' assumes that propositional knowledge in the form of theories and principles can be applied directly to professional practice.

Looking to the manifestations of the '*technical rationality*' model in teacher education, Stuart (2002) states that this can take several forms and suggests that:

'Some programmes focus on behavioural skills, in which teachers are taught to deliver the curriculum by using certain methods, techniques and planning mechanisms. Others take a more academic approach, assuming that once students understand the subject disciplines, they can teach it. A third variant is the applied theorist approach, where students are given educational theories, based on child development and cognitive studies, on the assumption that these can be usefully applied in all classrooms.' (Stuart, 2002: 371)

In contrast Schön (1983) suggests that the capacity to reflect-on-action is one of the defining characteristics of professional practice. He therefore proposes the concept of reflective practice as a critical process in the development or refinement of professional skills. Schön considers that this involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline. He suggests this enables beginners in a discipline to recognize the similarities between their own individual practices and those of more experienced practitioners. He also suggests (Ibid: 278) that in-job practice provides '*fast-moving episodes punctuated by intervals which provide opportunity for reflection*'.

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Tripp (1993) considers that reflecting on what to do is essential to the development of professional judgement, but unless this reflection involves some form of challenge to and critique of the learner and their professional values, learners tend to simply strengthen existing patterns and tendencies. It is this tendency, he suggests, which means that learners have to do something other than merely reflect upon their current practice to alter it or consider it another way. Consequently in order to break out of this cycle Tripp proposes that learners must change their understanding through deliberately setting out to view the world of their practice in an alternative manner.

In terms of the application of reflection within ITT Harrison *et al.* (2005) suggest that reflection-on-practices involves:

'An experienced/expert colleague acting as mentor to the more junior teacher therefore supports, confirms, recognises and even challenges the interpretations and/or experiences of the other.' Harrison *et al.* (2005: 270-271)

Within this process of reflection Harrison *et al.* suggest that it will involve the mentor probing and questioning the student teacher whilst concurrently providing their own contextual knowledge and experiences. They suggest (Ibid: 276) that the premise for reflection is that reflection plus action will generate '*developing practice*', with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle underpinning this process.

This concept matches that of Sloboda (1986: 32-33), who states that '*real life skills ... are usually learnt with the aid of some form of coaching*', and argues that appropriate feedback on practice, which he characterises as '*knowledge of what your actions achieved*', is '*essential to skill acquisition*.' In addition it complements Tomlinson's (1995) view that:

'[T]he acquisition of practical capability requires cycles of plan-attempt-feedback-replan, a process which when done with the same action unit tends to produce a gradual tuning ... that makes it accurate, economical and intuitive.' (Tomlinson, 1995; 13)

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However, Clift *et al.* (1992) criticise the application of reflective practice, stating it was being overly used to the detriment of other important educational factors. Smith (2002) particularises this disquiet and suggests that Schön neglects the context of the learner, stating:

'[T]his is a dimension we have become rather more aware of following Lave and Wenger's (1991) exploration of situated learning. It may well be that this failure to attend to method and problematize the production of his models and ideas has also meant that his contribution in this area has been used in a rather unreflective way by trainers.' (Smith, 2002: 13)

In addition Clift *et al.* (Op Cit) consider that combining a more contextual approach to reflective practice together with Dewey's philosophy on the moral and situational aspects of teaching would be a better balance for teacher education.

Boud and Walker (1998) also criticise the use of a '*checklist*' or '*reflection on demand*' as having no link to conceptual frameworks such that student teachers are not challenged. They suggest that these problem areas could be addressed by mentors creating a climate of trust, and thereby creating opportunities for reflection particular to the learner's individual needs and context. Williams and Watson (2004) respond to this criticism by suggesting that reflective inquiry should draw on Schön's (1983) notion of reflection on action, with inquiry focusing on the practice of teaching and, in the debriefing, stimulated by the specific lesson being discussed by tutor and student teacher.

Theory of Andragogy- Knowles

'Pedagogy is by definition the science that studies the way in which children are taught. In the case of adults, we speak of andragogy, even though this distinction is not always pertinent and may not be generally acknowledged. It seems more important simply to recognise that child learning and adult learning are bound to have points in common.' (OECD, 2003: 162)

Although andragogy first appeared as a term associated with adult learners in the year 1921 it was not until Knowles heard about it, and then used the term in his work that a clear association with adult learning was established (Nottingham Andragogy Group, 1981). Knowles (1970: 38) defines andragogy as *'the art and science of helping adults learn,'* which he distinguishes from pedagogy, which he defines in turn as *'the instruction of children'.* However, Brookfield (1986) suggests that definitions of andragogy can vary and states that:

'To some it is an empirical descriptor of adult learning styles, to others it is a conceptual anchor from which a set of appropriately "adult" teaching behaviours can be derived, and to still others it serves as an exhortatory, prescriptive rallying cry. This last group seeks to combat what it sees as the use with adult learners of overtly didactic modes of teaching and program planning, such as those commonly found in school-based, child education.' (Brookfield, 1986: 90)

Indeed in a change of emphasis Knowles *et al.* (1998: 59) suggest that andragogy is in fact a set of assumptions about how adults learn. For Knowles (1970) andragogy is premised upon four, but subsequently six (Knowles *et al.*, 1998), andragogical principles as providing effective methodologies for adult learning. These principles consist of learners' needing to know; being self directed, i.e. they have moved from being a dependent personality toward one of being self-directed; prior experiences, i.e. their experience is a rich source of learning; readiness to learn, i.e. they learn what they need to know; orientation to learning, i.e. a change from a time perspective of postponed application of knowledge to one of immediacy of application; motivation to learn, i.e. as a person matures the motivation to learn is internal.

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In explaining the first of these principles Knowles suggests that adults need to know why they need to learn something before they undertake to learn it. As a consequence they become ready to learn something when *'they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real tasks and problems'* (Knowles *et al.*, 1998: 44).

This conclusion in turn links with his second principle that adults are self directed (Knowles *et al.*, 1998: 65), in which emphasis is placed on the fact that *'adults resent and resist situations in which they feel others are imposing their wills on them'* even though *'previous schooling has made them dependent learners.'* They therefore suggest that within an adult relationship it is the job of the educator to move the novice trainee away from their old habits and into new patterns of learning where they become self-directed and responsible for their own learning and the direction with which it takes.

Looking to helping a trainee to become self-directed Knowles *et al.* consider that it is essential that a trainee follows a pathway of learning that suits them best. Others also support this position, with Brookfield (1986), as described above, being a strong advocate of self-direction. However, Knowles (1980) recognises that this is one of the most difficult tasks of the educator, in particular the need to ensure that the learner is able to sustain challenge.

Turning to the basis for this principle Lunenberg and Korthagen (2005: 2) consider that *'the emphasis in constructivist-based education lies on the activities of the student.'* Constructivism views knowledge as an entity constructed by each learner, as such it considers that knowledge cannot be transmitted from one person to another; rather, following Kelly (1955) and his Personal Construct Theory, it is the unique construction of each learner.

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Rogers (2002: 113) also proposes that within constructivism *'[T]he act of learning is [seen as] ... largely initiated by the learner, exploring and extending their own understanding.'*

Cox (2006) concurs. In addition Huitt (2003: 1) states that *'The basic premise [within constructivism] is that an individual learner must actively "build" knowledge and skills.'*

Turning to the nature of knowledge within this model, which is seen as being both relativistic, that is to say it varies according to time and location, and fallibilist, so that nothing can be taken for granted. Rogers (2002: 114) therefore suggests that as a consequence *'The focus thus switches from trying to establish the validity of the knowledge itself to the criteria by which we judge the validity of the questions asked and the answers arrived at in each individual case.'* As a consequence, in terms of outcomes, constructivism looks to prepare the learner to solve problems at a future date in ambiguous situations.

In looking to application of the constructivist approach to learning and teaching Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003) suggest that:

'[L]earning is considered an active process in which the learner builds up personal knowledge representations that are the results of his or her learning experiences. As a consequence, the emphasis in constructivist-based education is on the activities of the learner ... Both Zimmerman (1990) and Claxton (1996) argue that the learning process should be organized in such a way that learners can take responsibility for their own learning processes. Pupils and students should be able to estimate their own levels and to plan and adjust their learning processes accordingly. Thus student-directed learning has become an important theme in educational theory and practice.'
(Lunenberg and Korthagen 2003: 3)

As his third principle Knowles suggests that the pre-existing experiences of adult learners provide them with a source of knowledge that can and should be put to good use in the classroom. As part of this process he suggests that practice as a reflective learner, as advocated by Schön, Kolb and Mezirow, is an important tool for the adult learner in assisting

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them to examine and question their habits, and then move them onwards to a new understanding of information. This is because:

'[R]eflective learning involves assessment or re-assessment of assumptions' and 'reflective learning becomes transformative whenever assumptions or premises are found to be distorting, inauthentic or otherwise invalid.' (Mezirow, 1991: 6)

In describing the fourth principle, the learners' readiness to learn, Knowles *et al.* (1998: 144) consider that adults become ready to learn when their life changes and thus creates a need to know. In support of this suggestion they refer to Pratt's (1988) model describing how life situations affect adult learners' readiness for andragogical-type learning experiences, and *'recognising that most are highly situational.'*

Pratt (Ibid: 165) identifies 2 core dimensions within each learning situation which adults vary; namely direction in the mechanics or logistics of learning and support (emotional support); and to the relationship between the educator and the learner. Pratt's model has similarities with Daloz's model for mentoring (1986), which is based on developmental theory of defined stages by Levinson (1978).

Knowles' fifth principle, the adult learners' orientation to learning is linked to the strategy of problem solving on the basis that adults prefer to solve problems rather than subject centred learning. In explaining the underlying basis for this, reference is made to Kolb's work on experiential learning, in particular his definition of learning as *'The process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience.'* This definition highlights the learning process from the experiential learning viewpoint in which:

"[T]he emphasis [is] on the process of adaptation and learning as opposed to content or outcomes. Second is that knowledge is a transformation process, being continuously created and recreated, not an independent entity to be acquired or transmitted. Third, learning transforms experience in both its objective and subjective

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forms. Finally to understand learning, we must understand the nature of knowledge, and vice versa.' (Kolb, 1984: 38)

Looking to the sixth and final principle, that is the motivation to learn, Knowles *et al.* (1998: 149) consider that the most potent motivational factors for adult learners are internal ones, which they suggest include *'quality of life, satisfaction, and self-esteem.'* As such they suggest that the learning they most value *'will be that which has personal value to them'* and look to Vroom's (1995) expectancy theory to support this, noting that:

'Expectancy theory posits that an individual's motivation is the sum of 3 factors:

- Valence - the value a person places on the outcome.*
- Instrumentality - the probability that the valued outcomes will be received given that certain outcomes have occurred.*
- Expectancy - the belief a person has that certain effort will lead to outcomes that get rewarded.*

This means that adult learners will be most motivated when they believe that they can learn the new material (expectancy) and that the learning will help them with a problem or issue (instrumentality) that is important in their life (valency).' (Knowles *et al.*, 1998: 150)

Turning to the application of his principles Knowles (1984) states that:

'While each principle of andragogy is important as a set they must be viewed as a system of elements that can be adopted in whole or in part. It is not an ideology that must be applied totally or without modification. In fact an essential feature of andragogy is "flexibility".' (Knowles, 1984: 418)

Knowles *et al.* (1998: 154) expand upon this and recognise that these principles cannot be applied rigidly, but rather that *'Instructors should adapt instruction to accommodate differences in individual abilities, style and preferences.'* They also recognise that it is not always possible to *'have the tools to adequately measure or study the individual differences.'*

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Following Smith (1996, 1999) the application of these principles in respect to the learner, the learner's experience, the learner's readiness to learn and the orientation to learning are set out in Table 3.6 below.

	Andragogy
The learner	<i>Moves towards independence.</i> <i>Self-directing.</i> Teacher encourages and nurtures this movement
The learner's experience	<i>A rich resource for learning.</i> Hence teaching methods include discussion, problem-solving etc.
Readiness to learn	<i>People learn what they need to know,</i> so that learning programmes organised around life application.
Orientation to learning	<i>Learning experiences should be based around experiences,</i> since people are performance centred in their learning

Table 3.6 - Assumptions of andragogy following Knowles (Jarvis, 1985: 51)

A key point illustrated in this figure is that in andragogy teachers guide the learners to their own knowledge rather than supplying them with facts; this contrasts with pedagogy where learners rely on the instructor to direct the learning (Green, 1998).

Zanting *et al.* (2001: 61) support Knowles' andragogical stance and note that '*policy makers and educators are increasingly striving for an increase of self-regulation by the learner and a decrease of external regulation by the teacher.*' Furthermore this approach is now expressly

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advocated within the Guidelines (TDA, 2006: 75), which look for providers of ITT to encourage student teachers to *'take responsibility for their own development.'* This approach is echoed in HEI Partnership handbooks. It may therefore be suggested with some confidence that in this respect mentors are expected to take the educator's role identified for them in andragogy.

Looking to the basis for Knowles' approach to andragogy Darkenwald and Merriam (1982: 78) consider that it has its foundations in humanism with its emphasis on *'man is his wholeness'* and *'how human experience might be "extended, enriched, or made more meaningful"; an effort is made to help people "to grow and evolve more fully in realisation of their potential.'* They conclude that *'the challenge set down by humanists has found expression in adult education through andragogy.'* They support this by suggesting that:

'The ... 4 tenets of the Association for Humanistic Psychology succinctly express the foundation for an andragogical approach to adult learners.' (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982: 78)

However, Tennant (2002), whilst using the term constructivism as opposed to humanism suggests that:

'The parallels between moderate views of constructivism and andragogy are rather striking. Both stress ownership of the learning processes by learners, experiential learning and problem-solving approaches to learning. However, andragogy and some of the more extreme views of Constructivism are not compatible.' (Tennant, 2002: 142)

Knowles' work has been subject to criticism, and his model described as an ideal state (Brookfield, 1994) and that andragogy is less a theory of adult learning than an ideal state for adult learners to be in, being a prescriptive rather than descriptive model. In support of this assertion the six principles of andragogy have been set out in Table 3.7 below, and

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linked to associated activities and to learning theories which express similar, although not identical views.

Principle	Activity	Learning Theory
Needing to know	Learning needs to be relevant	Schön (1983), Brookfield (1983)
Being self directed	The learner sets the direction for the learning	Constructivism, Rogers (1969) and Brookfield (1986)
Prior experiences	Experiences can be put to use as a resource for learning	Schön (1983, 1987), Kolb (1984) and Mezirow (1991)
Readiness to learn	With maturity learning becomes orientated tasks associated with the development of social roles	Daloz (1986), Pratt (1988)
Orientation to learning	As Strategy of problem solving – transformative experience	Kolb (1984)
Motivation to learn	A motivation to learn develops with maturity. As a result there is a focus on connecting a sense of purpose with a vision of a result	Maslow (1998) and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996)

Table 3.7 - Correlation between Principles of Andragogy and Learning Theories

As can be seen the principles espoused by Knowles have a large degree of correlation with the adult development theories identified by Hansford *et al.* (2003) as forming the

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theoretical foundation for mentoring described in literature. These individual theories are set out above.

In addition I believe that through andragogy Knowles has highlighted, amongst other things, potential differences in the role of the instructor and the purpose for learning in adult education.

Taking all these considerations in account, and following Brookfield (1986: 90), the stance I take in respect of andragogy in this research project is that it provides a '*conceptual anchor*' which may assist in deriving '*adult teaching behaviours*.'

3.3.2 Developmental Stage Theory - Fuller

'Frances Fuller's stages of concern, David Hunt's conceptual levels, and Jean Piaget's model of equilibration offer a foundation for how administrators might support teachers and learning amid organizational innovations.' (Kelehear, 2003: 1)

Hansford *et al.* (2003) identify from their literature review that development stage theory derived from Fuller's (1969) work provides a significant conceptual framework for mentoring. This research, which took place in the US in the 1960s, looks at the concerns of student teachers during their initial teacher training.

It is important to note that Fuller is not a psychologist or theorist; rather she is an educator researching the views of student teachers. It should also be noted that Hansford *et al.* (2003) describe her work as providing a conceptual framework, and not a theory in its own right.

The most significant aspect of Fuller's (1969: 221) work is that she postulates a '*three phase developmental conceptualization of teachers' concerns*.' These phases are pre-

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teaching, early teaching and late concerns. She suggests that in the first phase student teachers concerns are focussed on their yet to occur practical teaching experience, which is based upon their *'own experiences as pupils'* (Ibid: 219) and hearsay from conversations with others. By the second phase, i.e. when they are teaching, they are concerned with themselves and their own adequacy. This phase concentrates on coping with classes and the fear of negative evaluations by their supervisors. She suggests that it is only by the third phase that their concerns are focussed on *'pupil gain and self evaluation as opposed to personal gain and evaluation by others'* (Ibid: 221).

Subsequently Fuller and Brown (1975) developed Fuller's (1969) concerns theory by identifying three stages of concern, as opposed to phases, through which teachers pass in their development. They identified these stages as being self concerns, task concerns and impact concerns.

In setting out a theoretical basis Fuller relies on Bijou (1968) and his view that post childhood development is best understood in terms of sub-divisions of social interactions than in age, events or other similar concepts. This view of development is consistent with those of Maslow and Erickson.

It is, I believe, significant that whilst Fuller (1969) and Fuller and Brown (1975) identify only three phases or stages in their research they recognise that there may be more phases, both higher and lower than they identified. In addition Fuller (Op Cit) suggests that an unanswered question exists regarding whether student teachers have to move sequentially from one stage to another or whether some students can skip a phase.

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Thus, whilst her work is relatively simple Kelehear (2003:2) considers that Fuller has influenced the work of others (Hall and Loucks, 1978, Rutherford and Hall, 1990) and that *'she set in motion an understanding of the stages through which all individuals travel as they engage in change.'* Therefore, he suggests that:

'The message from the stages of concern work is that as school leaders engage in change, they must attend to the needs of those caught in the change in specific and intentional ways. Only after individuals begin to understand how they will manage the change can leaders begin to ask about the consequences for the students.' (Kelehear, 2003: 4)

Kelehear also suggests that Fuller's work can form an integral part of a model in which:

'[T]he leader can identify the stage of concern, the current conceptual level, and the level of stress, then he or she can appropriately support and stretch the group during the innovation. Just as a mentor teacher might match and mismatch a new teacher, a leader can prescribe a strategy that matches (supports) the current preferred learning style of the group and then mismatch (stretch) the group by asking it to consider the innovation.' (Kelehear, 2003: 7-8)

This model combines the support and challenge advocated by Daloz and with the understanding of the concerns and stage of development of the learner.

Accordingly, the real significance attributed to Fuller's work by the literature is not the number of stages of development it identifies per se, but rather because it suggests that learning proves to be more effective if educators have an understanding of the current stage of development of their students and of the following stages they can move on to.

3.3.3 Cognitive Development Theory

Social Constructivist Theory

Hansford *et al.* (2003) are not alone in recognising the importance of cognitive development theory to mentoring, with Hobson (2002: 6) suggesting that Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective is seen to have a significant influence on the theoretical basis of mentoring.

Looking to the nature of his work Tusting and Barton (2003: 14) suggest that it *'supports not merely a social, but a sociocultural theory of learning, which sees cognition as distributed both between the interaction, and across such mediating "tools for thinking" as are present in the culture more generally.'* Such social constructivist theory provides an approach to learning in which learners extend their knowledge through interaction with their environment, and by developing this knowledge through the context of their environment.

Applying this to learners Vygotsky suggests that acting in isolation they can only construct a limited view of the world that is unique to them. He describes this state as the *'zone of actual development'* [ZAD]. Expanding on this he suggests that the developmental processes within an individual follow behind the learning processes, and by way of example cites the example of children being able to successfully complete tasks when supported by others but which they would have not been able to complete when working in isolation. He considers that the abilities that are demonstrated by children when supported are *'being internalised'* by them, and that the associated cognitive development occurs in a *'zone of proximal development'* [ZPD]. He defines the ZPD as:

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'[T]he distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving ... in collaboration with more capable peers.' Vygotsky (1978: 85)

Thus the ZPD represents prospective mental development on the part of the learner (Vygotsky, 1978: 87). Atherton (2005a: 3), following Vygotsky illustrates the relationship of these states in Figure 3.8 below.

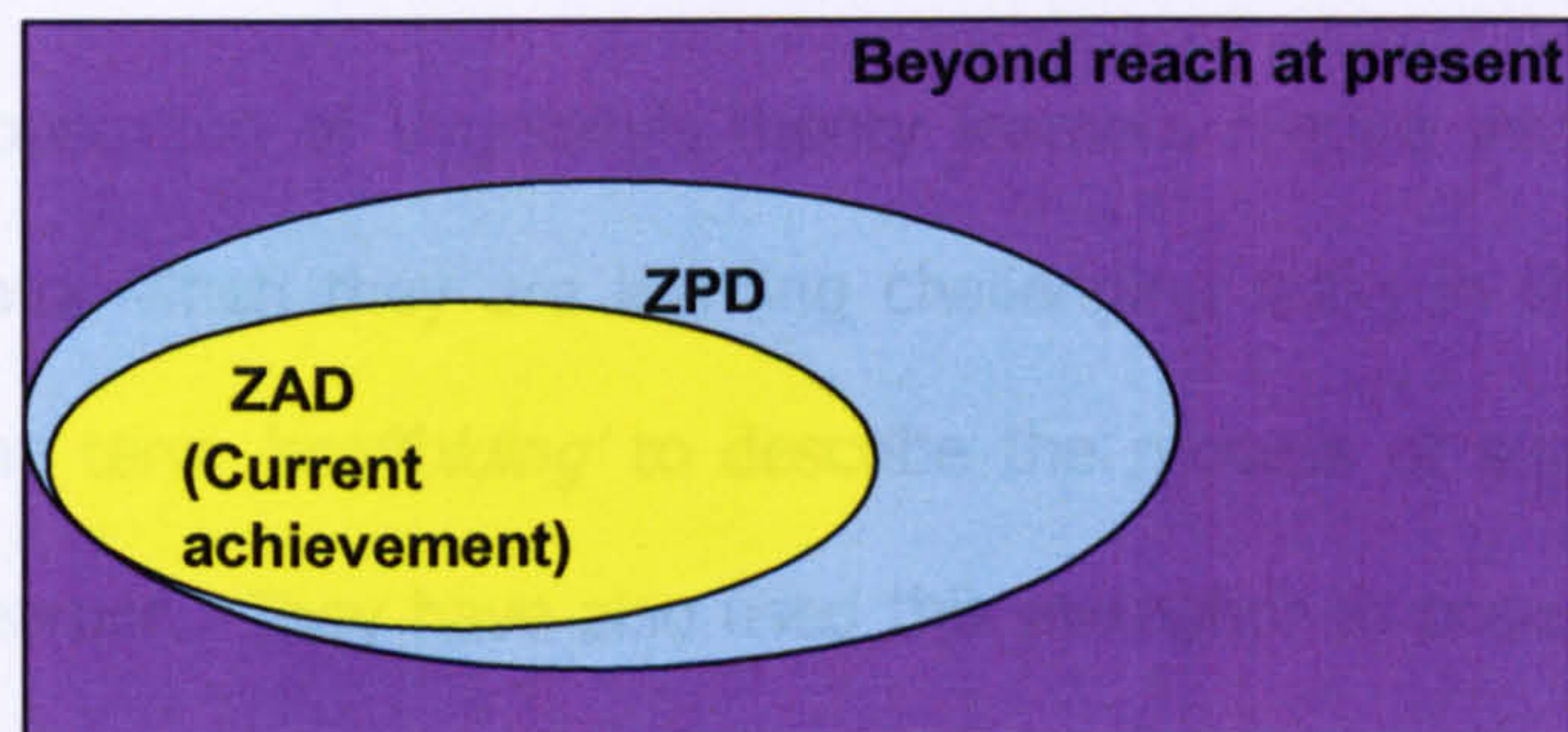


Figure 3.8 - Atherton (2005) after Vygotsky

Whilst the ZAD indicates the current level of achievement of the learner the ZPD reflects what they can achieve with support, albeit not permanently but rather as a precursor to being able to do things by themselves. Vygotsky suggests that the aim of the educator should be to stretch the learner so as to be working within their ZPD. In addition he suggests (Vygotsky, 1978: 85) that what learners can do with the assistance of others is *'even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone.'* He concludes by arguing that in this state of learning the more capable peer should be providing assistance to the learner through form, clues and encouragement and not just be arranging the learner's environment so that they can find the solution by themselves.

Looking to the ability to develop the ZPD of any individual Vygotsky considers that inherent within it is a willingness to learn, which in turn determines the achievable higher limits of

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competence with the individual. He suggests that these higher limits are constantly moving as the learners capabilities of learning independently are increasing.

Following Vygotsky's rationale human activities are rooted in social participation and are learned not in isolation, but with the assistance of others. Collaboration is seen as an important aspect of the process of development by the learner.

Looking to the application of Vygotsky's theory learners require intensive support on the part of the educator when they are learning challenging tasks in the ZPD. Wood *et al.* (1976) devised the term '*scaffolding*' to describe the process of support provided by the educator to the learner. They have also used this metaphor to postulate how an educator provides this support. Following on from this work scaffolding and '*reciprocal teaching*' has been developed as a strategy for the educator to enter the learner's ZPD.

Hausfather (1996) proposes that in scaffolding the educator must provide the learner with opportunities to extend themselves, to engage their interest, simplify tasks and motivate them. He suggests that in reciprocal teaching the key element is the creation of a dialogue which, when it moves beyond mere questions and answers, becomes a discourse.

In the context of ITT social participation can be seen as an important influence on the learning potential of school-based mentoring. Taking Vygotsky's work with that of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1991) it may be inferred that student teachers are taught and/or learn with the help of other people.

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Situated Learning Theory – Lave and Wenger

Following the thinking of Vygotsky and his view of learners interacting with their environment this approach is developed by Lave and Wenger (1991), who postulate that apprenticeship is an example of '*situated learning*.' They suggest that apprenticeship models of learning are often found within established '*communities of practice*' where newcomers are progressively exposed to the skills and working routines of experienced practitioners. In this model apprenticeship is seen as a holistic entity; not only do they see this as a means by which work-based skills are passed on, but one in which individual identities are developed in workplace settings in accordance with the prevailing norms.

They suggest (Ibid: 14) that through such situated learning the individual learner '*acquires the skill to perform by actually engaging in the process, under the attenuated conditions of legitimate peripheral participation*.' They differentiate this from learning in a formal setting in which the individual learner gains '*a discrete body of abstract knowledge which (s)he will then transport and reapply in later contexts*.' Indeed Brown *et al.* (1988: 7) suggest that '*To learn to use tools as practitioners use them students, like apprentices, must be enabled to enter that community and its culture. Thus, in a significant way, learning is, we believe, a process of enculturation*.' This understanding of learning is particularly relevant to ITT as Edwards and Protheroe (2004) suggest that student teachers' learning is heavily situated.

Looking to the nature of situated learning Lave and Wenger conclude that it is a concept of learning that '*represents the particular mode of engagement of a learner who participates in the actual practice of an expert, but only to a limited degree and with limited responsibility for the ultimate responsibility for the ultimate product as a whole*.' Significantly they also

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conclude that there is no evidence to imply that the learner's *'mental representations ... remain fixed thereafter.'*

Working within the *'situated cognition'* or *'situated learning'* perspective Lave and Wenger (1991) take the idea of apprenticeship as central to learning. However, their focus is not on individual cognitive processing but rather on the whole person, and the context and culture in which they learn. As such they perceive learning as a process of participation in *'communities of practice'* and suggest that in this process the role of the learner evolves over a period of time from peripheral participation to a position of increased engagement with the community they are within. Eventually the learner moves towards full participation, and in doing so absorbs the practice of the community. Brown *et al.* (1988) claim that *'[I]n order to learn these subjects (and not just learn about them) students need much more than abstract concepts and self-contained examples. They need to be exposed to practitioners using these tools in the authentic, ill-defined problems of their world.'*

By being immersed in a culture's beliefs Lave and Wenger (1991: 53) also suggest that this will involve a learner becoming a different person through *'the possibilities enabled by these systems of relation.'* They also consider *'to ignore this aspect of learning is to overlook the fact that learning involves the construction of identities.'* They also see learning as cultural, with the culture of the individual determining the way in which they see and interpret their experiences, and how students see themselves as teachers.

The context of a more experienced person working with a less experienced person in order to learn skills has been described as the *'Apprenticeship Model.'* Lave and Wenger see the model being utilised as an *'add on'* to a system of training for many professions such as law,

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medicine, teaching or even the arts, whether it is in Western Europe or the United States of America or in contemporary West Africa. They state:

'The historical significance of apprenticeship as a form for producing knowledgeably skilled persons has been over-looked, we believe, for it does not conform to either functionalist or Marxist views of educational "progress." In both traditions apprenticeship has been treated as a historically significant object more often than most educational phenomena – but only to emphasise its anachronistic irrelevance. It connotes both outmoded production and obsolete education.' Lave and Wenger (1991; 62).

However, Lave and Wenger are considered by some (Jones *et al.*, 1997: 254) to have been so strongly influenced by the apprenticeship model as to represent it as an idealised relationship, whilst others considered it to be less than that in reality. Fuller and Unwin (1999) suggest that one shortcoming is its emphasis on informal or '*social interactional*' learning in place of formal learning processes within communities of practice.

Nonetheless Lunt and Monaghan (1992: 138) cite Clutterbuck's (1985) work as locating the roots of mentoring firmly within the apprenticeship system and emphasise the '*power-dependency status*' of this model, if only because of the higher level of expertise located in the mentor. Kwo (1994) suggests that the apprenticeship model of teacher training has generally been discarded as outdated because of its simplistic assumptions about learning and its narrow adherence to the transmission mode of teaching. This interpretation may ignore the different usages of the term.

In contrast in educational psychology the term '*apprenticeship*' has a substantially different meaning. In illustrating the latter Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) identify one example of practical application of the apprenticeship model by referring to state policy in the United States as focusing on:

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'[A] "personal relationship" in which "instruction and guidance" are provided so that the beginner achieves "a practical working command of what is known about how to teach effectively." The mentor's role ... is defined by a list of activities including orienting the beginner to district and school "policies, procedures and expectations", and providing "feedback, coaching and support" the interactions between mentors and beginners are expected to be sensitive, non-judgmental and supportive, and it specified that they are intended to focus on the beginners' classroom performance.' (Cochran-Smith and Paris, 1995; 183)

The high level of correlation between this example and the current regulatory framework for ITT in England and Wales is noteworthy. In addition the example cited by Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) fits very closely with the competence-based education model currently used in England and Wales, having many of the same features. In doing so it also explicitly identifies the role to be adopted by mentors and the strategies they are to use.

I therefore believe that the definition of the term '*apprenticeship model*' used in educational psychology to be more appropriate to my research than that commonly used in education, with its association with the transmission mode of learning.

3.4 Conclusions

'While the differences among the theories are important, all provide useful and overlapping perspectives. And all attempt to counter the implicit metaphor of the unwinding clock, which pervades so much of our conversation about aging. Instead, they suggest more profound and mythic metaphors: the seasons, an upward-spiralling helix, a journey.' (Daloz, 1986: 44)

As identified by literature (Brooks and Sykes, 1997; Butcher, 2000), there is no one model of mentoring that has superseded all others. Instead Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993: 716) suggest that '*different forms of mentoring emerge in different contexts. Formal expectations, working conditions, selection and preparation all create a set of constraints and opportunities that shape how mentors define and enact their role.*'

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In addition Hansford *et al.* (2003) suggest that a range of diverse learning theories underpins mentoring. This should come as no surprise given that Rogers (2002: 115) tells us that there is no agreement about learning, with a diversity of views on the way learning occurs and therefore considers that *'we cannot say with certainty that any one theory is closer to expressing the "truth" of reality than any other.'* He concludes that instead of searching for one learning theory to fit all situations we should look for a number of theories, particularly as the learning by solitary individuals may be different from that occurring in group situations.

Ertmer and Newby (1993) also believe that the strategies used by individual learning theories overlap and that with the focus of the strategies varying according to the aim of the learning theory being employed by the educator and the level of cognitive processing required by the learning task being undertaken. Accordingly, they suggest that an understanding of the level of task knowledge being undertaken by a learner allows the educator, as the designer of the instructional material being used, to make the best use of the different learning theories. Taking this approach the educator is able to draw from a large number of strategies to meet a variety of learning situations.

Taking the above conclusions together it is likely that in looking at the use of learning theories by mentors I may not look at one theory of learning, rather I am likely to be looking to a range of theories reflecting different orientations to learning. Significantly these theories, by being implicitly behaviourist, cognitivist or constructivist, may involve contrasting ideas as to the purpose and process of learning and education, not least in the role that educators may take.

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Nonetheless Hansford *et al.* (2003: 53) have been able to identify adult learning theory as providing the '*dominant conceptual framework*' underpinning mentoring in literature. However, I believe that little attention has been given as to whether this occurs in practice, and if so, by what means, although Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) suggests:

'Facilitating the learning experience for adults thus necessitates an understanding of adulthood in conjunction with the learning process. The adult's ability to acquire new information may have more to do with lifestyle, social roles, and attitudes than with an innate ability to learn. Likewise an older adult's success in processing information may be hampered by physiological impairments. It would seem that few generalisations can be made about adults as learners without considering the interrelatedness of cognitive, biological, and psychosocial factors.' (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982: 75-76)

Accordingly, I believe that one of the requirements for my research project is to consider how, if at all, learning theories used by mentors focus on the distinctiveness of adult learning. In doing so I note that when looking to the characteristics of the theories of adult learning Atherton (2005a) states that '*humanistic theories of learning tend to be highly value-driven and hence more like prescriptions (about what ought to happen) rather than descriptions (of what does happen).*'

I do acknowledge that Tusting and Barton (2003) argue that recent literature sees adult learners as not being intrinsically different from other learners, however, such literature recognises the importance of the contextual and cultural factors that are unique to adult learners. Accordingly, they suggest that:

'Adult learning takes place in specific social contexts, and is engaged in for specific purposes. The way learning develops is directly related to the combination of factors in these specific settings and purposes. Therefore there may not be a singular "right" model of learning that can be applied.' (Hansford *et al.*, 2003: 22)

I will therefore consider these contextual and cultural factors, in particular the specific settings and purposes of student teachers, in my research.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

'Qualitative inquiry's analytic pendulum is constantly in motion. There have been times when naturalism was on the upswing, when the richly detailed description of social worlds was the goal. At other times, analysis has shifted toward the processes by which these worlds and their experiences are socially constructed. The pendulum has even doubled back on itself as post modern sensibilities have refocused the analytic project on itself, viewing it as a source of social reality in its own right.' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2005: 487)

Before looking at the design of the methodology for my research project it is worth reflecting on the nature and purpose of this research project in order to contextualise it, and thus assist in justifying the methodological approach I will use.

As previously explained my research looks to examine the learning theories used by mentors. In addition it looks at the influences on mentors' professional practice, taking particular note of the role of assessor prescribed for them by the current competence-based system of ITT they are working within. This involves looking at individuals, their perceptions and behaviours, and recognising that they each have unique interpretations of the world they live in. My research also acknowledges that there may be underlying motives behind mentors' perspectives and strategies, thus identifying the need to take individual mentors' experiences in context. My research strategy thus needs to recognise the formulation of personal perspectives by mentors, and eventually to theories about how individuals see themselves in the context of *'the world and I.'*

Disagreements as to which research method is more effective or better to answer questions have led to a dualism between quantitative and qualitative research emphasising different accounts and roles, or as Miles and Huberman (1994) refer, to *'variables'* and *'cases.'* Whilst I recognise that all research approaches have both strengths and weaknesses the guiding

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principle for research design has to be one of fitness for purpose. Bearing this in mind, and following the outline of my research project set out above, I have chosen to adopt a qualitative paradigm and to use an interpretive approach for my epistemology.

The reason for adopting an interpretive approach, which is part of the qualitative paradigm, is to assist in the understanding of mentors' personal interpretations of the surrounding world, which are '*multi-faceted images of human behaviour*' and as '*varied as the situations and contexts supporting them emerge*' (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 23). This approach is also suitable as it is sympathetic to a view of social reality being constantly on the move, and created and owned by individual human beings. In addition it is consistent with my ontological position, which is one that '*challenges the suggestion that categories such as organisation and culture are pre-given*' (Bryman, 2001: 17).

Looking to address these aspects of my methodology this chapter is split in to two sections, the first looking to the theoretical framework for my research, whilst the second considers the basis for my research.

Within the first section I will develop the basis for the methodology adopted for this research project, initially by looking at the ontological position for my project, and the links to the associated epistemological framework; and then to the interpretivist philosophy that I will be adopting. In the second section I will consider the parameters for the use of a case study, trustworthiness, ethics and access.

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4.2 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.2.1 Ontological Position

'Contemporary postpositivistic philosophy of human and social sciences is marked by a return of the metaphysical, if by that phrase we mean a renewed concern with the nature, constitution, and structure of being and social reality and how knowledge of same plays a role in our claims to know social reality.' (Schwandt, 2001: 158)

Ontology, is the way that knowledge is explored and is interlinked with epistemology, as different questions and understandings regarding truth, knowledge, objectivity and reality lead to the use of different research methods to answer them. Following Corazzon (2008) ontology also refers to the theory of objects and their ties, and as such it provides criteria for distinguishing various types of objects, whether concrete and abstract, or existent and non-existent, and their ties, be they relations, dependences or predication. Developing this Cocchiarella (1991: 640) states that *'the method of ontology is the intuitive study of the fundamental properties, modes, and aspects of being, or of entities in general.'*

Reflecting the above, the ontological perspective that I have adopted in the study being carried out is that of a constructivist, recognising that *'social phenomena'* and all their various meanings are *'continually being accomplished by social actors'* (Bryman, 2001: 18). Accordingly, the strand of constructivist thought that I am following is described as social constructivism, as advocated by von Glaserfeld and Piaget. The basic concept of this approach is that human knowledge cannot consist of accurate representations or faithful copying of an external reality, rather it is seen as an *'unending series of processes of inner construction'* (Schwandt, 2001: 31). Thus following Bryman (2001: 18) my research relates to *'social objects'* and *'categories'* on the basis that I view them as *'socially constructed.'*

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In taking such a perspective, questions of social ontology cannot be separated from issues concerning the conduct of social research. As a consequence Bryman suggests that the researcher's ontological assumptions and commitments will inevitably impact on the way in which they formulate their questions and how the research is carried out. In my case a major factor will be my prior experience of being a mentor and teacher practitioner, as well as being a researcher of the mentoring relationship.

It is also necessary to recognise that in recent times the term constructivism has been associated with researchers' own perceptions of their participants' personal constructions of the world around them. This reinforces the ontological position I am adopting in which the importance of the researcher being involved methodologically in the *'life worlds'* of the participants is stressed.

Accordingly, my epistemological perspective is not that of a *'narrative inquiry'* as all the approaches, methods and analysis used do not revolve around *'an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by one who lives with them'* (Chase, 2005: 651). Likewise an ethnomethodological framework, which generally focuses on *'the assumptions people make the conventions they use and the practices they adopt'* (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 24), is not appropriate for my research arena. Also I am not utilising an ethnographic framework using a Postmodernist perspective with that of *'Discourse Analysis'* and *'Conversation Analysis'* as Foucault (1972, 49) explains *'that discourses are practices that systematically form objects of which they speak.'*

Instead I consider that my investigation will take on an inductive approach, *'one that reflects the distinctiveness of humans'* (Bryman, 2001: 13) and where the emphasis is on an empathic understanding of human behaviour. As a researcher I can only understand this behaviour from

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within the context that the mentors are working as an '*understanding of individuals' interpretations of the world around them has to come from the inside, not the outside*' (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 19-20). Additionally, because my research looks to obtain an understanding of the meaning of human action this suggests, following Schwandt (2001: 213), that my inquiry will almost certainly be of a qualitative nature. Given the qualitative nature of my inquiry it also suggests a reliance on qualitative data.

4.2.2 Interpretivist Philosophy

'Interpretivism ... denotes those approaches to studying social life that accord a central place to verstehen as a method of the human sciences, that assume that the meaning of human action is inherent in that action, and that the task of the inquirer is to unearth that meaning.' (Schwandt, 2000: 134)

In looking to the basis for my philosophical position I believe that the work of Weber (1864-1920), who established an interpretive sociology (Verstehende sociology) in which he argues that human action is characterised by its concern with the individual and is '*both open to and requires interpretation in terms of the subjective meaning that actors attach to that action*' (Schwandt, 2001: 274), to be highly relevant.

In justifying the adoption of this philosophical position I note that Charmaz (1999) reminds us that the '*interpretive tradition relies on knowledge from the "inside"*' and that the tradition begins '*with and develops analyses from the point of view of the experiencing person*' (Charmaz, 1999: 30). Developing this concept Cohen (2002) identifies the importance of the researcher in this approach and states that:

'Interpretive approaches ... focus on action. This may be thought of as behaviour-with-meaning; it is intentional behaviour and as such, future oriented. Actions are only meaningful to us in so far as we are able to share their experiences. A large number of our everyday interactions with one another rely on such shared experiences' (Cohen, 2002: 22-23)

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I thus consider this approach is relevant to my own study, particularly when collecting data. Accordingly, by adopting an interpretive methodology (Cohen *et al.*, 2002), I believe it may be possible to understand the use of learning theories by mentors through their own '*voice*' (Gilligan, 1993), '*experiences*' (Connolly and Clandinin, 2000) and '*perspectives*' (Kvale, 1996).

In following the interpretivist tradition my research project endeavours to understand as fully as is practicable the subjective experiences of mentors in all the contexts they operate. It also tries to ensure that it retains '*the integrity of the phenomena being investigated*' (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 22) and resist '*the imposition of external form and structure*', which reflects the observer's viewpoint and not that of the observed. This suggests that I conduct my data collection in such a way as to elicit an understanding of the human behaviour of my participants in their '*real world*.' I believe that this necessitates me participating in their '*life worlds*', as a '*methodological requirement*' (Schwandt, 2000: 274).

One of the benefits of the interpretive approach is to allow me as the researcher to internalise my interpretation of the mentor's role whilst making comparison of these thoughts with the participants' own interpretations in my study. Adopting such an approach has also made me consider the associated ethical implications for my research project. I have therefore tried to ensure that I have been as open as possible in my disclosure on the subject of being a mentor with all my participants, and I refer in detail to my ethical considerations later in this chapter.

4.3 BASIS OF RESEARCH

4.3.1 Introduction

Utilising the interpretivist approach described above, my study aims to capture the world of the mentor by describing their various situations, thoughts, perceptions, feelings and actions, as

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well as looking to portray *'the research participants' lives and voices'* (Charmaz, 1999: 30). Consequently, it is through my participants' beliefs and concerns about mentoring that the shape, format and most importantly, the direction of my research has to be provided.

Thus in order to achieve my research objectives I believe that I need to gain a *'first-order understanding'* of the mentoring world which will then be fashioned by myself, and then to provide *'a second-order interpretation of that world'* (Schwandt, 2000).

Looking to the most appropriate methodology for my research I believe that a case study which will *'describe, explain and understand the lived experiences of a group of people'* is particularly appropriate to my research as it is *'the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context'* (Ibid: 20). Looking to the circumstances when a case study should be used Schwandt (2001) suggests that a:

'Case Study strategy is preferred when the inquirer seeks answers to how and why questions, when the inquirer has little control over events being studied, when the object of study is a contemporary phenomenon in a real life context.' (Schwandt, 2001: 23)

One benefit of using a case study is that it may assist in *'represent[ing] something of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by [the] participants'* (Adelman *et al.*, 1980: 59). Furthermore, in the context of my particular research, I believe that by using a case study the viewpoints of the participants on learning theories can be obtained, thus enabling a comparison to be made with the role ascribed to it in literature, thereby assisting in the illumination of their use by mentors.

Turning to the nature of a case study Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that whilst literature frequently refers to it there is little agreement about what it consists of. However, other more recent works are more confident, with Stake (1995: 2) suggesting that it is *'the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case.'* Cohen *et al.* (2002: 124-125) express a similar

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view and believe that a typical case study researcher looks at the characteristics of an individual or community, and that the purpose of *'such observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena comprising the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalisations about wider populations to which that unit belongs.'*

However, Stake (Ibid: 2) acknowledges that not everything is a case; rather he suggests that a *'case is a specific, a complex functioning thing.'* Denzin and Lincoln (2005: 355) develops this point further, suggesting that in looking at a single case the researcher has to gather the stories of multiple participants around a common theme. By doing this he suggests that it is possible for the stories of the individual participants gathered within a similar framework to be compared and contrasted, thereby allowing *'convergences in experience'* to be identified.

Looking to the benefit of using case studies Cohen *et al.* (2002) consider that their use enables the research findings to be generalisable. Adelman *et al.* (1980: 59) concur with this view and suggest that their unique strength is due to *'their attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right.'*

Following these conclusions I consider that there is sufficient agreement as to what a case study is, in particular that it relates to the study of a single unit in detail, for this approach to be useful to my research. In addition the output may be generalisable, thereby adding to its value. However, in considering using a case study I note Yin's (2003b: 4) caution as to the possibility of a *'complex interaction between a phenomenon and its (temporal) context'*, and his suggestion that this means that a case study should not be dependent on only one method of data collection. Instead he proposes that in such circumstances it needs to use *'multiple sources of evidence.'* My research design will need to reflect this consideration and utilise a number of data collection methods.

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Having decided to use a case study as the basis for my research the general considerations for my data collection are: the parameters for use of a case study for my research; and trustworthiness: ethics; and access. I will deal with these considerations in this order.

4.3.2 Parameters for the use of a Case Study

Looking to the basis for the use of a case study Cohen *et al.* (2002: 181) suggest that it provides '*a unique example of real people in real situations*', thus enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly.

Turning to how to carry out a case study Stake (1995) is clear that there are many ways that they can be carried out. However, he suggests (Ibid: xi) that it should be a '*disciplined, qualitative mode of inquiry into the single case.*' He also proposes that in a case study the researcher '*emphasizes episodes of nuance, the sequentiality of happenings in context, the wholeness of the individual.*'

Stake suggests there are a number of different types of case studies, namely the intrinsic case study, the instrumental case study and the collective case study. I consider that I am not doing an '*intrinsic case study*', which is defined (Ibid: 3) as '*needing to learn about that particular case.*' Neither am I carrying out a case study which is '*instrumental to accomplishing something other than understanding this particular teacher, and ... which allows the researcher to focus on another aspect other than the main foci as in a teacher or pupil.*' Rather, I perceive the need to look at mentors and student teachers to help illuminate the role of the mentor and thus provide similar or contrasting characteristics regarding the mentoring relationship. I therefore wish to co-opt Stakes' (1995) terminology of a '*collective case study*' for my research project.

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Stake also reminds us that within a case study *'there will be important coordination between the individual studies'* (Ibid: 4) whereby the research methods selected will be of instrumental interest. He states that this is because:

'The search for meaning is often a search for patterns, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call "correspondence" ... Often the patterns will be known in advance, drawn from the research questions, serving as a template for the analysis. Sometimes the patterns will emerge unexpectedly from the analysis.' (Stake, 1995: 78)

Thus in studying several mentors as opposed to just one, each individual study will contribute to the case, and it is this view of a case study that I have adopted for my research as I believe that it will be instrumental in *'learning about the effects'* of learning theories on the mentoring provided by the group of mentors being studied.

Prior to looking at the detail of my case study I believe it is necessary to set its design boundaries. In this context I note that Yin (2003b: 21) suggests that the design of case studies has five components, namely: a study's question(s); its propositions (if any); its unit(s) of analysis; the logic linking the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the data. This framework has been co-opted for my research project.

In the context of my research, with its inductive basis, the study questions being asked will be developed progressively through my case study, as will be set out in detail within Chapters 6 and 7. In addition I will be using a series of questions, each being unique to specific stages of my research.

However, given that I will largely be looking at mentors' beliefs most of the questions will be open. They will also be explanatory and look to deal with operational links, i.e. the interaction of mentors with student teachers, and will need to be traced over time, and not to frequencies or incidence. Thus in defining the limits to the case being analysed in the research the

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questions posed have to be realistic and answerable. Given the open form of my questions concerning mentors' use of learning theories this suggests, following Yin (2003b: 5) , that the use of a case study is an appropriate strategy to adopt for my research.

In considering the study proposition of the case Yin (Ibid: 22) suggests that '*each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of study.*' In the case of my research the underlying proposition is that mentors use learning theories; I have no propositions as to what these theories are and whether mentors use adult learning theories.

Having already identified the area of study and the proposition, specifically the use of learning theories by mentors whilst fulfilling their role, I am thus able to frame my research generally, and my questions specifically.

Turning to the unit of analysis for my case study, I perceive that in order to illuminate the role of the mentor it will consist of a number of mentors who will be able to provide similar or contrasting characteristics of their role. In studying several mentors, each of whom represents a case in their own right, the case represented will be instrumental to '*learning about the effects*' of learning theories on the mentoring process. However, Stake (1995: 4) reminds us that '*there will be important coordination between the individual studies*', thereby identifying the need to pull the different narratives together around a common theme.

In looking to the linking of data obtained in my research to my study proposition the approach I have chosen to use, following Campbell (1975), is that of '*pattern matching.*' With this approach I will be able to compare the data from my literature review with that obtained from my field research so that, following Yin (2003a: 26), '*the two potential patterns are considered rival propositions, ... the pattern matching technique is a way of relating the data to the propositions.*' I believe that this can be achieved by using the concepts and characteristics of

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the learning theories identified by the literature review to frame the questions asked of the participants and their subsequent analysis. These are set out in more detail in Chapter 7.

4.3.3 Trustworthiness

'All field work done by a single field-worker invites the question: Why should we believe it?'
(Bosk, 1979: 193)

Research design can be described as the structure for the collection and analysis of data, with there being no single right answer as to how this is to be carried out. Nonetheless Cohen *et al.* (2002: 73) consider research design to be shaped by the concept of fitness for purpose, with that purpose in turn dictating the methodology and design of the research. As a consequence, in evaluating the choice of research design I have considered, following Bryman (2001: 507), the priority being allocated to both the research questions and the dimensions of the process.

In addition there is a question as to whether the design selected has to consider the issues of reliability, replication and validity. As these issues emerged from quantitative research there are some who question their suitability for qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985), for example, suggest that these issues are inappropriate, and other concepts should be used to assess qualitative research.

On balance, following Lincoln and Guba (1995), I do not consider that they are the dominant concepts of my research, rather in conducting a case study the principle issues concern insight and particularisation. In addition having already decided that I will be working within the qualitative paradigm this has weighted the relative importance to my research of these issues. For example reliability, which is particularly important within quantitative research, when there is concern whether a measure is stable or not, is less important to my research. In addition

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replication, which is closely related to reliability, is also less important to my research as I am not looking to assess the replication of a measure or a concept.

In contrast Bassey (1999: 74-75) suggests trustworthiness, is in many ways the most important criterion for my research, particularly as it is a case study is *'the study of a singularity which is chosen because of its interest to the researcher ... It is not chosen as a 'typical' example in the sense that typicality is empirically demonstrated, and so the issues of validity are not meaningful.'*

Recognising that potential subjectivity of the researcher has been seen as a weakness in case study research Yin (1994) proposes a number of ways in which triangulation could remedy this. The first is through the use of multiple sources of evidence, and the second by creating *'a chain of evidence.'* He also suggests the use of a multi-member research team.

Taking these points into account I will follow the guidelines for case study research established by such researchers as Miles and Huberman (1994, , 1984), Yin (1994) and Merriam and Caffarella (1998) and I will apply different forms of triangulation. The dominant means by which I will achieve this will be by the use of multiple data sources and different methods for collecting data. Being a single researcher I will be unable to follow the additional guideline suggested, namely of using a multi-member research team.

In addition appropriate research design has to be chosen in which the instruments selected are sensitive to the research issues. It is therefore essential that there is a *'good match'* (Maxwell, 2002: 40) between my operationalised research questions, and my research tools.

4.4 PHASES OF RESEARCH

4.4.1 Introduction

Having established in the preceding section that a case study is an appropriate methodological approach for my research, the subsequent chapters of this thesis look to how I have carried out my case study as part of that research. This case study is developed over two chapters, namely: Chapter 5 – Developing the Case Study; Chapter 6 – A Perspective on Mentors.

Within this section I seek to provide an overview of my case study, in particular how it sets out to develop my research proposition as to whether mentors use learning theories, and if so, do they use adult learning theories. In addition it addresses issues common to both Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 describes the progressive evolution of the case study and has the following elements: an exploratory case study based upon my MA in Research Methods; observation of mentors and student teachers in schools; the analysis of TDA and Partnership documents; observation of mentor training at HEI; an interview with the Head of a PGCE course. The final element of my case study, as set out in Chapter 6, focuses on the perceptions of mentors, and consists of interviews with the mentors forming part of the case being studied. This phase looks to establish whether learning theories illuminate the practice of mentoring, and if so to what extent, and which learning theories underpin it.

Looking to the case being studied, in particular the core group of people in question and who constitute a 'case', this is represented by a number of school teachers working as mentors to student teachers undertaking their PGCE course. The composition and nature of the case, and how it has developed is set out in detail in the next two chapters.

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Within the balance of this section I explain the phases of my research; tools, questions and data collection; and the analysis of data. The latter two sections are applicable as both parts of the case study. In respect of these sections Chapters 5 and 6 further develop them, in so far as is necessary, in relation to the specifics of a case being considered in those chapters.

4.4.2 Inductive Process

In following an inductive approach my research has identified a number of questions, which it has sought to answer. However, in doing so, further questions have been identified; where these additional questions could not be answered by analysis of the data obtained in that phase of my research they have been used to form the basis for a subsequent phase. This iterative process continued until all the questions posed during the process of answering my research questions were answered, and the data was saturated.

These phases, and the interaction between and within them, are illustrated in Figure 4.1 below. The figure is to be read from left to right, reflecting the timeline and sequence of my research. As indicated on the key to the chart the rectangular symbols indicate the data collection phases, including any pilot studies, whilst the shaded ellipses indicate the principle data outputs. The pilot studies and the main data collection phases are separately colour coded so as to differentiate them. All of the data outputs ultimately lead to a box entitled '*Analysis and Conclusions*'. The analysis is carried out progressively, both in Chapters 5 and 6, and the conclusions are set out in the last chapter of this research project.

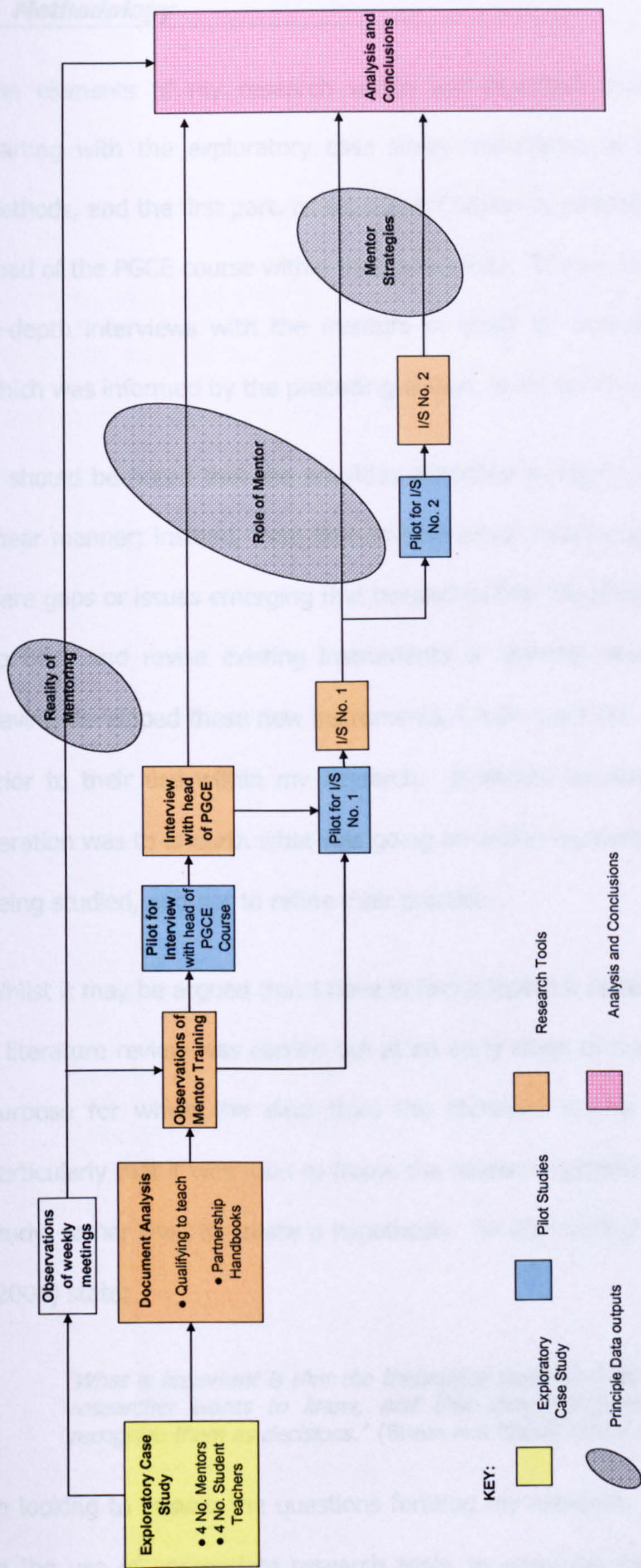


Figure 4.1 - Phases of Research

The elements of my research within are described broadly in chronological order, starting with the exploratory case study undertaken as part of my MA in Research Methods, and the first part, as set out in Chapter 5, concludes with an interview with the head of the PGCE course within the Partnership. The second element of my research, i.e. in-depth interviews with the mentors in order to understand their perspectives, and which was informed by the preceding stages, is set out in Chapter 6.

It should be noted that the activities described in Figure 4.1 were not carried out in a linear manner; instead, from time to time when carrying out my research I found there were gaps or issues emerging that needed further exploration. This dictated the need to go back and revise existing instruments or develop new instruments and questions. Having developed these new instruments, I then went out into the field to validate them prior to their use within my research. It should be noted that the purpose for this iteration was to unearth what was going on within my case, that is the group of mentors being studied, and not to refine their practice.

Whilst it may be argued that I have in fact adopted a deductive approach, particularly as a literature review was carried out at an early stage of my research, I consider that the purpose for which the data from the literature review was used to be significant, particularly that it was used to frame the research questions being asked within the case study, rather than to create a hypothesis. In this context I note that Braun and Clarke (2006) state:

'What is important is that the theoretical framework and methods match what the researcher wants to know, and that they acknowledge these decisions, and recognize them as decisions.' (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 80)

In looking to answer the questions forming my research, consideration had to be given to the use of appropriate research tools, in particular the need to make the research design appropriate to the research area under scrutiny. Therefore in order to obtain a

focussed and objective view of these naturally occurring phenomena, my emphasis was on a specific case, in this research a group of mentors, thus allowing their practices to be studied in their real life context.

Turning to the unit of analysis for my case study, this is the group of mentors from the Partnership being studied, who were all active in that role. However, some of them had either been or were currently working as mentors within other HEI Partnerships in addition to the partnership being studied. Whilst consideration was also given to using mentors working within other partnerships this raised the prospect of another variable being introduced into my research. The added benefit of a larger size of the group being analysed had to be balanced against the possible complexity of an additional variable being involved. On balance I decided not to collect data from mentors who had only received training from other partnerships in order to ensure that there was a standard basis for comparison of mentors within the case and that the conclusions were generalisable.

4.4.3 Tools, Questions and Data Collection

'Investigators work directly with experience and understanding to build their theory on them. The data thus yielded will be glossed with the meanings and purposes of those people who are their source.' (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 23)

In order to contextualise the overarching tools, questions and data collection used in my case study it is worth restating the point that my research proposition is linked to the potential dichotomy between the theory and practice of mentoring, and will thus define the tools and questions that I use in my research project.

In looking to the methods used in qualitative case studies Bryman (2001: 48) suggests that participant observations and interviews are especially useful for a detailed and intensive examination of a case. This correlates with prior research into the role of the

mentor using such tools (Zanting, 2001; Hansford *et al.*, 2003; Jones *et al.*, 2004). It therefore seems most appropriate to use conceptual and contextual frameworks utilising observations, semi-structured interviews and artefacts to help me in my task in eliciting mentors understanding and knowledge about their role. Accordingly, I elected to include studies of individual mentors allowing me to perceive, appreciate, interpret, understand and criticise their teaching and learning as part of their mentoring role. All this has then to be evaluated along with careful review of official documents and literature for a complete appraisal of the whole.

In addition, as set out in Figure 4.1 above, my research project comprises an analytical study developing through a number of stages in which each stage informs its successor, in particular assisting in the establishment of the criteria and the design of the research tools. As part of this process my research project has been '*situated and re-contextualised*' (Janesick, 2000: 380) within the shared experience of the researcher and the participants in the study, thus at various points within the research design process the direction and method tools were reviewed and revised.

The selection of the individual tools for my research was supported by a prior investigation, i.e. an exploratory case study provided by my MA in Research Methods, which considered the issues of the design of research instruments for working with mentors and student teachers in school-based ITT programmes. One of the key aims of this exploratory study was to consider the design instruments for this project. This process has been supplemented by continued reading of the literature on the area being studied. However, whilst my exploratory case study used focus groups, questionnaires, observations and semi-structured interviews, I elected to use only the latter two tools in this research due to the development of the direction of my case study.

Observations

'[T]he goal for design of research using participant observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study that is as objective and accurate as possible given the limitations of the method.' (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002: 92)

The initial purpose of carrying out participant observations within the school was to collect detailed information about mentors' practices and attitudes in the school environment. One of the prime features of this tool, which is wholly compatible with the inductive process that is being followed, is that it makes no prior assumptions as to what is important (Schmuck, 1997).

One of the benefits of collecting data using this method described by DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) is that it allows the observer to discover whether the participants are doing what they say they were doing. As such this tool, when used in combination with other tools, can assist in validating findings and contribute to their trustworthiness.

In addition the information gathered through observations *can produce* in-depth detail and despite usually dealing with observations of short duration, they can *'produce material that is very rich and emphasises meanings and experiences'* (de Munck and Sobo, 1998: 43).

The role of observer undertaken within this research project varied, within schools observing student teachers and mentors it was that of *'complete observer'* (Gold, 1958). During these observations I remained uninvolved and detached from the actions of the student teacher in the classroom and the interaction between the student teacher and mentor during their discussions. In contrast during observations of mentor training, whilst initially taking the role of complete observer I progressively became more involved, ultimately taking the role of *'observer as participant'* (Gold, 1958) although still focussing

on the collection of data. In both cases the data obtained was recorded through field notes.

In practice the use of observations of mentor training had an unintended benefit to my research, namely the ability to make contact with mentors who were willing to take part in my research.

Whilst Hansford *et al.* (2003) identified observations being used in very few of the studies they investigated in their literature review, from my analysis of literature, in particular the examples cited in the previous chapters to this research project, I consider they have under reported their use.

Empathetic Semi-Structured Interviews

'"Empathetic" emphasises taking a stance, contrary to the scientific image of interviewing, which is based on the concept of neutrality. Indeed, much of traditional interviewing concentrates on the language of scientific neutrality and the techniques to achieve it. Unfortunately, these goals are largely mythical.' (Fontana and Frey, 2005: 269)

When considering the use of semi-structured interviews in the field of mentoring it is noteworthy that Hansford *et al.* (2003: 50-51) identify that 22% of the 159 studies recorded in their literature review of mentoring used this methodological tool. Turning to how and why this tool is so frequently used, Hansford *et al.* suggest that it is because semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to capture the meaning of their '*described phenomena*'. Looking as to why this might be so Kvale (1996) suggests that this might be because:

'Through conversations we get to know other people, get to learn about their experiences, feelings, and hopes and the world they live in.' (Kvale, 1996)

As a consequence Denzin (1970: 125) considers that interviews assist respondents in describing their '*unique ways of defining the world*'.

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Additionally, Silverman (2000) suggests that interviews aid in accessing beliefs about '*facts*' or '*experiences*' (Ibid: 94), identifying '*feelings*' (Ibid: 91) and obtaining '*reasons and explanations*' from respondents. In order to achieve these aims Zanting (2001:7) notes '*Interviewing requires questioning techniques: prompting, summarising, listening, verbal and non-verbal behaviours.*' However, Cohen *et al.* (2002: 146) also suggest that if '*a schedule is prepared but is sufficiently open-ended to enable the contents to be re-ordered*' then '*digressions and expansions*' can be made and '*new avenues ... included*' and additional benefits obtained.

Accordingly, taking into account all these factors I considered semi-structured interviews would provide me with greater information for my purpose, that of interpreting and understanding mentors' pedagogical strategies and use of learning theories.

It is also significant that Yin (2003b: 4) cautions as to the possibility of an *interaction between a phenomenon and its context*' and advises that a case study is not dependent on only one method of data collection, but instead uses '*multiple sources of evidence.*' Zanting *et al.* (2001) concur and suggest that in order to elicit information on other aspects of any field of research other instruments should also be used. Accordingly, the information gathered using this tool will be not be considered in isolation, rather it will be considered as part of the overall picture, and thus be taken in the context of the information gathered in all phases of my research, especially those in which other tools have been used. This will assist in the triangulation of the evidence provided by my research, and thus confidence in the findings will be increased as corroboration is provided.

Another key objective of the interviews was to minimise the extent that I influenced mentors, thereby reducing the bias within my research. Prus (1996: 196) proposes that this might be achieved by a researcher who is '*more chameleon-like ... who fits into the*

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situation with a minimum of disruption, and whose work allows the life-worlds of the other to surface in a complete and unencumbered a manner as possible.'

In addition I recognised that Kvale (1996: 109) suggests that carrying out an interview inquiry should be a '*moral enterprise: the personal interaction in the interview affects the interviewee, and the knowledge produced by the interview affects our understanding of the human situation*'. It was therefore essential that as an interviewer I was not seen to be judgemental, but instead to be mindful to show openness, understanding, respect and sensitivity as well as an awareness of the interviewee's needs at all times.

Turning to the recording of the semi-structured interviews, these were audio taped and identical questions were asked of all participants. This helped me accurately report the spoken word prior to conducting my '*interpretive textual analyses*' on the interview transcripts. These tapes, which were subsequently transcribed, were supplemented by field notes.

Mentors were interviewed in quiet rooms in their schools. Before commencing the interviews mentors were informed of the objectives of the research, the format of the interview and that they would remain anonymous. In addition it was made clear to participants that they could withdraw from the interview at any time and the audio recorder was only used to record the interviews after gaining permission from the interviewees. These consents were in accordance with the requirements of the University of Nottingham ethical guidelines. In addition to the interview schedule the participants completed a short proforma giving their written permission and personal details.

4.4.4 Analysis of Data

'To understand is hard. Once one understands, action is easy.' Sun Yat Sen (1866-1925)

In considering method of the analysis of my data I recognised that it would need to reflect the setting and social action under scrutiny, as well my epistemological and ontological perspectives. I also acknowledged that this data should be treated appropriately so not to induce any skewing of the resulting findings, thus producing a biased research report. Another consideration was that an in-depth qualitative inquiry is often characterised by participative observations that produce highly detailed, thick descriptions together with semi-structured interviews that encapsulate direct quotations about people's personal perspectives and experiences.

Accordingly, following Denzin and Lincoln (2005: 355) my case study seeks to gather the stories of the participants in my research, i.e. my case, around a common theme. I will be looking to the mentors' use of learning theories as that theme. Following Boyatzis (1998), I decided to use thematic analysis to describe my observations as it:

'[A]llows the collection or use of qualitative information in a manner facilitating communication with a broad audience of other scholars or researchers. ... Thematic analysis offers a vehicle for increasing communication in ways that researchers using various methods can appreciate.' (Boyatzis, 1998: 5)

In describing the benefit of using thematic analysis he states (Ibid: 3) that it enables researchers *'to see something that had not been evident to others'* as they are able to see *'a pattern, or a theme, in seemingly random information.'* Having established that I would be looking to *'pattern match'*, the question is how to go about this exercise given that: *'almost certainly there will be many times more data collected than can be analyzed'* (Stake, 1995: 84). Boyatzis (Ibid: 3) suggests that *'the next major step, [is] classifying or encoding the pattern'*, then developing the codes and finally to interpret the pattern in the context of a theory or conceptual framework.

It is worth noting that Boyatzis defines a theme as:

'[A] pattern found in the information that as a minimum describes and organises possible observations and at a maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon.'
(Boyatzis, 1998: 4)

Boyatzis (Ibid: 4) considers that *'The themes may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research.'* Aronson (1994: 2) concurs and also suggests that themes can be selected by reference to *'related literature.'* This is the line of analysis my research will be following. In electing to choose this course for my research I am, following Yin (2003: 111), relying on the theoretical propositions that led to my case study.

Following this approach Aronson (1994: 1) suggests that all data relating to a theme should be identified and gathered together. She proposes that *'related patterns'* are combined into *'sub-themes'* such that they enable a complete picture of the respondents' stories to be built up. Boyatzis further concludes (Op cit: 4) that the patterns that emerge may *'provide a link to any and all patterns that others have observed and considered previously through reading.'*

In looking to what subsequently takes place Boyatzis (1998: 5) considers that *'The interpretation phase of research follows development and use of a thematic code.'* It is important to note, following Chandler (2001), that *'words do not necessarily name only physical things which exist in an objective material world but may also label imaginary things and also concepts.'* Although words can be seen by many as just *'abstractions'* and many words may actually *'refer to the same thing'* they may in fact actually *'reflect different evaluations of it.'* In addition within my analysis I was looking for a typology which would not be so *'rigid'* that every word is classified whilst addressing my concerns regarding trustworthiness and not confusing the participants own *'voice'* with that of the researchers' voice (Chase, 2005). As part of this process my typology had to be as

flexible as possible so that I was able to understand the diversity of the mentors' voices, particularly as the process is so iterative and clarity is of such import throughout the whole process.

As part of my analysis I took care to ensure that the case focussed on the group of mentors being studied and not the Partnership; my objective was to be able to generalise on the group being studied and not the workings of the Partnership. However, the workings of the Partnership were important for setting the contextual events surrounding the unit of analysis. These events are set out in Chapter 5 of my research, which looks at the group of mentors being studied, i.e. my unit of analysis.

As part of my analysis, and when selecting categories whilst analysing the transcripts belonging to my participants, I recognise that researcher interpretation is of great importance as each category selected and applied is dependent on the experiences, knowledge, aims and purposes of the individual researcher. Accordingly, in order to follow a systematic approach, I will be following four guiding principles for the analysis of a case study set out by Yin (1994). These principles are evidencing that the analysis is based upon all '*relevant evidence*'; including all potential interpretations in the analysis; addressing the most important aspect of the case study; and use by the researcher of their prior expert knowledge to aid their analysis.

4.5 ETHICS AND ACCESS

4.5.1 Ethics

'Social inquiry is a practice, not simply a way of knowing. Understanding what others are doing or saying and transforming that knowledge into public form involves moral-political commitments. Moral issues arise from the fact that a theory of knowledge is supported by a particular view of human agency.' (Tusting and Barton, 2003: 203)

As a general introduction to ethical considerations I note that Christians (2005) suggests that there is the need for researchers to adhere to a code of ethics, stating:

'In value-free social science, codes of ethics for professional and academic associations are the conventional format for moral principles. By the 1980s, each of the major scholarly associations had adopted its own code, with an overlapping emphasis on four guidelines for directing an inductive science of means toward majoritarian.' (Christians, 2005: 138).

In addressing this aspect of my research project the overarching means by which this will be achieved will be by compliance with the ethical requirements of the University of Nottingham, in particular that my research be conducted in accordance with the University of Nottingham guidelines on ethical conduct and data protection. These guidelines in turn require compliance with the British Educational Research Association [BERA] Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) and the Data Protection Act 1998.

In applying these principles my ethics submission was made on 30 January 2005 and approved subject to comments by the School of Education on 2 February 2005. These comments were actioned by 17 March 2005. In addition, following Christians (2005), I have used the four ethical guidelines of informed consent, freedom from deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy for my research. These are set out below.

In addition, and of particular import was the need for me to establish independence from the participants in my research. This was largely achieved by having no prior relationship with any of the participants and no '*power differential*' between them and me in the course of our interaction. Accordingly I have recognised it and addressed it within Chapters 5 and 6.

Informed consent

One of the key ethical requirements for my project has been to ensure that all participants were asked to give informed consent prior to taking part in the research, and their explicit consent by means of obtaining a signature, for sensitive data [see consent form at Appendix 1]. All participants in this research were also informed of the aims, purposes and likely publication of findings of the research. This is consistent with the commitment to '*individual autonomy*' through the Mill and Weber social science tradition whereby the '*subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences of experiments in which they are involved*' (Christians, 2005: 138). In addition respect must be maintained for human freedom of choice and this includes two necessary conditions whereby the participant must agree voluntarily to take part without any '*physical or psychological coercion*.' (Ibid: 138).

Freedom from Deception

I have expressly designed my research project to be as '*free of active deception*', as is practicable (Christian, 2005) and am resolute in my aim for there to be an avoidance of deception, no breaking of promises or confidences and '*treating others always as ends and never as means*' (Schwandt, 2001). My aim has therefore been to provide a true and honourable representation of the role of mentor as my sample will allow. I consider

that deception is neither admissible nor justifiable within the precincts of the social sciences or academe.

Privacy and confidentiality

'Codes of ethics insist on safeguards to protect people's identities and those of the research locations. Confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure.' (Christians, 2005: 139)

In terms of the final output of research my prime ethical consideration has been to make the reporting of data anonymous in order to accommodate the need for confidentiality between school-based mentors and student teachers. This will, in large part, be accommodated through depersonalising all references or quotations used, thus pseudonyms for all my participants will be selected to ensure their anonymity within my study. Data generated by the research will be kept in a safe and secure location; additionally it will be used purely for the purposes of the research project. No one outside my supervisors or me will have access to any of the data collected.

I am reminded by Christians (2005: 139) though that *'despite the signature of privacy protection, watertight confidentiality has proved to be impossible. Pseudonyms and disguised locations are often recognised by insiders.'* I thus consider there will always be a dilemma about what is public or private when educational institutions are involved in a research project, and again Christians (Ibid, 139) asks the pertinent question: *'What private parts ought not to be exposed?'* What may appear to be impartial on paper may well not be the case in real life to those involved in the research project. Thus when considering *'encoding privacy protection'* what is public and private, it is an enormous task for a researcher to fulfil and one that there is no unanimity on.

However, there is more unanimity on the negative impact of research on the subjects being studied, with Cohen *et al.* (2002) stating:

'If the research involves subjects in failure, experience, isolation, or loss of self-esteem, researchers must ensure that subjects do not leave the situation more humiliated, insecure, and alienated than when they arrived.' (Cohen et al., 2002: 59)

My research will therefore take all possible steps to minimise its impact on the participants.

Accuracy

It is a given that the accuracy of all data is of paramount importance to my research project. As a consequence any contrived, omitted or fraudulent information is not valid ethically or morally, and so any results reported would be valueless.

Whilst accuracy is important, I recognise that care needs to be exercised over the possible conflicts between my desire as a researcher to explore those situations in which mentors struggle, and their interests in not having these potentially threatening situations explored. To cover potentially sensitive topics that participants might otherwise find difficult to discuss I recognise that I need to ensure that special attention is given to potential ethical and political issues, and most importantly styles of reasoning within the educational world by addressing the researcher mentor and the researched mentor relationship.

Following Denzin and Lincoln (1994) I am hoping to achieve a deeper understanding of the mentors' role through close observation of their practice. The latter is particularly important as my research is *'embedded within the qualitative paradigm and not external to it'* (Guba and Lincoln, 2005), thus helping me, the researcher, make sense of these kinds of situations. Thus, as per Elliott (1988), I have looked to develop my relationship with the participants as one whereby the researcher is perceived as a marginal participant (participant-observer) and the researched as informants. However, in carrying out my research, following Prus (1996), I have been looking to balance my

participation with a desire to reduce the intrusion that would occur due to my presence in the mentors' environment. These contrasting objectives reflect the tensions within my research and have been reflected in my ethical framework.

In carrying out my research I recognise, following Janesick (2000: 380), *'that as a Qualitative researcher working within a qualitative Research Design I am a Research Instrument.'* As such I am aware that I should not influence my participants or this will skew my findings. I therefore recognised that as part of my research there is a need to ensure all participants in my research know I have been a mentor for eleven years.

In keeping with a spirit of openness, but also in order to ensure accuracy, participants were provided with a summary of the research findings and an opportunity for debriefing after taking part in the research.

4.5.2 Access

Initial contacts with the HEI Partnership for access were made as part of an exploratory case study which revealed few potential problems in gaining access. However, I recognised the consideration that *'where researchers are not normally based in the target community, the problems of access are more involved and require greater preparation'* (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 54). Accordingly, my access strategy for the main part of this research project was to meet school based mentors at the earliest possible point in order to ensure access. The Head of the PGCE course at the Partnership being studied was contacted in September 2004 regarding obtaining access to mentors working within that Partnership; approval was granted two months later.

Following obtaining this permission, access to the participants in the main study was obtained through overt participative observations of the mentors being trained within the HEI Partnership agreement. This allowed the Partnership and mentors involved in this

training to accept or reject my attendance as a researcher at the training. The benefits of attendance were twofold. Firstly, that of data collection, and secondly the opportunity to make contact with mentors, who are the subject of my research. This access enabled participants to my research to be recruited, and for the informed consent of these participants to be obtained at an early stage following the views of Bell (1987), who states:

'Permission to carry out an investigation must always be sought at an early stage. As soon as you have an agreed project outline and have read enough to convince you that that the topic is feasible, it is advisable to make a formal, written approach to the individuals and organizations concerned, outlining your plans.' (Bell, 1987: 42)

Where data collection activities involved visits to schools these were only carried out with the prior agreement of the head teacher or an authorised representative [see template letter at Appendix 2]. Participants and schools were provided with my contact details, as well as those of my supervisor, in order that they could contact me concerning any aspect of my research. Research was carried out with regard for mutually convenient times and negotiated in a way that sought to minimise disruption on schedules and burdens on participants.

Having gained entry to the group being surveyed I was conscious, following Cohen (2002), that:

'You still need access to people. Simply because you have gained access to an organization does not mean that you will have an easy passage through the organization. Securing access is in many ways an ongoing activity. It is likely to prove a problem in closed contexts like organizations.' (Cohen et al., 2002: 297)

Accordingly, as an experienced practitioner in the field of mentoring my principal strategy in securing access was to reveal my credentials, i.e. past work and experience, to the participants and to demonstrate my understanding of their environment and problems. In addition I maintained regular contact with them by telephone and e-mail.

4.6 CONCLUSION

'The trend toward interpretive study, the quest for understanding, and the challenge to the imagination impel us to take our inquiry into the world. Through sharing the worlds of our subjects, we come to conjure an image of their constructions and of our own.' (Silverman, 2000: 529)

The aim of my research is to elucidate the unique features of mentors' pedagogical strategies, in particular the learning theories that they use. As such mentors are the focus of this study and the methodological framework selected has to fit this requirement. In looking to adopt a qualitative paradigm I recognise that it is the bridge that *'joins multiple interpretive communities. It stretches across many different landscapes and horizons, moving back and forth between the public and the private, sacred and secular'* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 1084).

Although case studies offer a wealth of information, information is gathered in specific situations, so I recognise that I have to be very careful when drawing general conclusions. However, as Merriam and Caffarella (1998) and others have stated, it is possible to use the information obtained as a *'working hypothesis'* for comparable situations. With this in mind, I will summarize my findings and formulate a number of such hypotheses. I will also put forward some suggestions for further research.

Looking to the methods I wish to employ, i.e. the varying *'techniques and procedures'* used in the process to gather data, I recognise that these may be subsequently applied *'as a basis for inference and interpretation, for exploration and prediction'* (Cohen *et al.*, 2002: 44). It is significant that the term *'methods'* include normative and interpretive paradigms as it is the latter approach I wish to focus upon for my research project. This is because I wish to look into human behaviour, thereby suggesting the use of observation of participants, field-notes and semi-structured interviews.

However systematic or controlled a piece of research may be I perceive that it has to be based to some degree on the *'inductive-deductive model.'* It is also argued by Kerlinger (1970) that *'the subjective belief... must be checked against the objective reality.'* I do though consider that the final test of any research project is being able to withstand the scrutiny of experts in the same field. Thus Cohen *et al.* (2002: 5) state *'research is self-correcting'* as all research *'procedures and results are open to public scrutiny by fellow professionals.'*

5 DEVELOPING THE CASE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As has been explained in the previous chapter, in particular through Figure 4.1 above, I have sought to progressively develop my case study as part of an inductive process. In order to do this the first part of the case as set out in this chapter is divided into five parts, namely: the exploratory case study; observation of mentors and student teachers; an analysis of TDA and partnership documents; observations of mentor training; and an interview with the Head of the PGCE course. Each of these parts is addressed in this order.

5.2 EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

5.2.1 Introduction

My research project follows from a pilot study carried out as part of my MA in Research Methods, completed in September 2003. This pilot study looked at the impact of mentoring on secondary school student teachers within ITT. The tools used consisted of questionnaires, focus groups and semi structured interviews with student teachers, and semi-structured interviews with mentors.

The purpose of the pilot study were threefold, firstly to test the research tools developed; secondly, to provide an introduction to the area being studied; and thirdly to obtain an understanding of the issues associated with access and ethics in connection with the area being studied.

The area researched in the pilot study was relatively wide, but was not very deep. This reflected the fact that it was actually an '*exploratory case study*' (Yin, 2003b: 5), in that it

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was *'aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study (not necessarily a case study) or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures.'* The subsequent study is this research project.

As will be evident, the pilot study served to indicate areas which deserved further and detailed study, and in addition showed a need for more focussed and in depth interrogation of data and participants. However, in the context of this research project I have found it necessary to limit the reporting of this pilot study. I have therefore set out below a précis of the data obtained, my analysis and further questions. For reasons of conciseness these sections have been significantly reduced from the original and have been limited to those areas relevant to this research project.

In summary the data collected for this pilot study came through a reconnaissance of new mentors meetings, a questionnaire administered to student teachers on their perceptions of the mentor's role, a focus meeting of a group of student teachers and semi-structured interviews with student teachers and with their mentors. The output of these tools is set out below.

5.2.2 Reconnaissance of Mentors Meetings

I attended two mentor meetings held by the HEI Partnership for mentors due to receive students from the History cohort of the PGCE 2002/03 during their TP. The purpose of attending these meetings was to derive insight from the mentors as a group, specifically their values, relationships with student teachers and possible areas of conflict.

Both sessions were highly informative as many of the mentors were experienced and already knew the Partnership requirements for students undertaking their TP very well. The

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sessions provided me with a good understanding of the environment and constraints that the mentors, and also to a lesser extent the student teachers, would be working under.

5.2.3 Questionnaire for Student Teachers

In order to understand the student teachers' views on mentoring a questionnaire was prepared. The questions were determined following a literature review of the subject of mentoring, with an emphasis on student teachers' perceptions of the mentor's role, in particular the effect of mentoring on a student teachers' ability to teach and the relationships between student teachers and their mentors. The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain a first hand understanding of student teachers perceptions and to inform the design of method tools to be used in subsequent phases of my research.

The questionnaire consisted of 24 open and closed style questions focussing on the students' past thoughts about School Experience in the autumn term of their course, which they had just completed, and their perceptions of what the challenges might be in their TP in the spring term of Academic Year 2002/2003. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the History cohort of the 2002/2003 PGCE by the course tutors whom I had previously been given permission to approach by the HEI following approval being given for my research. A total of 16 questionnaires out of 30 questionnaires were returned, a 53% response rate.

As a result of the sample being restricted to the history cohort of the PGCE course at the HEI Partnership, I recognised that it might not be representative of the PGCE students generally. However, I considered that by supplementing this research tool with others that

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the reliability might be increased. Accordingly, additional tools, as set out later in this section, were used in this stage of my research.

The underlying research questions I had which led to the design of the questionnaire were *'How does mentoring impact on the student teacher?', 'Does mentoring affect student teacher's abilities to teach? And if so how?', 'Does mentoring help motivate student teachers?' and 'What is the relationship and level of honesty and communications between student teachers and their mentors?'*

The data from the questionnaires was coded using numeric, descriptives and frequencies; the data was then input into SPSS. With this data an analysis of the Questionnaire using Frequency Tables in SPSS was carried out. The purpose of using SPSS was to analyse the frequency of responses within the response options available to the students for each question.

The most significant conclusion that could be drawn from the data was that the most helpful support provided by a mentor was regarding practical classroom suggestions. In addition, whilst most mentors helped student teachers by the modelling of good practice and by establishing a professional rapport with them, a sizeable minority (38%) stated it did not. The area that most student teachers required help from their mentor was with long term planning, assessments and lesson planning.

The analysis of the data derived from the questionnaire suggested that student teachers perceived that mentoring was positive, both to their confidence and their ultimate performance on School Experience. The findings also suggested that there were some aspects of the mentoring relationship worthy of further analysis. The particular aspects

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that interested me were the impact of the different roles mentors adopted in the learning to teach process, and the level and meaning of the communication between the mentor and the student.

In summary, whilst the cohort studied was highly cohesive in terms of their response, there were still areas of difference, sometimes significant. This would suggest that in a large, more diverse and thus more representative sample, further investigation would be justified.

5.2.4 Focus Meeting of Student Teachers

At the next stage in my investigation I carried out a focus meeting, which involved seven male history students; the meeting took place early in the spring term of the PGCE course. Even with this relatively small sample it was possible to discern a number of contrasting views amongst the student teachers. This suggested that with an appropriate methodology further research could shed more light on these differences.

The output from the focus group suggested questions for the semi-structured interviews, namely, *'What is the role and impact of mentors?'* and *'What is the relationship and level of honesty and communication between student teachers and their mentors?'*

In order to answer these questions I decided to conduct separate semi-structured interviews with four student teachers who volunteered to take part, and their TP mentors.

5.2.5 Mentor Interviews

The four mentors interviewed were history teachers in different comprehensive schools which were part of the HEI Partnership. In addition they were mentors to student teachers

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who had previously taken part in my focus group and had in turn agreed to take part in my research.

In looking at the biographical and professional details of the mentors I considered that in many ways the ages and experience of the mentors provided a good spread. However, within the sample only one of the four mentors was female. Thus the representativeness of these mentors had to be treated with some caution.

The interview schedule for the semi-structured interviews of the mentors was broken down into two parts, firstly that relating to background details for the mentors. The second part of the schedule looked to the role of the mentor in a generalised way, being an umbrella heading for the research questions.

For analysing these interviews I opted for a thematic analysis based upon the questions identified from the previous element of my research. The codes used for this analysis were the role of the mentor, the relationship between the student teachers and their mentors and the significance of communication.

Role of the Mentor

A major component of the mentor interviews considered the way in which the mentor teacher acted as a role model as all mentors considered that one of the key functions of the mentor teacher was that of the role model.

Significantly one mentor noted that mentoring was a different role from teaching and that it required different skills. However, no explanation was given as to how teachers acting as mentors gained these skills, although it was suggested that part of the answer might be

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that it "*comes with experience.*" When taken together with mentors' views on subject knowledge it might be inferred that they saw interpersonal skills, rather than technical ones, as being more important to their role as mentors.

When describing the monitoring and assessing element of the mentor's role it was stated by one of the mentors that he did not find the paper work a problem given the preparation and documentation provided by the HEI Partnership.

Relationship

In describing the tensions and difficulties within the mentor/student teacher relationship there was recognition from most mentors that this relationship had to be built up. However, it was also recognised that once that confidence had been broken it was very difficult to build it up again. Nonetheless mentors acknowledged that they did not always recognise the tensions existing between student teachers and themselves.

Despite the general desire to work with student teachers as colleagues the reaction of mentors on the failure of student teachers to take their advice was not the reaction one would expect to be shown to an equal. Indeed mentors perceived that such a failure on the part of the student teacher was likely to strain the mentor/student teacher relationship.

There was also a strong feeling by the mentors of importance of their position in the mentor/student teacher relationship. These aspects of the role of the mentor were variously described as assessor, manager, director of studies, boss, head of department to a junior colleague and '*totally in control.*'

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Failure by student teachers to recognise the status of mentors was seen as a major area of conflict between mentors and student teachers. This was perceived as likely to strain the mentor/student teacher relationship. In terms of the level of tension and differences experienced the student teachers' attitude was seen as important.

Communication

The importance of communication between the mentor and student teacher was a common theme referred to by mentors when discussing their relationships with student teachers. One mentor stated that student teachers preferred their mentors to be open and honest with them. However, there was a strong feeling that this was a two-way exercise. As part of the process of communication all mentors saw open access for student teachers as essential.

As part of the process of guiding the student teacher observation and feedback, particularly through the weekly meetings, were stated to be vitally important in order to set a student teacher's agenda.

A view held by three of the mentors that they should not be seen to be judgmental or directing contrasted with an acknowledgement by the fourth mentor that there were times when he wanted to be critical so that he could *"move the student teacher forward."* Together with the recognition of wanting to direct the student teacher's agenda this suggested that there were conflicts between different aspects of the mentor's role. This was confirmed when the mentors noted that tensions sometimes arose concerning the directions or advice they gave to student teachers.

5.2.6 Student Teacher Interviews

As previously stated these student teachers were volunteers who had previously taken part in my focus group. This sample was unrepresentative in many ways, in particular due to its small size, the fact that it was taken from the History cohort of one PGCE course and that the student teachers were all male. However, this should not distract from its primary purposes testing the design of research tools and of informing the subsequent phases of my research.

As with the mentor interviews I opted for a thematic analysis based upon the questions identified from the previous element of my research. The codes used for this analysis were the role of the mentor, the relationship between the student teachers and their mentors and the significance of communication.

5.2.7 Conclusions and Further Questions

Refocusing on the purpose of this pilot study it is worth referring back to Yin (2003b: 8), who suggests that *'pilot testing shows how explicit explorations can elaborate key conceptual topics in some previously identified broad subject area.'*

The most significant conclusion that can be drawn from my pilot study is that the most helpful support provided by a mentor was in relation to the provision of practical advice. In addition, whilst mentors helped student teachers by the modelling of good practice and by establishing a professional rapport with them, a sizeable element responding to the questionnaire, which was the broadest based tool used, stated that mentoring did not help them. It is not known what the causes were for this significant level of dissatisfaction,

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although domination by mentors was identified by the focus group as a cause for dissatisfaction, as was mentors being too critical.

My data suggested that the mentors surveyed adopted a highly supportive approach to their student teachers. This was not unexpected given that this outcome was consistent with much of the literature in this area (Ireson 1998; Burgess and Butcher, 1999; Hawkey, 1998). In particular they described helping student teachers by modelling good practice and by establishing a professional rapport with them. As such they conformed in many respects to the model described by Martin (1996) and Hawkey (1997) in which mentors are inclined to stress the interpersonal and supportive aspects of mentoring. They also emphasised the building of an equal relationship characterised by trust, the sharing of expertise and moral support. In addition they focused attention on mentoring as a relationship rather than a role with a set of preconceived duties.

These conclusions were similar to those of Zanting *et al.* (2001: 60), namely that many *'students' expectations of their mentors were very similar to the role interpretations of the mentors themselves.'* They also noted (Ibid: 77) that *'there do not seem to be any major contradictions between mentor and student teachers' beliefs about mentoring in general.'*

I considered it significant that some mentors saw their role as requiring different skills to those they required as teachers. In looking to how mentors obtained these skills mentors described them as being obtained through their own experience as student teachers, and Partnership materials and training. In respect to the latter I considered this might be significant and to suggest that the material and preparation provided by the HEI might define the actions and strategies of mentors. In addition mentors' own experience in this role was cited. I considered both areas merited further research.

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Additional questions which were not satisfactorily addressed included *'How do mentors gain the skills unique to their role?', 'What are the influences on the mentors, such as their own experience as a student teacher and their training as a mentor, and how do they affect the mentor's perception of their role?'* and *'Does the instructional design provided by the Partnership define mentors' strategies?'*

The exploratory case study had the additional benefit of allowing me to test a number of research tools and understand the potential difficulties of obtaining access to participants for my research project. Both subjects are commented on within the main body of this report rather than in this section as I have sought to address only those issues which are relevant to this research project.

5.3 ANALYSIS OF TDA AND PARTNERSHIP DOCUMENTS

5.3.1 Introduction

Whilst my exploratory case study identified questions that merited further research, possibly within this research project, I recognised that they could not be simply answered by any one research tool. Rather I perceived that a range of tools would be needed to progressively reveal the layers within these questions. In deciding where to start this process it seemed appropriate to analyse the documents setting out the administrative framework in which mentors were required to operate so as to contextualise their role.

Accordingly, I undertook to review the key documents which set out the framework within which mentors in England and Wales operated at the point in time my field work took place, the subsequent revision issued (TDA, 2007) is not considered. The documents reviewed

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consisted of *Qualifying to teach* (TDA, 2006b) and the associated handbook (TDA, 2006a). My analysis also included the HEI Partnership handbooks as they set out in detail how the Partnership implemented the TDA requirements.

I consider that these documents, together with other official documents such as the overview report on Secondary Initial Teacher Training by Ofsted (1999), are vital to my research as they form an initial point of reference, i.e. the official view, to which a comparison with practice can be made. I therefore see this document analysis as an essential precursor to the other stages in my research, in particular the identification of the criteria for my observations I will be conducting in the subsequent sections of this chapter. Looking to the use of this tool for such a purpose, Bryman (2001) reports that Penny *et al.* (1996) consider that scrutiny of course documentation for an ITT scheme assisted in the creation of the evaluative framework for their research into critical reflection and mentoring.

Returning to the purpose of my documentary analysis, in particular the questions that I was looking to answer by my analysis, and as identified from my exploratory case study, were '*What is mentoring in ITT?*', '*What is the mentor's role?*' and '*What is the preparation and experience of mentors?*'

5.3.2 Qualifying to teach

In *Qualifying to teach* (TDA, 2006b) the professional standards prescribed by the TDA are organised in two sections, namely Standards and Requirements. The accompanying Handbook explains the Standards and Requirements, and as such the two documents have to be taken together. However, whilst *Qualifying to teach* has statutory force the Handbook is non-statutory, although it is stated in *Qualifying to teach* that '*Providers can refer to this*

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Handbook for clarification and support in their assessment of student teachers, to check the contents of their training, as a reference source' (TDA, 2006b: 5).

Given that much of *Qualifying to teach* focuses on the standards expected from student teachers it does not address the specifics of how they are to be trained; rather it concentrates on the content knowledge and use of strategies required from student teachers. However, the Standards section (S1.7) states that student teachers must demonstrate that *'They are able to improve their own teaching, by evaluating it, learning from the practice of others and from evidence. They are motivated and able to take increasing responsibility for their own professional development.'*

More guidance is given in the Requirements section where some of the most significant aspects of the criteria for assessment are stated as being that: student teachers' achievement against standards is to be regularly and accurately assessed (R2.2); and that training is to take account of the individual needs of student teachers (R2.3). Emphasis is also placed on *'rigorous internal, and independent external, moderation procedures are in place to assure the reliability and accuracy of assessments'* (R4.3).

It is also noteworthy that *Qualifying to teach* does not require any specific person to work with student teachers looking to obtain QTS; instead this is left to the Handbook, which refers to *'school based tutors'* giving guidance to student teachers. In addition the Handbook (R3.1) refers to schools providing *'suitable staff'* and *'experienced teachers'* who are to *'contribute to the assessment of trainees [student teachers] against the Standards.'* It also requires that they should *'monitor and record student teachers' progress; plan assignments and tasks to enable trainees to provide evidence of their achievements;*

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contribute to summative, evidence-based, final assessments; and contribute, with other members of the partnership ... to the moderation of assessment.'

The nature of the required assessment is explained in terms of the Standards being *'outcome statements that indicate what trainee teachers must know, understand and be able to do in order to achieve QTS.'* (TDA, 2006a: 5). However, the Handbook (R2.4) also looks to the functionality of the training provided to student teachers, explaining that they should be *'well prepared for employment in schools.'*

Other elements of the Handbook that relate to the training of student teachers address the need for reflection (S1.7) as *'teachers need to have a capacity and commitment to analyse and reflect on their own practice'* and for *'trainee teachers to develop an ability to make judgements about the effectiveness of their teaching, and to identify ways of bringing about improvement.'* In addition the Standard states that student teachers are expected *'to use [the] feedback they receive from more experienced colleagues observing their teaching ... to identify ways of improving their practice.'* It also requires (R2.5) that schools are *'to insure [sic] that trainee teachers have sufficient high-quality experience.'*

The Handbook also advises providers of ITT to encourage student teachers to *'take responsibility for their own development'* (R2.2), and that their training needs to provide planned progression in the demands made on student teachers (R3.3).

In looking to the role for school-based staff the Handbook asserts (R3) that *'training is most effective where practising teachers are directly involved.'* It also identifies (R2.3) that student teachers are to be *'given the support they need to succeed.'* In addition it requires (R3.1) that student teachers are provided with opportunities *'to discuss and reflect on their*

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experiences ... with experienced teachers.' Thus mentors are to train student teachers, and as part of this process support and reflection is to take place.

In the part of the Handbook addressing Partnership agreements it is suggested (R3.2) that they are *'supplemented by documents containing more detailed information (for example course handbooks).'*' The same section also states that all trainers need to be clear as to their roles and responsibilities for each element of the training and assessment of student teachers.

The Handbook also states (R3.2) that it is for the Partnership to *'ensure all staff are fully prepared for ... planning and delivering training.'* However, it does not dictate how this is to be achieved. Instead it suggests that this should be set out in the Partnership Agreement, which should include, amongst other things, *'training sessions, practical sessions for school ... based staff, and familiarisation events.'* This is supplemented by the provision that it is *'the provider's responsibility to ensure that all new staff in the partnership are fully prepared for their roles, and that all existing trainers are kept up-to-date with recent developments, including changes in the Standards and Requirements.'*

Given this requirement in the Handbook that Partnership Agreements should be supplemented by more detailed information, possibly in the form of Partnership handbooks, this suggested that my document analysis should look to these sources for further information.

5.3.3 HEI Partnership handbooks

In looking to appropriate Partnership documents from the Partnership being studied for further information to answer my research questions two handbooks were reviewed, firstly

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the *'Partnership Handbook'*, and secondly the *'Mentor and Coordinator Handbook'*. These documents are part of a set produced by the Partnership, with the Partnership Handbook being the overarching document for the PGCE course, and the Mentor and Coordinator Handbook being aimed specifically at persons in those roles.

One of the stated aims of the course described in the Partnership Handbook is to comply with the DfES criteria for secondary phase courses, in particular the criteria for QTS. As a consequence the award of QTS to the student teacher on completion of the course depends on passing *'national skills tests set and marked under the direction of the Teacher Training Agency'*, i.e. as set out in *Qualifying to teach*.

The most pertinent section is that relating to roles and responsibilities, in which it is stated that some responsibilities sit with the HEI, some with schools, and some with both of them. Within the latter category there is a requirement relating to *'the training of those staff involved in the Partnership.'* The staff referred to include school-based tutors, i.e. mentors, who are described as *'experienced and trained school teacher[s] who takes responsibility for one or more students in a particular subject area in school.'* However, the handbook provides no guidance as to how mentors are trained or what experience is required in order to undertake the mentor's role.

The handbook also identifies mentor roles which are generic, or specific to either School Experience or TP. Under the generic role most of the activities of the mentor described involve either *'managing a student teacher'*, *'facilitating professional learning'* by *'helping student teachers'* or assessing the student teacher's performance. In order to achieve these objectives the mentor is specifically advised to develop a *'professional relationship with the student teacher, which means proactively providing support, guidance and supervision.'*

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During the School Experience the handbook envisages that the student teacher will progress, and that this will involve the student teacher observing, collaboratively teaching with the mentor and recognising good practice. Significantly the handbook suggests that by their TP *'students move towards becoming autonomous teachers in the classroom'*, with the mentor managing the progression of the student teacher from the collaborative approach identified as being appropriate for the School Experience to one of greater autonomy. It also states that the responsibility for this progress lies with the mentor.

Examples are given as to how mentors are to manage this progression. These range from co-ordinating information received from the student teacher's School Experience; providing support to the student teacher; planning and monitoring an observation programme for the student teacher, with the mentor providing feedback; discussing the student teacher's progress with colleagues; and finally providing an assessment of the student teacher.

A major element of the Partnership Handbook is devoted to monitoring, reporting and assessing by the mentor. The most significant element within this process is the Record of Professional Development which provides the *'structure for the monitoring of the development of Standards for each stage of the course.'*

The Mentor and Coordinator Handbook, which in large part addresses many of the generic aspects of the mentor's role, implicitly suggests that most experienced and trained teachers can be mentors. It also details the training of mentors referred to in the Partnership Handbook, stating that the HEI provides two training sessions, which *'play a crucial role in the continuing professional development of mentors'*, and that at these sessions mentors would be provided with *'opportunities to discuss their interpretations of the role and its responsibilities.'*

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In contrast the stated purpose of these training sessions is to enable 'new' mentors to become familiar with the structure of the PGCE course and *Qualifying to teach*, to reflect upon the mentor's role and consider the skills needed for mentoring.

These objectives are supported by the handbook suggesting that training in assessment procedures and the use of the Standards can be provided through provision of school-based support from university tutors, with further support being provided by co-ordinators and more experienced mentors in school.

In considering mentor skills and strategies that can be used by mentors the handbook refers to a number of models of mentoring (Hagger *et al.*, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Brooks and Sykes, 1997). The emphasis placed on these references by the handbook is on achieving a balance between listening and talking, which is considered to be essential to the mentor's observation (Hagger *et al.*, 1993). In addition it suggests that observation is '*the cornerstone to mentoring and crucial to establishing reflective practice.*' This in turn links to the handbook section which focuses on observation and feedback.

The reference to Maynard and Furlong (1993) is used to support the statement that student teachers develop at different rates, and that as a consequence the strategies used by mentors should vary accordingly. The extracts cited from this work also seek to illustrate the different phases of development of student teachers, with the different roles and strategies adopted by mentors according to these stages. These concepts are developed using the work of Brooks and Sykes (1997) to suggest that mentors should not follow one model, but instead use strategies appropriate to the needs of individual student and the context they find themselves in.

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The handbook also refers to *Qualifying to teach* for guidance on the mentor's role in the assessment of student teachers. Significantly it also recognises that there may be some conflict for mentors between supporting student needs with reflective practice, and having to assess them against those standards, and between feedback and support, and encouragement.

5.3.4 Conclusions and Further Questions

Whilst the documents analysed come from quasi-official sources, and as such are authentic and have their own inherent meaning, there is a question, identified by Abraham (1994), of bias. Accordingly, although these documents are of interest in their own right, their significance to my research will largely depend upon the status attributed to them by mentors, and the extent to which mentors work to their parameters.

The Standards set out in *Qualifying to teach* focus heavily upon content or subject knowledge and understanding, and pedagogy is not addressed; indeed the document makes no suggestion that student teachers need to be aware of how to teach content knowledge. Instead the role of pedagogy is left to the Handbook, where it is addressed in the section entitled '*Commitment to professional development*', in which emphasis is on the personal development of student teachers and not that of the mentors.

Interestingly, the term '*mentor*' is not used by the TDA. Instead, like Circular 09/92 (DFE, 1992) *Qualifying to teach* does not identify any specific person to work with student teachers, instead the Handbook refers to '*school based tutors*'. This ambiguity is compounded by the Handbook (R3.1) referring to schools providing '*suitable staff*' and '*experienced teachers*', with the latter reference also imitating the wording of Circular 09/92

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(DfES, 1992). Whilst this may have the advantage of giving Partnerships flexibility as to how they organise their provision the corollary is that it has the disadvantage of providing no guidance as to whom these tutors are, and what qualifications or attributes they need to possess. Although recognition is given that mentors should be fully prepared by the Partnership through training sessions, no details are given as to what this training should consist of.

Mentors are also described as '*trainers*', which implies their role is perceived to involve training student teachers. This aspect of the mentor's role is also recognised by Youens and Bailey (2004), who suggest that there is recognition of the concept of the mentor-as-trainer.

The Partnership Handbook, through reference to various models of mentoring (Hagger *et al.*, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Brookes and Sykes, 1997) seeks to illuminate the roles identified for mentors. It is also notable that whilst the handbook seeks to be non-judgmental on the extracts quoted from these models, judgement has been applied in the selection of the particular extracts cited.

In addition my analysis suggests that various elements of mentoring models are recognisable in the Handbook. For example the requirement for mentors to give support to student teachers, as suggested by Daloz (1986), forms part of current requirements for ITT (R2.3), specifically that student teachers are to be '*given the support they need to succeed*'. The Handbook (R2.2) also looks for providers of ITT to encourage student teachers to '*take responsibility for their own development*.' It may therefore be suggested from the latter that mentors are expected to take the role identified for them in andragogy as advocated by Knowles (1978), as opposed to pedagogy.

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Reflection is also seen by the Handbook (S1.7) to be an important aspect of the Standards, with student teachers being required to have the *'capacity and commitment to analyse and reflect on their own practice.'* As a consequence it considers there to be a need for *'trainee teachers to develop an ability to make judgments about the effectiveness of their teaching, and to identify ways of bringing about improvement.'* There are thus possible links to Schön's theory of reflection on learning (1987) and the reflective model of mentoring described by Maynard and Furlong (1993).

However, the Mentor's handbook also suggests that there may be conflict between some of these roles, in particular mentors *'wanting to support students' learning needs within reflective practice and having to assess them against the criteria set out in the national Professional Standards.'* This is largely because of the focus in *Qualifying to teach* on assessment, whilst the Partnership looks to encourage reflective practice, which is one of the strategies of mentors identified by Maynard and Furlong (Ibid), and is seen as being particularly important during the student teachers' TP.

Reference to experiential learning is also seen in the Handbook (R2.5), with schools being required *'to insure [sic] that trainee teachers have sufficient ... experience.'* Links can thus be made with Kolb's theory of experiential learning (1984), in which it is suggested that experiential learning is the source of learning and development.

The findings from my analysis of the documents are, firstly, that there is a clear link between *Qualifying to teach* and the Handbook on the one hand, and the Partnership handbooks on the other hand, with the latter providing the detail to flesh out the principals set out in the former. Secondly, student teachers are situated in schools, with implicit assumptions by government of situated and experiential learning on their part.

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The third finding is that mentors are seen as trainers of student teachers. This finding is similar to the conclusion of Elliot and Calderhead (1995), who suggest that this is in order to allow student teachers to be trained under a competence-based model. This is consistent with my fourth finding that the primary role envisaged for mentors by the TDA is one of assessment in line with the competence statements prescribed. This appears to be in order to deliver specified outputs, i.e. the certification of student teachers to QTS, and is consistent with the conclusion of Fletcher (2000), who suggests that what is unique about competence based assessment is that it should always take place in the workplace.

Another finding is that the training of mentors is within the remit of the Partnership. However, the nature of that training is uncertain other than in relation to assessment procedures and *'the use of the Standards.'* However, the Mentor handbook suggests that the best way for training to be achieved is *'through the complementary provision of school-based support from university-based tutors ... and university-based training.'* The focus on this area of mentor training is not surprising given the statement in the handbook that *'it is the assessment of practical teaching that is obviously the focus of greatest concern to mentors.'* While this emphasises the primary role for the mentor as an assessor in a competence based ITT system it may or may not reflect the views of the mentors. I concluded that this would have to be ascertained by further research.

However, such is the strength of these standards and the rigidity with which they are enforced that Hill (2001) suggests that the individual mentor's flexibility is limited. He goes on to state that the TDA and Ofsted have progressively introduced changes deliberately designed to limit the degree of interpretation available to mentors.

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I also found that there are links between the documents analysed, in particular the Mentor handbook, and models of mentoring, and possibly with learning theories, albeit that the latter conclusion is only tentative. This is exemplified by the recommendation that mentors establish a professional relationship with student teachers, and that this involves the proactive provision of support, guidance and supervision.

Following on from these findings my analysis suggested a number of further questions, namely, *'What training is given by Partnerships to mentors?', 'What is the status attributed by mentors to the Partnership handbooks?', 'What instructional design is provided by the Partnership', 'Do mentors use learning theories to guide their instructional design?' and 'Do mentors see their role as being assessors or trainers?'*

In looking to answer these questions I considered that some of them would be best answered by observation of mentor training, and through dialogue with the Partnership in order to understand its perceptions of the areas defined by my questions. These phases are set out in the following subsequent sub-sections of this chapter.

In addition other means, such as mentor interviews, may have to be considered to look at further questions such as *'Does learning theory have a role in the instructional design used by mentors?'* and *'Are mentors equipped to train student teachers, specifically are they prepared for working with adults, as opposed to school age pupils?'* However, investigation of these questions has been deferred to the next chapter.

5.4 OBSERVATIONS OF MENTORS AND STUDENT TEACHERS

5.4.1 Introduction

It is possible to argue that all research is some form of participant observation since we cannot study the world without being part of it.' (Penny et al., 1996: 61)

Following my analysis of the TDA and Partnership documents I considered that it would be necessary to immerse myself in the reality of mentoring in a school environment in order to obtain an understanding of mentoring in practice through observation of mentors. Accordingly, within this section two different observations are described, namely of mentors working with student teachers teaching and of mentors weekly meetings with student teachers, both of which were carried out in 2003/2004.

I chose to observe mentors in schools rather than using focus groups, as in the exploratory case study, as I wished to hear about the personal experiences of mentors as they conversed whilst mentoring. In addition I considered that observations of mentors with student teachers, with their natural talk and contexts would allow me to remain neutral and reduce bias. This process was assisted by the observations being located in the mentors' schools. I do not believe that this would have been possible to the same extent using focus groups.

Other factors also militated against the use of focus groups. Firstly they would have been extremely difficult to organise; in addition it is widely acknowledged that mentors have a lack of time to carry out their roles, and as a consequence I felt it would not be practicable to request them to take part in an extra session.

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In a more positive sense, previous research into mentor activities (Edwards and Collison, 1996, Maxwell, 2002) has used observations, together with other tools, as part of a process of providing '*methodological triangulation when analysing data.*' Orland-Barak (2001) also reports using observations for that purpose in her research into mentoring, and emphasises their suitability for use in action situations such as occur in analysing and recording practice.

The first observations carried out were of four mentors monitoring student teachers teaching in school, and the subsequent reflection and feedback by these mentors, and subsequently when conducting weekly meetings with their student teachers. With these observations I wanted to continue my interrogation of the mentoring process. The school environment was selected as the forum for my research because I felt I needed to look further at the context in which the mentoring relationship took place.

Looking to develop my research from my exploratory case study I looked to use the same four mentors used in that study for this research project. However, only two were willing to take part as one had recently received additional responsibilities in his school and another unwilling to take any further part in this research. Accordingly, I continued these observations with the two mentors that were willing to take part, and two new mentors who had agreed to take part. These additional mentors were recruited through the mentor training sessions I attended.

The biographic details of the mentors and student teachers observed are set out in Table 5.1 below.

Name and Pairing	Mentor /ST	Gender	Age
Chris Smythe	M	Male	35
Anne Williams	ST	Female	
Katherine Taylor	M	Female	33
Ged Kline	ST	Male	
Rachel Naara	M	Female	28
Elizabeth Wells	ST	Female	
Nicola Francis	M	Female	45
June Brown	ST	Female	

Table 5.1 - Pairing of Student Teachers and Mentors for Observations

The criteria for my observations were informed by my analysis of the HEI Partnership course documents and handbooks. These criteria are *'How do mentors and student teachers elicit their personal educational goals and values, and how do they interact, and potentially conflict?'*, *'How does the mentor/student teacher relationship help the participants to examine their pedagogy and professional practice?'*, *'Do mentors teach the student teachers how to teach?'*, *'What is the impact of the TTA standards on the role and strategies of mentors?'* and *'What is the role and significance of the Partnership Handbook, and whether it constitutes the instructional design for mentors?'*

My observations were recorded using field notes, and subsequently analysed looking for recurrent themes and exceptional features in individual cases. By overlapping the collection of the data and its analysis, the analysis was speeded up. In addition any adjustments to the data collection required were facilitated.

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Whilst Hansford *et al.* (2003) identified observations being used in very few of the studies they investigated in their literature review, from my analysis of literature, in particular the examples cited in my literature review, I consider their use has been under reported.

5.4.2 Monitoring and Feedback

These observations took place in two parts, the first being the monitoring of student teachers by mentors, and the second was the provision of feedback by mentors to student teachers. During the first stage the mentors and I sat at the back of the classroom during the lesson, taking no part in it.

By way of example of this round of observations I will describe in overview the first observation that took place in Chris Smythe's school whilst the student teacher taught a Year 8 history lesson, which focussed on World War I. During the lesson a number of minor issues occurred indicating some lack of control of the class by the student teacher. In addition there was an element of unpreparedness and/or lack of flexibility on the part of the student teacher when unforeseen events occurred.

Following the lesson Chris and the student teacher reflected on the positive and negative aspects of the lesson. Rather than criticising the conduct of the lesson directly Jon asked the student teacher for her views on how the lesson went.

The student teacher was very self-critical and identified three aspects which she thought did not go well. Whilst agreeing with the points identified by the student teacher Chris chose on each occasion not to criticise the student teacher. Rather he elected to offer constructive advice as to what the student teacher could have done differently. He concluded by being very positive and saying, *"I thought you did well with the class at the*

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end, you didn't give in to the noisy ones with the big voices at the back." He then suggested that the student teacher observe the same class being taught by two named teachers of other subjects in order to see different methods of classroom management.

This feedback was carried out in a sympathetic and collaborative manner, an example of which occurred when Chris Smythe consoled his student teacher when one aspect of the lesson did not go well, saying *"This comes with experience."* However, he was also willing to take an active role in developing the student teacher in perceived problem areas, for instance stating *"we have got some consideration regarding the marking of GCSE course work"* and *"we need to look at your lesson plans together."* In both cases he emphasised the collaborative nature of this process.

Having been asked by Chris whether she was prepared for her next lesson, and answering in the affirmative, the student teacher left the session in a positive mood.

The role of experimentation was further explained by Katherine Taylor in terms of *"It's about learning from your mistakes, and also whenever you have a new group, sometimes one method that you used last year works and then sometimes you think, 'No this isn't right.' So, well, you ... can still be learning no matter how long you teach."* It was clear from this comment that trial and error was seen as part of the student teacher's learning process.

Mentors also made suggestions that one way student teachers could expand their knowledge was by looking to role models. In addition to the example of Chris Smythe cited above Rachel Naara suggested, *"What about observing somebody who has got a similar group or teaches that group?"* to which the student teacher, Elizabeth Wells, responded by

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saying, *"Well yes, I haven't seen Tony teach them for a while, so what I was going to ask him to do was say: 'Can I sit in on one of your lessons?'"* This exchange also suggested a good relationship between the mentor and student, and one in which the mentor did not seek to dominate.

The feedback from mentors also allowed mentors to set targets for future teaching by student teachers. An illustration of this approach was the acknowledgement by Elizabeth Wells that as a consequence of the feedback and reflection *"We have established a few targets that I have been working on."*

Encouragement was also seen as important, with Nicola Francis starting the feedback session with *"So, you have done a lesson this morning, I liked the little cards! Generally it was a good start. How did you feel?"* She subsequently added that it was *"A very positive start really."* This matched the style adopted by Chris Smythe.

5.4.3 Weekly Meetings

During the course of the weekly meetings I observed a number of themes around the mentor's role which became apparent from my analysis of the observations. These themes included mentors providing advice, feedback and encouragement.

Looking to the provision of advice one student teacher, Ged Kline, acknowledged the importance of advice from an experienced colleague, stating *"Katherine's brilliant...she's really a great reference point, because if I am passing her in the corridor and Katherine you know, what shall I do with this? Then she will give me a really quick run down, it's brilliant."* This also suggested that student teachers looked to experienced teachers for role models.

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During the meeting Ged also stated *"I have been looking at all my targets more, I have been doing that, defining the learning outcomes, and I am beginning to put them on every lesson plan now ... If there is something I really want, I usually emphasise the importance of a given lesson."* I believe that this dialogue indicated reflection and self-direction on the part of the student teacher. In addition the meeting as a whole indicated a good relationship and constructive dialogue between the mentor and student teacher.

The ultimate purpose of the feedback was well illustrated by Katherine Taylor in the following terms *"The beauty of it is, though, is that you will be able to go back and make those changes and improve it, and adapt it, which is a sign of a good teacher isn't it?"* Rachel Naara also saw these meetings as a point at which feedback and reflection took place, stating *"Yes, we might as well talk about the lesson whilst it is fresh."* She expanded upon this by suggesting that the student teacher should *"Emphasise ... changes in the dynamic in your voice when you needed to direct the class to do something different. Also stay facing them and deliver your words more slowly."* In addition she encouraged the student teacher, saying: *"Yes, that was a good idea and I really liked that reading activity. ... I have put this as one of the positive things."* This positive aspect to the way the feedback was provided was common to most of the mentors.

It also became apparent from the dialogue between mentors and student teachers that student teachers experimented, with Elizabeth Wells admitting *"Yeh, it was just an experiment for me to see how much they do know ... to have them do this. But it was possibly the wrong decision, yes. I took a step back and decided that it wasn't working and ditched the lesson."* Notwithstanding the apparent failure of the stratagem employed her mentor was encouraging, stating that *"It was a very positive thing to do and a very brave*

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one." In describing these meetings Rachel Naara saw them as *"an active discussion and it's not like a formal meeting, that [it] is a guide line rather than something that is absolutely set in stone."*

There was also clear reference to the role of the material provided by the Partnership, with the student teacher, June Brown, stating *"I might move it on [Looking at Handbook] because I have gone through that with them,"* to which her mentor responded by noting that *"So we have the targets for the week then for the evidence indicators."* This in turn reflected the aim of both the mentor and student teacher to demonstrate compliance with the assessment criteria set out in the Partnership handbooks, both those for the student teacher and the mentors.

5.4.4 Conclusions and Further Questions

Whilst these observations were a natural continuation of the research carried out in my exploratory case study they also helped me to explicate and refresh my thinking about the role of mentor, mentor practice in the school context and the mentoring relationship. I was struck by how well mentors and student teachers interacted when discussing the lesson, in particular that they clearly each understood one another and related well. This appeared to exemplify the views of Awaya *et al.* (2003: 11), who suggest that *'Sharing practical knowledge with students is a matter of "professional dialogue" thus a two-way conversation between mentor and mentee on an equal basis would be the ultimate representation one could hope for.'*

From these observations it was also possible to see monitoring, reflection and feedback being carried out by mentors as part of their role. I believe that it was highly significant

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that during this process that they were not criticising their student teacher's performance in any way or appearing judgemental. Rather they focussed on possible solutions to the problems encountered by the student teacher.

Whilst mentors did not refer to role modelling when advising student teachers I believe that they were opening student teachers up to the idea that they might be able to find appropriate strategies from observation of the practice of those other teachers. For example, looking to Chris Smythe I consider that he was also trying to be subtle by suggesting that the student teacher see two other teachers take the class, thus providing the opportunity for different styles to be observed and not limiting the student teacher to one solution.

When considering this observation as an entirety I believe that it fulfilled the criteria that I had set for the observation, in particular that it enabled me to listen to and understand the talk between the mentor and the student teacher. In addition it provided a clear exposition of the role of monitoring and feedback by the mentor. In these respects the observation was a success and increased my understanding of the role of the mentor, and of some of the strategies used by mentors.

I also was interested as to the effect, if any, of the National Curriculum for ITT, with its emphasis on competencies on the mentor's role and the strategies they used. Due to the fact that mentors did not come into direct contact with this curriculum this question could not be answered directly, but rather had to be posed in terms of the role and significance, if any, of the Partnership handbook and mentor training.

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The further questions that arose from the observation of the mentor training sessions are as follows:

1. *'What is mentoring in ITT?'*

Is mentoring instructing, coaching, developmental, role modelling or assessing? The answer to this question cannot be taken as a given as mentoring is said to suffer from a lack of conceptual framework or vagueness (CUREE, 2005). As a consequence there is a need to define what mentors believe that a mentor is, and to analyse their practice. If mentors rely on their experiential learning are they really not coaches rather than mentors?

2. *'What is the mentor's role?'*

Again this generalised question is underpinned by a number of more specific questions as to the mentors' role. Given the context in which the mentor is working there are further questions as to whether it is the mentor's role to train the student teacher. Alternatively, another key role for the mentor may be to assess the student teacher. It could also be the articulation of practical knowledge, which has been described as the *'missing role'* (Zanting *et al.* 2001) of the mentor.

3. *'What is the preparation and experience of mentors?'*

This generalised question is underpinned by a number of more specific questions, for instance how skilled and experienced are mentors and does being an expert teacher guarantee being an expert mentor?

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Accordingly, I decided to start this process by analysing the documents setting out the administrative framework in which mentors were required to operate in order to contextualise their role.

5.5 OBSERVATION OF MENTOR TRAINING AT HEI

5.5.1 Introduction

In getting to understand more about mentoring I looked to the influences of the HEI. As part of this process I attended two mentor training sessions held by the HEI Partnership in autumn 2004.

The questions for my observations of mentor training were informed by my exploratory case study and analysis of documentation, both as previously described, and the specific questions they posed, specifically *'What training is given by Partnerships to mentors?'* and *'What instructional design is provided to mentors by the Partnership?'*

My observations were recorded as *'field notes'*, then later as *'diary entries'*, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985: 143). These notes provided data for my research as they were:

'Fieldwork descriptions of activities, behaviours, actions, conversations, interpersonal interactions, organisational or community processes or any other aspect of observable human experience.' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 273)

Looking to the data obtained through my research and its purpose Lincoln and Guba suggest that it:

'[C]onsists of field notes; rich detailed descriptions, including the context within which the observations were made. Descriptive validity refers to observable events; no sense of generalisability or representativeness is involved.' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 273)

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5.5.2 Observation

The first observation took place on 16 September 2004 and was described as a '*new mentors meeting*.' It is noteworthy that Chris Smythe, one of the mentors used in my exploratory case study, who had been mentoring for at least three years by this time also attended despite not being a '*new*' mentor.

Following the introduction of the session I was formally introduced to the mentors and asked to explain the purpose and nature of my research project. Following my explanation I remained a silent observer in one corner of the room for the first half of the session; then the university tutor made the suggestion that I should join in with the group activities taking place. I then became a participant observer for the rest of the session.

The session was devoted to making explicit the roles and responsibilities of mentors, and introduced by the question "*What does it mean to be a mentor?*", to which the university tutor leading the session provided the answer "*A challenging role which needs great organisational skills.*" No reason was given as to why it was challenging or why organisational skills were stressed in preference to other skills or aptitudes.

The main part of the meeting started with an explanation of the dates for the start of the TP in January 2005, the days the student teachers were going to be in school, the activities they were expected to carry out and the range of academic stages they should gain experience of. An indication was also given of the amount of observation of experienced teachers the student teachers should undertake at various stages of the TP.

Mentors were advised that they should gradually introduce greater challenges as the TP progressed. It was also said that after the initial stages of the TP the student teacher

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should be left on their own for "*a couple of lessons*", and as the TP progressed the mentor should progressively withdraw a little more and remain in the background. By half way through the practice the mentor was expected to withdraw, although it was acknowledged that this might be later for "*weaker students*." At the same point challenge should be introduced, with the number of lessons taught by the student teacher increasing.

The university tutor also suggested that during the TP student teachers might "*plateau*", and that in such circumstances the mentor should "*push them on*". No explanation was given as to how mentors were to do this. In addition it was suggested that good student teachers should be expected to experience "*one very intense day to show them reality*" so as to prepare them for the "*real world*." It was acknowledged that this would test their organisational skills.

An explanation was given to the mentors of the Partnership assessment documents that the mentors were expected to complete, and the scheme of work assignment that student teachers were to undertake during the TP. It was stated that on the occasions that student teachers failed mentors often felt that this was their fault. The university tutor suggested it was not, noting that whilst student teachers might be highly successful academically some found that teaching was not for them.

The session concluded with mentors being advised of the date for the next mentor training session, at which they would be able to meet their TP student teachers.

The second observation took place on 8 December 2004. The session commenced with a review of the previous years course statistics, with particular attention being given to the fact that 50 out of the 60 student teachers commencing the course had completed it. In

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addition feedback from those student teachers was relayed to the mentors. This includes advice that three student teachers had not been happy with the mentoring they had received, with a further three not being happy with the co-ordinator at their schools.

The university tutor then advised the mentors of the Partnership's objectives. One objective was for an increase in the joint observation of student teachers by university tutors and mentors. This was linked to the requirement for assessment of the student teachers by the mentors, and was raised in the context of allowing moderation by the university tutor of assessments by mentors, thereby improving the consistency of the assessments.

Subsequently the subject of course documentation was discussed. When the subject of the '*method project log*' was raised it became apparent that a number of mentors were not aware of its existence. In addition the mentor handbook for the course was discussed. When the university tutor stated that this was a working handbook many of the mentors disagreed. Instead they suggested that it was "*far too thick*", and that there was "*too much to read*." In reply they were told that there would be new mentor and co-ordinator handbooks in the near future, which it was hoped would be more workable.

The mentors were also shown the new mentor packs from the TTA, which included a video. Whilst it was acknowledged by the mentors that this pack contained good resources for professional development there was a strong feeling that it was yet more material from government. Most mentors stated that they would not look at it, with some saying that they would "*put it in the bin*."

The subject of teaching assistants was also raised with the mentors. It was acknowledged that this was a new area for teachers and still being developed, with different schools

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handling it in different ways. Whilst there was common agreement amongst the mentors that other adults should be treated with respect there was a very strong feeling that student teachers already had too much material to handle. Because of this "*overload situation*" most mentors stated they would not cover this subject within the TP. It was also felt that the subject was "*not relevant to the student teacher and will just go right over their heads. It is the here and now that counts*" with most student teachers just wanting to pass their PGCE course.

The mentors were then given a presentation on paired mentoring. It was stated by the presenter that constructivist notions of learning through social activity, with an emphasis on knowledge acquisition as a process of meaning, suggested that paired placements were more conducive to the learning of student teachers than the traditional single placement. The general feedback from mentors was that this arrangement was very tiring for them. Chris Smythe stated that he had once taken on two student teachers at the same time, but that it had been very difficult for him. Additionally, he felt it had been detrimental to one of the student teachers.

The session concluded with the mentors being introduced to the student teachers that they would be mentoring during TP. Many mentors considered this to be the most positive aspect of the session.

5.5.3 Conclusions and Further Questions

My observations of mentor training sessions suggested that limited training in the processes and strategies of mentoring described in literature (Hagger *et al.*, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Brooks and Sykes, 1997) and referred to in the Mentor handbook was

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provided by the Partnership to mentors. Instead the sessions looked to brief mentors on the details of the PGCE course and the Partnership requirements, in particular the subject requirements they need to cover in order for them to set up a school based timetable suitable to provide the student teacher with a weekly meeting. In addition much of the training and guidance provided to mentors was focussed on the assessment criteria to be used by mentors. The latter is entirely logical in the context that the prime role of the mentor under *Qualifying to teach* is that of an assessor.

However, some time was devoted to making explicit the roles and responsibilities of mentors, in particular the development of student teachers during their TP, and the use of challenge. Guidance was given by university tutors on the role of challenge, the amount of observation to be undertaken by student teachers and progressively increasing independence for the student teachers. Whilst it was clear that it was intended that mentors should take these aspects in to account when managing the student teacher's TP it was unclear as to the extent this information was accepted or understood by mentors.

These findings are consistent with that of Youens and Bailey (2004), who suggest that the aims of such training for new mentors are threefold. Firstly, it is familiarisation with the PGCE course the student teachers are participating in. Secondly, it is to understand mentoring roles and responsibilities. And the third is about the role of assessor they were to undertake and where this fitted into the Partnership objectives.

A key element of this approach to mentor training is implicit reliance on the work of Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), who suggest that basic, generic mentoring skills are already in place within the teaching profession. As a consequence Youens and Bailey (2004)

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consider it is perceived by Partnerships that there is now less need for general training skills and strategies as part of PGCE mentor training.

Whilst the Partnership handbook was discussed, and perhaps considered by the HEI tutors to be, either in whole or part, the instructional design to be used by mentors, not many mentors appeared to hold this view. Instead some mentors appeared to regard the document as too large and cumbersome for that purpose, with the consequence that they did not read or use it. When taking into account the comments by mentors on other course material, in particular the method project log, it is quite clear that some mentors had an incomplete understanding of it.

In contrast other mentors were aware of the material, suggesting that they had a better understanding of the contents, but how they had become aware of the contents was not clear. My concern as to the extent to which mentors made use of the information provided by the Partnership was reinforced by their reaction to the mentor packs issued by the TTA. I also concluded that relatively little understanding of the views of mentors on their role had been obtained through my observations.

On a more positive note my observations of mentor training allowed the following to be obtained: an understanding of Partnership requirements and instructional design provided to mentor teachers; an initial understanding of the views of mentor teachers on the instructional design provided to mentor teachers; and identification of mentor teachers to participate in my research.

This understanding lead to the formulation of the following questions, *'Is the current Partnership model of training student teachers during ITT providing enough direction,*

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support and training for mentors?', 'What are the mentor's strategies? And are these strategies shaped by the TDA standards for student teachers?' and 'Do mentors use different strategies according to the stage of development the student teacher is at?'

In order to answer these questions it was necessary to obtain the views of teachers acting as mentors. However, prior to moving on to posing questions I looked to obtain a better understanding of the Partnership aims and objectives, as set out in the next section to confirm my findings from these observations and prior analysis of official documentation.

A further benefit of these observations was that I was able to recruit participants for my research. After the sessions I asked the groups of mentors if any of them were prepared to participate in my research, which led to sixteen mentors from the HEI Partnership agreeing to take part in my research project; these were in addition to the four already being used.

5.6 INTERVIEW WITH HEAD OF PGCE COURSE

5.6.1 Introduction

In order to obtain a better understanding of the Partnership aims and objectives I carried out further reconnaissance of the Partnership within which the mentors were working. This took the form of a semi-structured interview with heads of PGCE courses from two Partnerships were conducted in order to understand the views of the Partnerships as to their members' role and method of operating. The first interview, which was with the head of a PGCE course at a Partnership other than that being studied, was used solely to pilot the interview schedule.

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These interviews were very important for contextualising the role of the HEIs and their view of the training and support provided to mentors. Also they clarified the stated aims of my work.

The interviews were held subsequent to the analysis of documents and observations of mentor training, but prior to the interviews with mentors. The reason for conducting the interview after the participant observations was so as to make the most effective use of discussion time, as by then I was adequately informed on the subject matter before the interview, as recommended by Cohen *et al.* (2002).

The criteria for the interviews, as established in the previous section, were to explore the Partnership aims and procedures, the training requirements and provision for mentors, and the instructional design provided by the partnership for mentors.

The questions for the interview with head of the PGCE course were informed by my exploratory case study and prior observation, both as previously described. The specific questions posed, which were the same as those underpinning my observations of mentor training, were '*What is the training provided by the HEI to mentors?*' and '*What instructional design is provided to mentors by the Partnership?*'

Whilst these questions may appear to repeat some of the questions raised in prior sections of this chapter I was looking to supplement my observations and analysis with information from within the Partnership, thereby obtaining triangulation for my findings.

In terms of output from the interviews the interviewees referred to their own accounts of their own practice very closely, and as such the interviews were used for clarification purposes only. These interviews were very successful in achieving the intended purpose

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and facilitated the operationalisation of my questions and the subsequent design of the interview schedules for use with mentors.

A copy of the revised interview schedules used is attached at Appendix 3.

5.6.2 Interview

In looking at the selection of mentors the head of course stated that this was a matter for the school, and the department within the school in particular, rather than the HEI. In addition she did not think setting a minimum age requirement was an appropriate way of ensuring the entry of suitable mentors. Rather she considered that the HEI had to work with the people who came forward and who wanted to carry out the role.

However, she qualified this statement with the proviso that if mentors were initially unsuitable in some way the HEI would work with them and train them, but would ultimately resort to asking the mentor's school to withdraw them if they had to. She summed up this position as *"It is not for us to choose a mentor, but it is up to us ultimately to de-select a mentor if there was a ... stand-off between the school and the university."* She acknowledged that the HEI would be more proactive in the recruitment of mentors, stating:

"If we think here is a person in a department that we think would be really good as a mentor we might try to encourage the head of department or the co-ordinator to encourage that person to come along and be trained as a mentor as well."

Turning to why teachers undertook the role of mentor she considered that schools and potential mentors saw mentoring as providing an opportunity for professional development for those undertaking that role.

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In terms of the training of mentors she referred to the annual training cycle set out in the Mentor handbook, and supplemented by in-school training by university tutors. She made a particular point of emphasising that mentor attendance at training was monitored in order to ensure that mentors understood the requirements of *Qualifying to teach* and where to look for details of their role, i.e. as set out in the Partnership handbook. In addition she explained that mentors were given feedback from the HEI of how student teachers "*have rated their performance,*" and that if problems occurred they were raised with the appropriate school co-ordinator.

Given the importance of the standards she considered it very important that mentors knew where to look for guidance as to their role, which was "*set out very clearly in our Partnership handbook*", and with access to university tutors if they needed advice. She saw the school co-ordinator's role as one of ensuring compliance with the Partnership requirements for the student teacher placements, and thus also providing quality assurance. In this environment she considered that the HEI's role was "*about establishing lines of contact, clarifying the requirements [Qualifying to teach], making clear that they understand how much is resting on the way they do their job for the student teacher.*"

The mentor's role was considered to "*vary according to the time of year*", a reference to School Experience and TP, and to the development and progression of the student teacher between those placements. She stated that as part of this process the mentor's initial role was to familiarise the student teacher with the school environment into which they were being introduced. In looking at the subsequent role of the mentor she considered that it depended upon two things, firstly the individual student teacher's needs, and secondly their relationship with the mentor. She also emphasised that the mentor had an assessment role,

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which she considered to be complemented by the student teacher conducting self-assessment.

As such she considered that it was of prime importance that mentors understood both the assessment criteria they were working to, and what the standards meant, in particular:

"[W]hat the minimum of those Standards, and what a pass might be, and then how to move people on. So that is a really important role and obviously in doing that they are then sometimes helping the person move forward, then they are sometimes coaching, sometimes counselling, sometimes giving them a bit of a kick if they seemed to have plateaued and coasting."

Assessment was not seen as something that only occurred at the end of the TP, instead she stated that:

"The assessment should be formative right through the whole process, so that at any point to be an effective mentor you are assessing what the student teacher is going to need next, where they are going, what they are working on, you are looking at that and you give them feedback."

She developed this concept by stating that this role should be concurrent with that of providing support and encouragement. However, she considered that this ran counter to the teacher ethos of *"encouraging them when they have tried hard, even though it has not been very successful, has become almost second nature to most teachers. This does not sit well with a standards driven curriculum. You might have tried very hard but not actually met it."* She thought that this was a *"very painful role for the mentors because they have got quite close to the student teacher."*

As a consequence she felt that it was important that the standards for entry into the profession were understood, and that mentors understood the *"starting point for a teacher who is going to have their own classes."* Accordingly, she concluded that *"it has to be that*

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the university, with the schools and the mentors, have that dialogue and determine those standards in relation to what is written down in the government Standards."

This analysis led in turn to an explanation of the concept of the mentor acting as a gate keeper, as:

"What you are doing there, is that you are gate keeping for children. And that you have to gate keep that role, and that there is an opportunity for any student teacher to have another period of TP to try and reach the standard."

She saw this role being shared with the HEI. In addition, because of the standards being very prescriptive and overly long, with associated problems for assessment, she saw a further role for the HEI in managing the minutia of the Standards without making the mentor or student teacher feel that somebody was looking over their shoulders.

As part of the quality assurance of the assessment process she stated that the HEI looked to paired observations between tutor and mentors to ensure that mentors understood the standards. By this process, which she referenced to the handbook, the Partnership looked to moderate the mentor's assessment of their student teacher and *"maintain the quality of mentor assessments"*.

In looking to relationships she noted that sometimes relationships broke down between mentors and student teachers, and whilst this was not necessarily the fault of the mentor, they had to be managed. Her view was that it required a professional attitude on both sides, and *"From the student teacher point of view if they don't like their mentor, in a sense they have to find a way of dealing with that. They have to find a way of getting around it. They have to find a way of making a professional relationship."* As such if problems existed

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between a mentor and a student teacher she would look to the school co-ordinator to ensure that the student teacher was getting a fair deal.

She considered that most problems arose with less experienced mentors, who sometimes over-identified with the student teacher because they were *"quite close together in age and they get on together quite well, especially at a social level."* She explained that this was because *"If you over identify to the extent that you don't step back enough to see how the person can develop, and move on from where they are at, you are probably not very effective in your role."* Instead she considered that mentors had to develop their role over the academic year, as after establishing a welcoming environment there was a need to *"increase the challenge to help them learn as much as they can in the year of their PGCE course."*

She also suggested that inexperienced mentors also found it difficult to move into a role which had got elements of assessment in it as well as a guiding role which put them in a different position. She saw these as common problems for inexperienced mentors. Conversely, though, she considered that new mentors, despite being new to teaching, were often good mentors because they knew *"what you need to know at that point"* and were familiar with the Standards.

5.6.3 Conclusions and Further Questions

One of the major impressions generated by this interview was that much of the *'training'* provided to mentors is in fact instruction on the Partnership requirements, and on form filling driven by the need to evidence to external inspectors that the TDA assessment requirements are being met by the Partnership. This emphasis on assessment within a

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competence-based system of ITT corresponds with Fletcher's (2000b: 75) view that *'As performance criteria relate to critical aspects of performance, this means that all criteria must be met because true competence entails transferability of skills and knowledge, [and] evidence of performance across the specified range must also be collected.'*

As part of this process mentors are used to assist in the production of an audit trail by the Partnership to evidence its compliance with these requirements. This fits with Young's (2004: 5) suggestion that Ofsted inspections are used to ensure compliance with *'the letter and spirit of government regulations.'*

This emphasis on assessment underpins the interviewee's statement that new teachers are often good mentors as they are familiar with the Standards, implicitly suggesting that large amounts of experience as a teacher are not seen as necessary for mentors acting as assessors.

In concluding that much of mentor training is actually taken up in enabling mentors to understand the manner in which they have to assess student teachers and to demonstrate compliance with the Regulations, one of the consequences is that little time is available for any other training. This would suggest that mentors have to rely on something other than the training provided by the Partnership for the means to carry out their role in training student teachers.

However, it is worth noting that the head of the course used to pilot this interview stated that she suspected that much of the material provided to mentors by her Partnership was not used in practice. However, she felt that this allowed mentors to move beyond merely being assessors. She considered that this provided more focus on student teacher learning,

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with more reflection on the learning taking place. Like her counterpart she acknowledged that the pass/fail requirement of Standards, as set out in *Qualifying to teach*, was seen as being hard for some teachers to accept given the current ethos of the teaching profession.

Notwithstanding the emphasis on assessment the interview provided some evidence that the Partnership had been influenced by mentoring models. One example of this was her statement that student teachers might "*plateau*", and that in such circumstances mentors should "*push them on*", this appeared to match the model of mentoring described by Maynard and Furlong (1995).

In terms of output from the interview the interviewee referred to her own account of the Partnership's practice very closely. As such the interview was very successful in achieving the intended purpose of clarifying the aims and objectives of the partnership and allowing triangulation of data. In addition it facilitated the operationalisation of my questions and the design of the interview schedules for use with mentors, and led to the identification of the following questions:

1. *'What strategies do mentors use?'*

The aim of this question was to look at the pedagogical strategies adopted by mentors. The question was also intended to consider the role and significance of the Mentor handbook, and whether in actuality it forms part of the instructional design used by mentors.

2. *'What are the influences on mentors' strategies?'*

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I considered this question to be essential given the ambiguity of the TDA requirements, in which they are merely described as '*suitable*' and/or '*experienced*'. This is particularly important if credence is given to the work of Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), who suggest that basic, generic mentoring skills are already in place within the teaching profession, and the subsequent conclusions of Youens and Bailey (2004), that there is now less need for general training skills and strategies as part of Partnership mentor training.

3. 'What are mentors' views of their role?'

This question is predicated on the assumption that, given my prior research into the views of the TDA and the Partnership on the mentor's role, only the views of mentors remain unknown.

6 A PERSPECTIVE ON MENTORS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

'Observation precedes understanding. Recognizing an important moment (seeing) precedes encoding it (seeing it as something), which in turn precedes interpretation.' (Boyatzis, 1998: 1)

This chapter represents the second phase of my case study and, by way of a study of mentors' personal and professional perspectives of their role, is intended to build upon the phase of research that I have already described in Chapter 5. The focus to this phase of my research is to address the unanswered questions identified in the previous chapter, namely:

1. *'What strategies do mentors use?', 'What are the influences on mentors' strategies?'* and *'What are mentors' views of their role?'* (Interview with the head of the PGCE course - Section 5.6).
2. *'Do mentors use learning theories to guide their instructional design?'* (Analysis of TDA and Partnership documents - Section 5.3)

Having elected to answer these questions through an analysis of mentors' perspectives of their role I chose to use semi-structured interviews as the key tool for this phase of my research. The primary tool used to analyse the data obtained was thematic analysis, although statistical analysis was also carried out on some of the data. The rationale for this approach is set out in detail later in this section.

The means by which this phase of research was carried out was by way of an extension to my existing case, i.e. the group of mentors used in previous phases of my research,

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thus enabling it to form an integral part of the study of a single but more extensive and developed case.

Looking to the common features of the group of mentors used in my study, the first was that they were all working in schools in the Midlands of England, which in turn were all part of the HEI Partnership being studied. In addition they were all currently mentoring student teachers from the Partnership.

Looking to the selection of the participants in my case I was looking for limited numbers reflecting the fact that as a case study my approach would be '*deep*' and not '*broad*'. In addition I wanted a range of mentors from across the range of subjects. Thus I deliberately selected mentors who represented a range of experiences, both in terms of teaching and mentoring. I consider that this selection process falls under the category of purposive sampling in order to build up a case that was satisfactory for my specific needs, i.e. a group of subject mentors from one HEI Partnership working with student teachers in secondary schools.

6.1.1 Composition of the Case

Turning to the composition of the sample being studied the key biographical details of the 20 mentor teachers forming my case are set out in Table 6.1 below.

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Mentor	Age	Gender	Subject /Area	Academic qualifications	Years of Teaching	Years of Mentoring
Murphy, Adrian	39	M	Maths	BSc, PGCE	15	0.5
Collins, Melissa	27	F	Science	BSc, PGCE	4	1
Edwards, Cerys	39	F	Science	BEd	7	3.5
Carter, Alison	53	F	MFL	Cert Ed	31	2
King, Jamie	30	M	Science	BSc, PGCE	8	2
Taylor, Katherine	33	F	History	BA, PGCE	11	2.5
Brown, Harriet	47	F	MFL	BA, PGCE	23	3
Phillips, Abigail	49	F	MFL	BA, PGCE, Dip Computers & Ed	23	7
Warner, Richard	50	M	Science	BSc, PGCE	10	8
Hyde, Nick	43	M	Science	BSc, BEd	13	1
Hunter, Sarah	29	F	MFL	BA, PGCE	7	3
Benstead, Clair	24	F	Science	BSc, PGCE	3	0.5
Naara, Rachel	28	F	English	BA, PGCE	6	3
Francis, Nicola	45	F	Science	BSc, PGCE	15	8
Smythe, Chris	35	M	History	BA, PGCE, Dip Ed	8	5
Jones, Natalie	34	F	Maths	BSc, GTP	1	0.5
Roberts, Paula	43	F	Science	BSc, Grad Cert Sci. Ed.	22	3

6 A Perspective on Mentors

Mentor	Age	Gender	Subject /Area	Academic qualifications	Years of Teaching	Years of Mentoring
Collins, April	28	F	Science	BSc, PGCE	5	3
Adams, Lawrence	35	M	MFL	BA, PGCE	10	3
Green, Lucy	30	F	Science	PhD, BSc, PGCE	2.5	1
Female		14	Average		11.2	2.7
Male		6				

Table 6.1 - Key Biographical details of Mentors

With one exception, the oldest of the sample being studied, all the mentors had degrees. In addition, with two exceptions, all mentors had post graduate teaching qualifications. In the case of these two exceptions, one, who was the oldest of the group, had a Cert Ed, whilst the other had a B Ed. However, they were all part of the same HEI Partnership and as a consequence they all received similar training from an established provider with a consistent approach to ITT for the whole of the period for which all members of the case have acted as mentors.

Whilst the mentors within the sample had a number of common characteristics, as a group they varied in four key respects, namely age, experience, gender and subject taught.

Turning first to age, the mentors ranged in age from 24 to 53. As such, while not an exact representation of all the mentors within the HEI Partnership, the sample does represent a wide spread of ages.

6 A Perspective on Mentors

Turning to the experience of the members of the sample as teachers and mentors there was considerable variation, much as would be expected from the range of ages. The range of experience as teachers was from 1 to 31 years, with an average of 11.2 years. This indicated that, despite a general expectation of mentors being '*experienced teachers*' this was not always the case. In contrast the range of experience as mentors was much smaller, ranging from 0.5 to 8 years, with an average of 2.7 years.

It is noteworthy that most mentors (65%) had three or less years experience as a mentor, and that even the mentors who had mentored longest only had 8 years experience in this role; this compares with an average of 11 years experience as a teacher. One possible reason for this might be that most teachers undertake mentoring as part of their personal development relatively early in their teaching careers, often before undertaking management positions within schools. In addition there was a trend for teachers to mentor at a younger age and with less experience as teachers.

When considering the gender balance within the sample, i.e. 6 (30%) male and 14 (70%) female mentors, the sample appeared to be skewed on the basis that it did not represent a fair balance of mentors. However, from analysis of gender ratios within the Partnership over a number of years such a ratio does not appear unusual. Additionally, when comparing this gender balance with that for all teachers in the East Midlands in 2002 the difference was in fact very small, with the regional balance being 31.18% male and 68.82% female (TTA, 2004).

Looking to the balance of mentors by subject, the split was as follow:

Subject	Number
Sciences	10 (50%)
Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)	5 (25%)
Maths	2 (10%)
History	2 (10%)
English	1 (5%)

In addition my pilot study used mentors who taught maths (1) and history (5).

Having determined the nature of this phase of my case study, and the nature of the sample and method tool to be used, i.e. semi-structured interviews as described in Chapter 5, for this phase it is necessary to consider the basis for its use and how the data was obtained in more detail.

6.1.2 Form of the Interview Schedules

From my prior research, as set out in Chapters 2 and 6, I had no reason to expect that mentors would be familiar with learning theories or the terminology associated with them. Accordingly, the purpose of questions in this chapter relating to the role of the mentor, their use of strategies, and the influences on these strategies was to engage with mentors in a language that they would be able to understand so as to provide data which would illuminate the basis for their professional knowledge, including learning theories as far as possible, and the nature of their personal theories. The final section, relating to the principles of adult learning, was intended to ascertain the extent to which mentors recognised and used these principles.

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Whilst the criteria for the interview schedules arose in part from my literature review they were largely the product of the prior research that I carried out in the first part of this case study, i.e. Chapter 5. Turning to my literature review, two previous studies had a significant impact on the derivation and framing of my questions. Firstly, Hansford *et al.* (2003) provided me with part of the conceptual framework, i.e. the underpinning of mentoring by adult learning theories. Secondly, Jones *et al.* (2004) identified the strategies of experienced mentors, and how they relate to the standards set by the TTA.

Before commencing the interviews, the interview schedules were piloted on six mentors. These pilot studies did not form part of the main study; instead they formed the basis for testing the interview schedules and revising them as necessary. The revisions to the interview schedules included reformatting the schedule, adding or omitting questions, and restating questions which were not easily understood by respondents. Following revision of the original interview schedule during the pilot study the two new schedules were more succinct and simpler for the respondents to answer. This had the additional benefit of making the mentors' responses more fluent.

When I commenced the pilot study for the interview schedule it was my intention to carry out only one interview with each mentor, however, it quickly became apparent during this study that my schedule was excessively long. This affected the mentors' concentration, which started waning towards the end of the interview. It also made the interview too time consuming for the mentors. As a consequence I split the original mentor interview schedule into two parts during the early stages of the pilot study. The first part of the original interview schedule is now represented by mentor interview schedule No.1, whilst the second is now represented by mentor interview schedule No.2.

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Interview schedule No.1 (see Appendix 4) looked at the strategies employed by mentors and the influences on these strategies. The objectives of these two sections were to elicit why mentors chose to adopt certain pedagogic strategies, and why they felt the strategies worked well. This section was informed by the findings of Jones *et al.* (2004), who have identified many strategies used by mentors, and how they related to the standards set by the TTA. As distinct from the work of Jones *et al.* my analysis of the data focuses on the nature and role of learning theories behind their selection and use by mentors.

Interview schedule No.2 (see Appendix 5) was also split into two sections, the first relating to the role of mentors and the second the recognition and use of principles of adult learning by mentors. The purpose of the first section was to assist me in determining whether mentors used learning theories, in particular adult learning theories, as part of their role, either viscerally (internalising) or through a conscious cognitive choice. In the second section the use of andragogy to assist in the analysis of the mentors' perceptions does not rely on Knowles' distinction between andragogy and pedagogy, and differences in learning between children and adults. Rather these questions were informed by the principles of adult learning, as set out by Knowles (1980), which Brookfield (1986: 90) considers could provide a '*conceptual anchor from which a set of approximately six "adult" teaching behaviours can be derived.*' Cox (2006: 193) agrees, and suggests that andragogy has a '*particular part to play in adult learning and has ... practical application.*

Their relevance to my research is further emphasised through the work of English (1999), who states that:

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'These six widely held assumptions have significant implications for how individuals are educated for mentorship and provided with CPE while mentoring. Each assumption influences the consent, process, and evaluation of learning in mentorship.' (English, 1999: 196)

In addition Sytsma (2006: 3) considers that the nature of mentoring, in particular the requirement for *'working continuously and together'* necessitates the application of *'andragogical rather than pedagogical practices in mentoring.'*

Accordingly, I considered that these principles of adult learning were likely to be relevant to my research given that, as demonstrated in the preceding chapter, literature suggests that the principles of adult learning theory inform mentoring. I also considered that these questions would be appropriate even if a mentor's use of these behaviours was subconscious.

In drafting my interview schedules I was conscious that:

'Questions are a central part of the data and are best viewed not as neutral or uninterested invitations to speak; rather, they shape the grounds or the footings on which the participants can and should speak.' (Freebody, 2003: 137)

I also recognised that my questions would therefore have a significant impact in determining the answers that the participants in my research would provide. As a consequence both schedules were drafted so as to avoid leading the participants as to their understanding of adult learning theory, which is one of the foci of my analysis.

Nonetheless, following Bauer (1996), individual elements of my two interview schedules answered specific elements of my unanswered research questions, as set out at the beginning of this Chapter. This was achieved by selecting themes and topics, ordering the topics, and wording the questions. The questions relating to the principles of adult learning in the second section of Interview Schedule No. 2 (see Appendix 5).

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A key feature of both interview schedules was that they did not address learning theories directly, in large part because my prior research suggested that it could not be assumed that mentors understood such theories or were able to describe them. Indeed Jones *et al.* (2004: 12) suggest that *'whilst mentors seemed confident in their use of strategies, they felt less secure in explaining the underlying reasons for their decisions.'* Reflecting this characteristic the framework for the schedules was also deigned to be flexible such that I could use a mix of direct questions, as well as open and more flexible ones. The purpose of using open-ended questions and probes was to gather in-depth responses concerning mentor's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge. The questions in Section 1 of interview Schedule No. 1 (see Appendix 4) typify this approach. The data obtained consisted of verbatim quotations with sufficient context to be interpretable.

The interviews based on interview schedule No. 1 lasted approximately 45 - 50 minutes, whilst those based on interview schedule No. 2 lasted approximately 30 minutes. Transcripts of the interviews are enclosed (see Appendix 6).

6.1.3 Analysis of the Interviews

Having established the basis for the collection of my data, I was concerned that the analysis I wished to employ was not reduced to a kind of fragmented reductionism whereby there was a *'methodological contestation between the merits of observation and those of interviewing- between what people do and what people say'* (Atkinson and Delamont, 2005: 835). However, as Silverman (2000) noted *'coding your data to some theoretical scheme should only be the first stage of your data analysis. You will then need to examine how these elements link together.'* As a consequence the data was

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analysed following transcription of the audio taped interviews. The data was used to assist in the identification and classification of the forms of learning theory and their characteristics described by mentors.

In my analysis I used the medium of themes from literature, in particular those derived from Jones *et al.* (2004), Hansford *et al.* (2003) and Knowles *et al.* (1998) as prisms for reviewing the actions of mentors in order to carry out an interpretive investigation using thematic analysis. This process is set out diagrammatically in Figure 6.2 below.

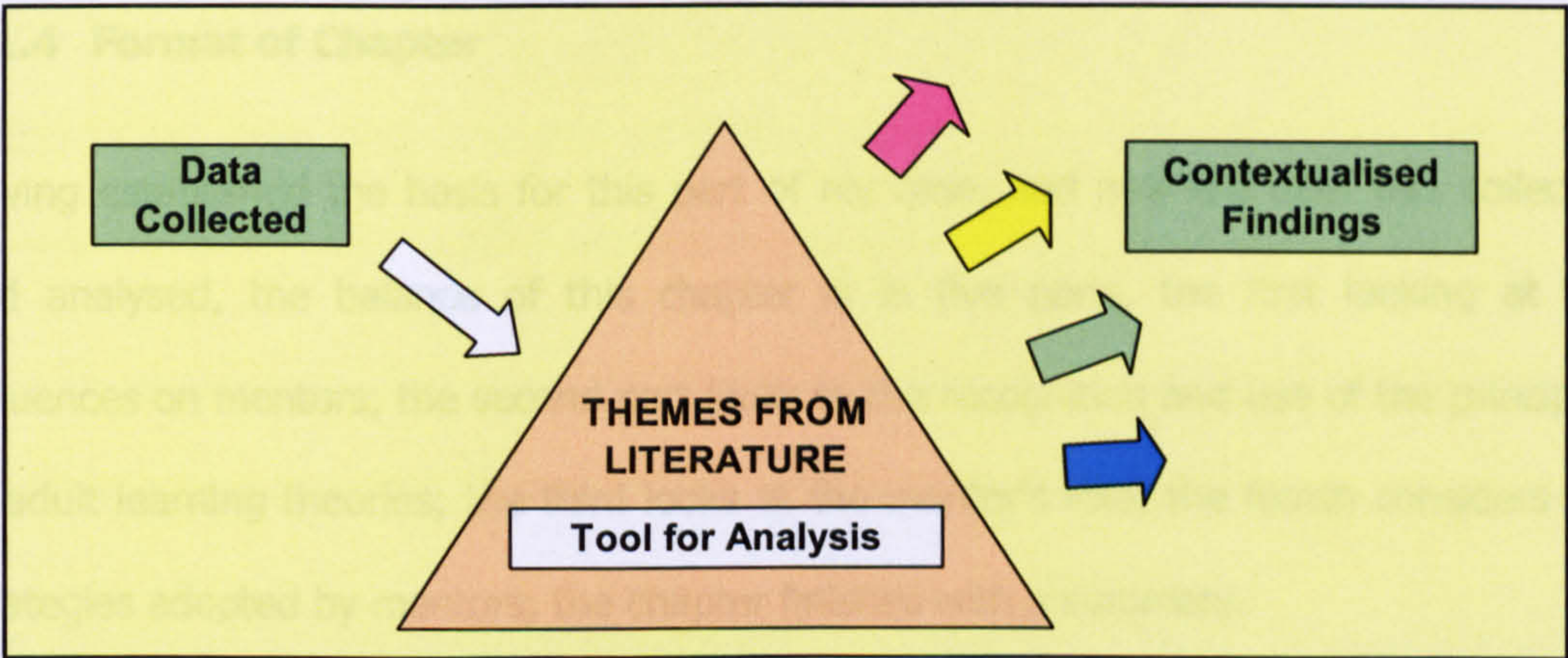


Figure 6.2 - Basis for reviewing data

A key aspect of my data analysis was the inductive process of reviewing the raw data, with no underlying hypothesis, to indicate whether or not mentors used learning theories.

The thematic coding of the interview schedules was carried out using NVivo 7 software. NVivo is a well proven type of software for use in qualitative research, and is commonly used when thematic analysis of data is carried out. The advantage of using NVivo for this task was due to its ability to store and retrieve data, as well as assisting in the creation of thematic codes. NVivo was employed in organising the initial analysis of the

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qualitative transcription data. When coding the data the highest level of the coding structure evolved from the responses to specific questions, which in large part represented the coding of the theoretical propositions that led to my case study, as previously described in Chapter 5.

Following Freebody (2003: 135) I recognised that, my analysis should consider the perceptions of the participants, not only in terms of what they have in common but also in terms of their distinctiveness and differences.

6.1.4 Format of Chapter

Having established the basis for this part of my case, and how the data was collected and analysed, the balance of this chapter is in five parts, the first looking at the influences on mentors; the second part looks to the recognition and use of the principles of adult learning theories; the third looks at the mentor's role; the fourth considers the strategies adopted by mentors; the chapter finishes with a summary.

The choice of the order of the sections within this chapter, which did not correspond with that of the Interview Schedules or their sections, has been made consciously, with the aim of assisting in the explanation and development of the conclusions of this research project. This approach reflected the inductive approach that I used for my research, which progressively went into more detail, with later sections building on the work of previous sections and thereby becoming more and more focussed. In addition this assisted with the development of conclusions.

6.2 INFLUENCES ON MENTORS

6.2.1 Introduction

This section looks to identify the influences on mentors. As identified within the previous chapter the requirements for mentors' development and training are defined by the *Handbook of guidance* (TDA, 2006b), which at R3.1 (Ibid: 88) refers to schools providing '*suitable staff*' and '*experienced teachers*'. In addition it states at R3.2 (Ibid: 89) that it is '*the provider's responsibility to ensure that all new staff in the partnership are fully prepared for their roles, and that all existing trainers are kept up-to-date with recent developments.*' However, the extent or source of this preparation is not defined.

Accordingly, in order to achieve my stated objective the second section of Interview Schedule 1 (see Appendix 4) was devised to obtain data on this subject.

The influences on mentors, as identified in the previous chapter, are experience as student teachers; professional practice; mentors' continuing professional development and training; mentor training; literature; and theory. The order in which these codes are listed is not intended to indicate their relative importance; rather they are intended, at least for the first four codes, to indicate the chronological order in which mentors encounter them in their professional life.

In looking to explain the influences on mentors this section is divided into two parts, the first is an analysis of the mentor's role compared with the mentor variables, whilst the second is a thematic analysis of the data obtained from the interview schedules.

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6.2.2 Analysis of Influences on Mentors

The ranking of the influences on mentors is set out in Table 6.3 below. The mentors' recognition of the different influences on them, as based upon the answers to the questions in the second section of Interview Schedule No. 2 (see Appendix 4), are set out in the next part of this section.

Ranking	Influences	Percentage Agreeing	Percentage Agreeing Jones <i>et al.</i> (2004)
1	Professional Practice (Q1.1)	95%	98%
2	Experience as a Student Teacher (Q 1.7)	90%	66%
3	Mentor Training (Q1.2)	55%	66%
4	Theory (Q 1.9)	35%	Not included
5	CPD and Teacher training (Q1.4)	30%	67% (POST 16 = 33)
6	Literature (Q1.8)	15%	Not stated

Table 6.3 - Influences on Mentors

The first result was that 100% of the less experienced teachers (less than 10 years experience as teachers) considered that their experience as student teachers influenced their strategies. In contrast only 75% of more experienced teachers (more than 10 years experience as teachers) agreed. The second result that only 13% of the less experienced mentors stated that their practice was influenced by theory. This compared with 50% of more experienced mentors who stated that theory influenced their practice.

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When comparing the data obtained with that obtained by Jones *et al.* (2004) a number of similarities and differences appear. The most significant similarity is the high level of correlation as to the importance of professional practice to mentors. However, the sample studied was much more influenced by their own experiences than was that studied by Jones *et al.* One possible reason for this may be the balance between experienced and less experienced mentors in the two samples as less experienced mentors appeared to be more likely to rely on their own experience.

Whilst there was a reasonable correlation between the two samples as to the importance of mentor training, the sample studied were less influenced by it. However, there was a large difference between the two samples as regards CPD and teacher training, with the sample studies being significantly less influenced by it. However, the sample studied had a high degree of correlation with the results Jones *et al.* found for the post 16 sector.

6.2.3 Thematic Analysis of Influences on Mentors

Experience as Student Teachers

Many mentors found their experience as student teachers to be one of the most important elements of preparation for their role as mentors, albeit less important than their professional practice. However, some older mentors found their experience as student teachers less relevant, with one (Harriet Brown) saying she only vaguely remembered that experience as it was approximately 25 years since she had been a student teacher. Whilst largely agreeing, a second mentor (Abigail Phillips) stated that she still remembered what she liked about the people who mentored her, and that she tried to bring aspects of what she liked from that time into her mentoring, for example including the student teacher within "*the running of the faculty.*" In contrast an older

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male mentor (Richard Warner) stated that he always remembered the bad things, which he tried not to forget so as not to replicate them.

From the data obtained the style of their own experience as student teachers had deep and significant impacts on the attitudes of mentors. For example, one mentor (Sarah Hunter) found her time in university frustrating, as all she wanted to do was get into school and have her own classes, she considered student teachers shared her views, and looked to place them in the classroom as soon as possible. Another female mentor (Rachel Naara) stated that she had worked with lots of mentors, with lots of different skills, and that as a consequence she would *"try and offer student teachers alternatives."* In addition, her own experience had involved being *"thrown in at the deep end"* and she believed that it helped her. As a consequence she was an advocate of student teachers *"working things out themselves"* and being more independent. A male mentor (Lawrence Adams) adopted a similar approach, stating that as a student teacher he had a very steep learning curve he copied his own experience by putting student teachers under similar pressure.

Mentors generally considered that their own experiences as student teachers were very important to their practice as mentors, and second only in importance to their professional practice. The strength of their own experiences also led some mentors to consider that the current practice of the Partnership was not as good as when they were student teachers.

Professional Practice

Mentors were unanimous in identifying their professional practice as teachers as their primary source of training and knowledge for their role as mentors. The only variance

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between mentors was to the extent on which they relied upon their professional practice. Some mentors stated they relied upon it wholly (Sarah Hunter), whilst others regarded it as the "*first port of call*" (Chris Smythe) or the starting point for working with student teachers (Harriet Brown).

A caveat was placed upon this reliance on professional practice by an inexperienced and young female mentor (Clair Benstead), who stated as she had only been teaching for two and half years she had limited professional practice. As a consequence she relied less on this than on the experience of her colleagues. Other mentors agreed with her to the extent that whilst their work as a mentor was largely based on their own experience there was a major role for input of colleagues, particularly those who had more experience as mentors than they had.

In addition one of these mentors (Abigail Phillips) stated that she "*developed her pedagogical theories quite a lot through experience*", thus acknowledging the establishment of personal theories. It may also be significant that two experienced mentors (Abigail Phillips and Lawrence Adams) stated that whilst their professional practice was very important to their role as a mentor it was also always developing.

Mentors' Continuing Professional Development and Training

Most mentors considered that their CPD and other training organised by their schools was not relevant to their role as a mentor, and as such had not been an influence on their practise. There were two exceptions to this, specifically two mentors who were taking part in structured training; one through a support programme organised by the LEA on literacy (Rachel Naara), and a second (Chris Smythe) who took part in a '*School's Issues*' project every summer term.

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The latter mentor stated that these courses helped him with *"a range of strategies without me actually experiencing all of them"*, which he found very important to his teaching and mentor strategies.

Mentor Training

As previously identified the *Handbook of Guidance* (TDA, 2006b) states that mentors are to be fully prepared for their roles, with the Partnership Agreements setting out the appropriate training and follow-up support. However, the way in which this was to occur or its content is not specified.

When considering the training provided through the Partnership mentors gave a mixed response as to the usefulness of mentor training they had received. Whilst a narrow majority found it useful, 9 mentors stated that they had not received any relevant training; whilst a further two mentors (Clair Benstead and April Collins) qualified its usefulness stating that it only informed the administrative side of their role. Clair Benstead stated:

"I didn't feel that it helped me with any strategies, I felt that they just helped me with the paperwork aspect really, so I wouldn't say that the training actually helped me with the strategies I used, it just helped introduce me to mentoring and introduce me to who my student teacher would be."

Looking to how mentor training had proved useful, four mentors were able to give specific examples. For example, one (Abigail Phillips) stated that she had been given strategies for feedback for working with adults and people who were in professional training. She also noted that the Partnership had:

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"[G]iven parts, not all of their mentor training over to strategies for observation, strategies for feedback which, however long you've been teaching is a different concept working with adults and working with people who are in professional training so that's been really quite useful to have."

Another (Sarah Hunter) stated that the practical sessions involving role play had an influence, in particular making her think about her approach. A third mentor (Lawrence Adams) stated that the training had been a good refresher, reminding him of the student teacher's perspective, and had increased the range of strategies he used as a consequence. The fourth mentor (Adrian Murphy) felt that the training, which included looking at the course documentation and case studies, had addressed his needs.

Literature

Mentors were divided as to the usefulness, if any, of literature to their role as mentors. The majority stated that they did not read anything on mentoring, and in large part this was a consequence of time pressure, although one (Lawrence Adams) said he actively avoided it unless it was in the workplace. Only one mentor (Sarah Hunter) said she kept up with the educational press, in particular the Times Educational Supplement, and read what was available. However, she also stated that the best experience was in school. A further mentor (Richard Warner) stated that he would *"read up when I need to."*

In contrast two mentors specifically made mention of literature as an influence, one of whom (Clair Benstead) stated that this was part of an MA in Educational Leadership course she was taking. The other mentor (Harriet Brown) had been influenced by recent training undertaken by her husband, and as a consequence read about teaching, learning styles and assessment for learning. She found this material interesting and

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relevant, but noted that as a mentor in school she was not aware of the recommended reading list for student teachers at university.

Looking to the balance between these two views only 4 (20%) of the mentors saw literature as a positive influence on their practice as mentors. In contrast 16 (80%) of the mentors stated literature had no influence on their mentoring.

Theory

As with literature, mentors were divided as to the usefulness, if any, of any learning theories to their role as a mentor. The majority (65%) stated that they did not use theory as part of their mentoring. At this end of the scale one mentor (Lawrence Adams) said that he doubts whether he referred to any theory as his work as a mentor was so *"experience based."*

At the other end of the scale an experienced mentor (Harriet Brown) said that she made some reference to basic theories and suggested that student teachers read them. In addition another mentor (Chris Smythe), who attended training projects every summer term, found theory very important to his teaching and strategies. In applying this to his mentoring he stated *"It's ensuring that if they picked up some theory [in university], whatever theory it is, theory does underpin their practice. ... once they've left, once they've got their first job, they don't leave academic practice behind."* A third mentor (Sarah Hunter) also saw a role for theory in her mentoring as *"most practical thoughts come from theory."*

A further, albeit small group of mentors stood between the two extremes, being conversant with some theory, but not finding it a major influence to their role as a

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mentor. One mentor (Abigail Phillips) said that she did not use theory but then contradicted herself by then stating *"I am using them a bit more because I'm finding time to get myself trained up on more current educational theory now."*

Conclusions

Mentors' clearly saw their own experience as teachers to be the single most important influence upon their professional practice as mentors, as predicted by Jones *et al.* (2004). In addition they considered their own experience as student teachers to be a very significant factor in their practice; this was much more important to the sample being studied than was found by Jones *et al.* (ibid). However, within the case there was a decline in the influence of this experience as mentors got more experienced, with some of the older mentors seeing their own experience as student teachers as being too remote to be influential on their practices. Conversely young mentors were very strongly influenced by their own prior experiences as student teachers.

A majority of mentors acknowledged that mentor training had been an influence on them, although some strongly disagreed whilst others only saw it as of use for the administrative aspects of mentoring. Whilst the sample was less influenced than was predicted by Jones *et al.* (Ibid) the difference was not large.

In contrast 70% of mentors saw ongoing professional training as teachers and CPD to be of little use to their practice as mentors. A similar view was held by 85% in respect to the role of literature and the role of theory, although a limited number of mentors, particularly the more experienced ones, found theory to be of use to them. The statistical analysis suggested there was difference in the influence of theory within the case, with 50% of more experienced mentors, i.e. those with 3 or more years experience,

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were likely to be influenced by it. In contrast only 13% of the less experienced mentors, i.e. those with less than 3 years experience, stated that their practice was influenced by theory.

My findings therefore suggest that mentors' prior experiences, both as teachers and student teachers, were the dominant influence on their practice as mentors, with espoused theories being relatively unimportant to most of them.

6.3 THE RECOGNITION AND USE OF PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

'I want to talk about learning. But not the lifeless, sterile, futile, quickly forgotten stuff that is crammed in to the mind of the poor helpless individual tied into his seat by ironclad bonds of conformity! ... I am talking about any learning in which the experience of the learner progresses along this line: "No, no, that's not what I want"; "Wait! This is closer to what I am interested in, what I need"; "Ah, here it is! Now I'm grasping and comprehending what I need and what I want to know!"'
(Rogers, 1983: 18-19)

6.3.1 Introduction

This section is divided into two main parts, firstly a short analysis that was carried out, and secondly, a detailed explanation of the views of the mentors. In both cases the data was obtained in response to questions 2.1 to 2.6 of Interview Schedule 2 (see Appendix 5). For ease of reference the questions are included as headings for this part of the section.

In looking to ascertain the recognition and use of the principles of adult learning, as proposed by Knowles *et al.* (1998), this section is divided into two parts, the first is statistical analysis of mentors' recognition of these, whilst the second is an explanation of the results of thematic analysis carried out on the data obtained from the interview schedules.

6.3.2 Analysis of Recognition and Use of Principles

The ranking of the recognition and use of the principles of adult learning by the mentors is set out in Table 6.4 below.

Ranking	Principle of Adult Learning	Percentage Agreeing
1 =	The learners need to know (Q2.1)	100
1 =	Readiness to Learn (Q2.4)	100
3	Self-directed learning (Q2.2)	95
5 =	Prior experiences of learner (Q2.3)	90
5 =	Orientation to learning and problem solving (Q2.5)	90
6	Motivation to learn (Q2.6)	75

Table 6.4 - Analysis of Mentor Responses on Principles of Adult Learning

My first finding was that most mentors recognised and agreed with the principles of adult learning identified by Knowles *et al.* (1998), with the highest level of disagreement, being limited to 25% of the sample in respect of the question of motivation to learn. Whilst the highest level of agreement was interesting no statistically significant or borderline significant differences were identified for the Independent variables of Years, Experience and Gender. This was largely because the responses were highly uniform, with virtually no disagreement, and the relatively small size of the sample.

6.3.3 Thematic Analysis of Recognition and use of Principles of Adult Learning

The learners need to know (Q2.1)

Knowles *et al.* (1998: 133) consider that the principle of the learner needing to know leads to the premise that *'adults should be engaged in a collaborative planning process for their learning'* and suggest that this leads to shared control of *'program planning and facilitation'*. They also suggest that there are three *'dimensions'* to this need to know, namely *'the need to know **how** learning will be conducted, **what** learning will occur, and **why** learning is important.'*

In describing how the student teacher went about their TP Nicola Francis suggested that from an early stage she had to ensure that they learnt what they needed to learn so that *"they [could] focus on their weaknesses to make them stronger, and at the same time keep their strengths ticking along."* Indeed Alison Carter suggested that the initial stage of the TP included a review as to *"what is expected"* and stated that this was necessary as *"we are working to a system that is prescribed. ... That is what is laid down for us to do and this is what they are entitled to receive; the two things go hand in hand. If you omit either, then you have lost something on the way."* By this means she considered that student teachers were focussed by the mentor on the higher level requirements of the ITT course. Other mentors were agreed that this exercise was a joint one, and that it was one way in which mentors achieved *"buy-in"* from student teachers, which in turn was assisted by making the proposed learning relevant to their future activities.

In describing how a student teacher's learning should take place in this environment Chris Smythe was clear that they *"should take ownership, to in a sense create a much*

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more independent professional practitioner. It makes it a lot more of a two-way process; if they are setting a meeting agenda, I then obviously respond to [it]. It is them taking control of their practice, rather than me." Another mentor (Sarah Hunter) developed upon this process and suggested that their weekly meetings were the key point for the ongoing co-ordination by the mentor. April Collins agreed as to the role of the weekly meeting, which she saw as a good opportunity for student teachers to discuss their strategies, with the further opportunity to come back to them at the next meeting so that it was an ongoing process.

Lawrence Adams described these meetings as "*open and sharing*" and looking to "*how we are going to go about achieving that, we are very focused on them, the targets that come from them as well.*" Other mentors (Katherine Taylor, Adrian Murphy) also felt very strongly that they should not have to impose the use of strategies upon the student teachers. Their justification for this approach was described by Katherine Taylor as being based upon the premise that if she were to be "*too didactic [it] would change the relationship between the student teacher and the mentor in a way which would not be constructive in the outcome.*" As part of this process discussion was seen by mentors as a key tool, particularly "*if there is a mismatch of opinion of any significance*" (Katherine Taylor). Adrian Murphy considered that this was because "*the trainee has to be confident that they are doing the right thing and they have to be able to clarify in their own minds what is expected*".

In addition Richard Warner considered that feedback from the student teacher was also important. However, Cerys Edwards suggested that the basis of the weekly meetings changed as the TP progressed, stating that "*You set them to start with, find out ... what*

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they are good at, and back off on those and push the [other] ones, but it's still a case of 'what do you want to focus on this week?' As a consequence she saw this process as one of *"Steering them ... so they think they've chosen them themselves, but actually they haven't!"*

Another mentor (Harriet Brown) noted that a lack of interest or desire to know on the part of the student teacher affected their attitude to learning, noting that *"a lot of student teachers have shown a lot of resentment regarding the paperwork, having to do it and jump through all the hoops."* However, she also noted that when they *"realise they have to do it and therefore from that point of view they are willing to do it, but they don't exactly embrace it happily."* Clearly, there was recognition by the mentor as to a linkage between relevance of the material and willingness to learn on the part of the student teacher.

Analysis

From the interviews above mentors explained the process by which the focus of the TP was defined, and clearly identified that it was a joint one, with student teachers taking a leading role. The means by which this was achieved was through the weekly co-ordination meetings between mentors and student teachers, which were described as *"open and sharing"*. Clearly there was a strong correlation between the premise advanced by Knowles *et al.* (Ibid) as to the collaborative planning and facilitation of the learning by educators on one hand, and the practices of the mentors interviewed on the other.

This is particularly important as Tessmer and Richey (1997: 93) suggest that involvement by students in the setting of objectives is useful in guiding their learning but

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also assists in motivating them through joint ownership in the planning of the learning process.

Looking to the dimensions to this principle Knowles *et al.* (Op Cit) suggest they sit behind the premise, again there was a large element of correlation with the practice described by mentors. In respect of the need to know how the learning would be conducted and what learning would occur, these processes were clearly identified by the mentors as occurring during the initial weekly meetings. Similarly, they also recognised and described why a desire to know why to learn was important.

Self-directed learning (Q2.2)

In considering why self-direction was important Knowles *et al.* (1998) considered that:

'It is the sense of personal autonomy, not self-teaching, that seems most important to adults. The biggest problems arise when adult learners want to have more independence in their learning but are denied that opportunity.' (Knowles *et al.*, 1998: 139)

In considering how self-direction occurs Grow (1991: 418) suggests that learners advance through four stages of self-direction, and that during these stages their teachers can assist or hinder that development. He proposes that a good teacher aligns their teaching to the learner's stage of self-direction, thus helping the learner become ever more self-directing.

Mentors were unanimous in believing that student teachers were capable of directing their own learning and taking ownership of it. This was summed up by one mentor (Lawrence Adams) who stated that "*they are in a prime position to be directing their own learning.*"

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There was general agreement amongst the mentors that the level of self-direction varied between student teachers. In order to be self directed Lucy Green suggested that it was important that student teachers identified and selected their own goals. She considered that student teachers were *"very aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, and they will know when they will need to ask for help with stuff, they will know what they need, they are with it."* How students expressed their determination to direct their own learning whilst acknowledging their weaknesses in some areas was described by Nick Hyde in terms of them saying *"I need to look at these this week, these are the bits that I feel I need to do."*

Looking to why self direction occurred, relevance of the material being learned was seen as being important. Harriet Brown believed this was because *"it is in their interest to be pro-active about it and make sure that they can prove that they have done it."* Cerys Edwards agreed, stating that *"If they see it being relevant, they will learn it. If they don't, they won't, they will put it on the back burner until such time as they need it, by which time they will have forgotten it and they will have to learn it all over again."*

Some mentors (Adrian Murphy, Cerys Edwards and Richard Warner) also differentiated the student teacher's desire to learn from that possessed by pupils. Cerys Edwards identified motivation as being the key factor behind the desire to learn. In addition Alison Carter suggested that this was because *"they have come through a sort of higher education system where they have had to take on board their own learning, they have had to be independent learners."* Katherine Taylor agreed as to the importance of student teachers having been to university, where they were *"almost forced into more independent learning"*. However, in terms of ITT, as opposed to Higher Education,

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Cerys Edwards differentiated between them, suggesting that in ITT student teachers could not be self directed without guidance.

Whilst student teachers were seen as engaging in self-directed learning many mentors (April Collins, Sarah Hunter and Lawrence Adams) saw that a complementary strategy of guidance on the part of the mentor was also important. Looking to explain why mentors still had to provide guidance Lawrence Adams suggested that *"some answers do come from within themselves, and with the best students they do begin to develop that ability to almost self-coach, as do the best sportsmen. They can see where their weaknesses are and programmes to develop them."*

Conversely Katherine Taylor considered that student teachers needed guidance as they did not have *"the experience to fully assess their own performance and know where their weaknesses are."* This rationale was endorsed by Nicola Francis, who considered that it was important for mentors to ensure that the focus is there and that if it was clear that a student teacher could direct their own learning, then they would be supported by a very clear action plan provided by a mentor. As such she considered that mentors still needed to provide student teachers with guidance.

Because of the level of motivation and self-direction on the part of student teachers Adrian Murphy considered that the mentor's role was largely *"a matter of monitoring that, and encouraging that, and supporting that."* Similarly Katherine Taylor saw the mentor's role as being facilitative, and stated that she *"always ensure[d] the student teacher sets the agenda for each meeting and then after each meeting sets the targets for the next week."* She noted that whilst they generally knew what areas they needed to develop in they would *"fit in with whatever I would recommend."*

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In contrast Richard Warner considered a mentor could not always say "*this is how we do it, this is what I want you to do*" because student teachers come in with different degrees and developed in different ways. As a consequence he believed that mentors could not force student teachers to do exactly what they wanted because student teachers were autonomous and had their own ways of doing things.

Looking whether student teachers' self direction was constant Sarah Hunter suggested that on TP they became more independent learners. Nick Hyde agreed, and stated that during this period "*you see the change in them; you see what confidence they have to be able to decide what to do themselves*". April Collins suggested that the development of the student teachers over the period of the TP was such that "*in the last few weeks or so that although we have our weekly meetings, we are not really having huge amounts to discuss because they are feeling much more confident now and they are on top of all their stuff and they are trying their strategies, and they are much more independent.*"

Analysis

Mentors described the way in which student teachers directed their own learning in terms of personal autonomy, and of taking control of the objectives and rationale for learning. Importantly, there was a clear recognition that student teachers developed their self-direction over the course of their TP

Looking to the stages of learning autonomy identified by Grow (Op Cit) the mentors interviewed adopted the roles assigned to them in the second stage, i.e. motivating and guiding, in which they were adopting goal setting and learning strategies. In addition they also adopted the role assigned to them in the third stage, i.e. facilitating, where they discussed issues with student teachers on the basis of equality. However, few

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mentors saw the student teachers at the fourth and final stage of development, where the student teacher was fully self-directed and the mentor taking the role of consultant or delegator. This observation would be consistent with the view expressed by one mentor that, despite student teachers being motivated, ITT was a unique environment, which prevented the attainment of this final stage of autonomy being reached during the TP.

The interviews also indicated that mentors saw themselves as providing student teachers with the opportunity for ownership of the learning process which Knowles *et al.* (Ibid) see as essential for self-directed learning. This view of ownership of the learning process is not unique to andragogy, and Knowles *et al.* (Ibid: 142) acknowledge that it is also consistent with '*moderate*' constructivism, and which is described in Section 3.3 above.

In looking to develop the mentor/student teacher relationship Lunenberg and Korthagen (2003: 6) suggest that it is important for a shift to student-directed learning to occur and propose that '*the teaching and learning orientations of teacher educators correlate with those of the student teachers, and/or that teacher educators stimulate student teachers to broaden their learning orientations.*' My interviews clearly found that mentors recognised the importance of correlating the student teachers' learning orientations to their own, not least by tempering their own instinctive preferences and personal styles.

Prior experiences of learner (Q2.3)

Knowles *et al.* (1998: 139) consider that this principle is important in the professional development area of an adult and have identified four means by which prior experiences affect adult learners:

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- '1. Create a wider range of differences.*
- 2. Provide a rich resource for learning.*
- 3. Create biases that can inhibit or shape new learning.*
- 4. Provide grounding for adults' self identity.'* (Knowles *et al.*, 1998: 139)

They suggest these multiple dimensions to adult learning have a significant part to play in how adults learn. They particularly emphasise that these prior experiences can have both a positive and negative impact on this process, both aiding and impairing learning.

They note that Argyris (1982) and Schön (1987) have considered the difficulties and importance of overcoming the natural tendency to resist new learning that challenges existing mental schema from prior experience. Argyris labels learning that fits prior learning as '*single loop*' learning and learning that does not fit the learner's prior experiences as '*double loop*' learning. In the latter he considers that this means that learners must change their schema quite drastically.

Schön describes a process of '*knowing-in-action*' or '*reflection-in-action*' in which the former reflects a response based on existing mental schema, whilst the latter is used whilst performing an action to move on from existing schema that is no longer appropriate to moving to another to fit the circumstances at hand.

As with many other mentors Cerys Edwards saw student teachers as being very strongly influenced by their prior experiences, particularly those gained at university. Because of this prior experience she considered that "*They can see the light at the end of the tunnel and they are going every way possible to get to it, and I think some of them could get there much quicker because of it.*" Another key aspect identified by Nick Hyde was that following higher education many student teachers were willing to take the Initiative In

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their learning, make mistakes as part of the learning process, and then learn from these mistakes.

Many mentors noted the independence of student teachers, which they also linked to their experience in HEIs. Clair Benstead described this in terms of *"they can go away and find things out for themselves; they can go away and read educational literature, and maybe come up with some of their own plans."* She linked this independence to ownership of the learning process by the student teacher.

Whilst agreeing with the high level of independence exhibited by students, particularly the ability to research, Chris Smythe also suggested that they were not always sure how to use the information they had found. As a consequence they were forced to enter a dialogue with their mentor to discuss how to apply the information they had obtained in order to put it into practice. Paula Roberts agreed noting that *"Even if, at that stage, they perhaps don't have sufficient understanding to know how they can possibly get there, and that is where the university comes in and the TTA comes in and the mentor comes in and the subject teachers in schools, and so on. But yes, they can identify their goals, and they are happy to go along that route."*

Cerys Edwards, who had been a laboratory technician in a number of schools before retraining as a teacher, agreed with the importance of prior experiences. She explained that as a consequence of her own prior experience her first TP was *"[M]uch better because I had seen it all. I hadn't done it all but I had seen it all. Nearly every situation I came across I would think 'Oh, how did What's his name handle that?' I was in six different schools, so I'd probably seen sixty different teachers' way[s] of handling something."*

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Another mentor (Abigail Phillips) felt that prior experience outside the education system, i.e. school and university, was beneficial to student teachers. However, she saw this external experience could have both positive and negative impacts. She explained that *"There is an optimum time to be out of education before you come back into it in my opinion. Somebody who has spent 3-5 years in the working world; that is perfect because they have not lost their relationship to education and the relationship to schools and the familiarity with the school system. Whereas somebody who has had 15-20 years of experience of the working world it can be a major difficulty, because they think schools are still like they were when they left and they expect them to still be the same."* As such she thought that some additional experience assisted a student teacher's learning in the school environment, however, too much experience reinforced natural tendencies to resist learning.

The difference between student teachers who had studied foreign languages and had a year abroad, as opposed to those who did not have this as part of their training, was highlighted by Sarah Hunter. She suggested that student teachers who arrived in schools having had a year or two in a different environment were better setting their own learning goals and more open to learning than those who have come straight through from training.

Looking to the nature of a student teacher's learning one mentor (Adrian Murphy) considered that *"they have very much taken ownership of what they want to achieve, they know what they want to achieve and they are very much more self-motivated about that and will seek to achieve that."* Harriet Brown agreed with this analysis and concluded that they realized they had to *"access things for themselves."* As a corollary

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to the ownership of the learning process by the student teacher Adrian Murphy saw his role as monitoring, encouraging and supporting.

Analysis

Knowles *et al.* suggest that the most effective practitioner and learners are those who are double loop learners and also use reflection in action and consider (Ibid: 144) that '*the unlearning process*' has an equal role to '*learning process*'.

In agreeing that the prior experiences of learners were important most mentors suggested that the student teacher's time at university was the most influential. They also identified that these prior experiences had often facilitated students becoming double-loop learners and able to reflect-on-action. However, they noted that whilst students had often developed these skills they were not always able to use the new information they gained. This often forced them to enter into a dialogue with their mentors in order to be able to apply their knowledge in practice. This clearly led student teachers into the process of experiential learning, as described by Kolb (1984) and set out in Section 3.3 above, in which they learnt by, among other things, trial and error.

Mentors were also able to identify other positive prior experiences on the part of student teachers, particularly language placements in foreign countries or experience of working in schools. However, they also identified negative aspects of student teachers' prior experiences. These were often related to the student teacher's prior experience not being relevant to the TP and as individuals that had become too set in their ways.

In looking to how mentors assisted this process of experiential learning on the part of student teachers mentors often spoke of discussion, particularly in the context of their

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weekly meetings, during which reflection-on-action and reflection-about-action took place.

Readiness to Learn (Q2.4)

Looking to this principle of adult learning Knowles *et al.* (1998: 144) suggest learners *'become ready to learn when their life situation creates a need to know.'* As a corollary they also suggest that this allows an educator to anticipate and understand this need, and thus become more effective.

Mentors were unanimous in agreeing that a student's readiness to learn was important. However, many of them saw this as occurring progressively, and evolving through TP. Nick Hyde described this process in terms of the first placement or School Experience, and their second placement or TP, saying *"Quite clearly it is the second placement which is the biggest thing. In the first placement I am quite willing to let them make more mistakes and let them find out what works and what doesn't work, so that the second time they can get it right, as it were, just the fact that the second placement is the exam. I would not let them worry about something for too long. I would step in more if I had to on the second placement, but yes, also the second placement is so long, that you see the change in them; you see what confidence they have to be able to decide what to do themselves."* The mentors were also unanimous that the process varied according to the student teacher; all were different, with the result that they adjusted the mentoring in order to meet the needs of the student teacher.

However, this process was far from being consistent and even, as Melissa Collins explained, *"[Y]ou have also got to take into account that some won't be able to meet each stage in the order that you have expected them to. Some of them will jump ahead*

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very suddenly and suddenly slip back again and do some things that they were doing right before and suddenly are not doing right. And I think it's constantly being able to change what I want from them and what I expect from them being able to guide them through things that they find difficult." Thus, the process was seen as being iterative.

In explaining how this progressive approach to learning affected her mentoring strategies Alison Carter saw support as the mentor's initial priority, with the level of support reducing as the student teacher progressively took more control. Harriet Brown largely agreed but described her initial strategies being guiding in nature, and then changing to those that allowed the student teacher to become more independent. She explained that as student teachers increased their independence *"they themselves are going to realise what was right or wrong about something they have done, and what they are going to do to set it right. So you hope they are going to listen more, I suppose, and hope they are going to arrive at the answers with less prompting basically."*

In contrast Cerys Edwards explained it in terms of *"[Y]ou start by instructing, you finish by supporting. That's it really. Within the first couple of weeks you find out how capable they are, and then you back off accordingly. Some you don't back off at all, others you say 'go ahead, I'll be in the back room' and it is very individual to the student. You are always there."* Additionally, Rachel Naara suggested the final role was that of an assessor.

Whilst these mentors used different terminology they all saw a progressive movement from a supportive environment in which the mentor provided direction to one in which the student teacher required less support and direction. However, April Collins noted that *"if you have a weaker student that it is pretty much the same all the way through*

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which can be quite tough on your time and stuff to be honest but they need that support."

In accepting a student teacher into his classes Adrian Murphy imposed limitations on them, which he acknowledged impacted on them. The first was described in terms of wanting classes to be "*doing the things that you would otherwise be doing*", which he saw as requiring more prescription on his part. The second was that not wanting to impose too heavy a burden on them. He subsequently looked to give them "*a bit more free rein later on when they have built up their confidence with that group and when you have built up confidence with them.*" At this point he allowed them to take part in the decision-making process.

Analysis

Pratt (1988) considers that the learners need to know might be assisted by recognising the two dimensions of '*direction*' and '*support*', which vary within adult learners. In the former, which relates to the learner's need for assistance from others, Pratt describes the dimension as ranging from '*dependence*' to '*competence*'. In the latter, which he describes as the encouragement by others, he describes the dimension as ranging from low to high '*commitment*' and '*confidence*'.

In looking to balance these dimensions he advocates a model which recognises combinations of high and low direction and support. This model has similarities with Daloz's model for mentoring (1986), which in turn builds upon developmental theory of defined stages by Levinson's (1978), which looks to the achievement of a balance between the provision of support and challenge by mentors. In addition it is noteworthy

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that Daloz was also influenced by Knowles (1970), so some common ground with the work of Knowles *et al.* (1998) should not be surprising.

Mentors described many of the dimensions identified by Pratt, for example increasing confidence and reduced dependence from School Experience to TP, and from the start to the finish of the TP. In addition they agreed that support, which varied according to the student teacher, was largely a priority for student teachers in the initial stages of their TP.

Looking to the other dimension, i.e. direction, mentors recognised it and described this in terms of guidance, limiting the actions of the student teacher and stepping-in. Yet again they saw their actions as mentors as being adjusted according to the needs of individual students.

Orientation to learning: Problem solving (Q2.5)

Knowles *et al.* (1998: 146) relate this principle to '*problem solving orientation*' in contrast to '*subject-centred learning*', and suggest that learning is most effective in a '*real-life*' context. As such they suggest that adult learning is often centred upon learning through experience.

Mentors were very clear that there was no substitute for student teachers learning taking place in the school environment and thereby learning through experience, and through trial and error. Adrian Murphy stated that "*None of that can be done theoretically, or only to a very limited extent, so obviously there is no substitute for that. Being in school is absolutely vital and it could be said to be quite a steep learning curve, but being in school is vital to a student teacher's capacity to learn.*" Another mentor

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(Melissa Collins) went so far as to suggest that most student teachers' learning took place in school.

Supporting this view Alison Carter suggested that this was because learning was "*no longer a theoretical thing; it is actually hands on, and you have actually got children here, young people, pupils, and I think that is the difference; obviously you do need a lot of theory behind what we are doing and you do need to understand a lot of things but I think it must surely fall into proper context the moment they come into a classroom and into a school and see it actually the way it is.*"

As part of this time in school, and reflecting the "*steep learning curve*" Richard Warner and Rachel Naara suggested that student teachers needed as much experience as possible. Clair Benstead agreed, noting that the opportunity offered by different schools for a student teacher's School Experience and TP was a real benefit as it would enhance their learning.

The process of learning by practice was seen by one mentor (Nick Hyde) as also extending to a teacher's subject knowledge. He considered that "*you learn far more about a subject when you have to teach it. I think that is incredibly true; being able to describe and explain things, you need to understand things incredibly well to explain it and come at it from different angles and that sort of stuff. So being in school enables that learning greatly.*"

Turning to how student teachers learned whilst they were in school, mentors described a number of ways, namely through observation and practical experience. The importance of the former was considered to be very important, with Nicola Francis noting that they "*see learning taking place at all different levels.*" She also considered that "*when you*

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see a good teacher teaching enough times, some of it rubs off without you actually consciously realising that you are using similar sorts of strategies, and there is so much going on that is a constant learning experience 'oh yes, I'll try that' - without it being structured learning."

Practical experience was linked to trial and error, and experimentation. Referring to this process Katherine Taylor stated that *"They need the actual practise. They need to try strategies out to find out what works, and you only learn from making mistakes, and people can tell you 'Don't do this', and 'Don't do that' but until you actually go in there and try it, then no, I don't think they'd learn at all without coming to school. Making mistakes and finding your own solutions of how you are going to correct them."* In addition she concluded that student teachers had to find their own strategies because what worked for one person did not necessarily work for another. Clair Benstead agreed, summing this up in terms of *"you can't get any better experience than actually just getting in there and teaching yourself."*

As part of this process Nicola Francis noted that student teachers were also involved in a wider and much more informal learning process which involved problem-solving. Indeed she suggested that *"every lesson is a problem-solving activity almost; dealing with classroom management, with behaviour, with the content of the lesson, with the learning skills and so on."* Chris Smythe strongly agreed, considering that most of the student teachers' learning was experiential. He noted that due to the pressures that they were under, student teachers learnt very quickly.

The process of learning to teach was also linked to the receipt of feedback and guidance on how to improve. As part of this process Paula Roberts considered that observation by

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student teachers was very important because it provided the opportunity to reflect on what had been observed. April Collins agreed and considered that this learning process extended through observing the whole range of activities in school, and that *"through just experiencing school then they realise and become much more aware of what teaching is really about. But I think without even realising it some of them learn a huge amount and they couldn't do without being in a school."* Being *"immersed in the culture"* was also seen as important (Lawrence Adams). Others, however, did not agree, with some seeing practical teaching by the student teacher as the sole means of learning.

Analysis

It was very clear within the interviews that many mentors felt strongly that experiential learning within the school environment was very important for student teachers. Accordingly there was a strong resonance with the views of Kolb (1984: 38) particularly his definition of learning as *'The process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience.'* This definition highlights the learning process from an experiential learning viewpoint, which Kolb (1984) sees developing in four phases, as set out in Figure 3.5.

The mentors clearly described three of the four stages identified by Kolb (Ibid), namely *'reflective observation'*, *'active experimentation'* and *'concrete experience'*. However, very few recognised, at least in this context, the stage of *'abstract conceptualisation'* through which Kolb (Ibid: 30) suggests learners *'create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories'* and which in turn enable them to *'use these theories to make decisions and solve problems.'*

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In large part mentors saw a large part of student teachers' experience in classrooms as problem solving. Indeed some mentors themselves closely fitted the model described by Knowles *et al.* (1998) in which they suggest that adults prefer to solve problems rather than on learning from theoretical tasks. However, Knowles *et al.* (Ibid: 142) acknowledge that the features of andragogy, which they describe within the '*orientation to learn*', specifically experiential learning and problem solving, are also consistent with those of '*moderate*' constructivism, and which are described in Section 3.3 above.

Motivation to learn (Q2.6)

In considering motivation to learn Knowles *et al.* (1998:149) state that '*the most potent motivators for adults are internal ones: for example, quality of life, satisfaction, and self-esteem. Said differently, the learning that adults value most will be that which has personal value to them.*'

Motivation was recognised as being very important by most, albeit not all, mentors and was the principle of adult learning described by Knowles *et al.* (1998) that the highest number of mentors did not recognise.

Mentors generally agreed that many student teachers were very determined and fixed on a goal, namely passing their TP; however, there was also agreement that this was dependent on the student teacher. Nicola Francis suggested that whilst "*some student teachers merely want to do an acceptable minimum to get QTS, others want to actually end up being very good teachers.*" She also thought that motivation affected the way they learnt new material, which was important as they had "*so many issues to address in a short space of time on this very steep learning curve.*" Chris Smythe considered that motivation was directly linked to the "*criteria they come in on*" and why they were

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student teachers and as a consequence considered that it could not be given to them, rather they had to have this within themselves

Other mentors (Lawrence Adams, Abigail Phillips) used the student teacher's motivation to learn to "*focus*" them; by doing so they were able to encourage them to become self-directing. In explaining how this happened Lawrence Adams stated that "*our student teacher really grasped the nettle and took charge of her own goals. In terms of ownership and wanting to pass and wanting to meet targets, she took charge. I think she owned it and certainly more than we did.*"

Improving student teachers' motivation was often described by mentors as being achieved by encouragement in general, and encouragement to experiment in particular (Lawrence Adams). Nonetheless, even with a well motivated student teacher it was considered (Adrian Murphy) that monitoring, encouraging and supporting were necessary activities on the part of mentors.

In the case of less well motivated student teachers, whom she considered were usually younger student teachers who have gone from school to University and then on to a PGCE course, Katherine Taylor looked to present the student teacher with targets to help their overall planning and personal focus. Ultimately a lack of motivation was seen as being potentially fatal to a student teacher's career. One mentor (Abigail Phillips) recalled a lack of motivation had led to a student teacher being failed, whilst another (Nick Hyde) stated that it had led to a student teacher dropping out.

Whilst motivation for QTS was seen as important one mentor (Sarah Hunter), who taught MFL, suggested that a "*love for the subject*" was also important.

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The impact of a lack of motivation was seen as having a very negative impact on student teachers. Abigail Phillips noted that *"if I don't see this when they arrive, I then think 'This is going to be a difficult time' with that particular student teacher."*

Considering how the motivation of student teachers affected their own role and strategies mentors raised a number of points. Some mentors suggested that this was achieved by the linking of individual issues affecting the *"bigger picture"*, and thereby motivating student teachers to learn material that they would otherwise have not been interested in. This was seen as being very important by Abigail Phillips as student teachers would take things on board if they were important to their teaching and *"help them meet their criteria and help them pass their course"*. Conversely she did not find that many were interested in things for the sake of being interested in them. As a consequence she found that they needed someone else to tell them that it was useful, and without this they did not do anything with the material. Other mentors (Lucy Green, Cerys Edwards) concurred.

Motivation was seen as being a key requisite for self-directed learning, which in turn was seen as a prerequisite for passing ITT. As such Katherine Taylor linked the need for the mentor to make new material relevant to the student teacher as one of her important tasks because she considered that *"they probably don't learn it if they don't see a relevance to it."* By way of example Melissa Collins stated that *"they are not too happy on paperwork for some reason. That is a goal that they didn't meet quite often, actually. They didn't seem to think that that was important."*

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Analysis

As predicted by Knowles *et al.* (Op Cit) mentors consider that a student teacher's motivation was important to their learning. Looking to the basis for why this might be Vroom and Jago (1995) propose, following expectancy theory, which is consistent with adult motivation in the workplace, that:

'an individual's motivation is the sum of 3 factors:

- *Valence - the value a person places on the outcome*
- *Instrumentality - the probability that the valued outcomes will be received given that certain outcomes have occurred.*
- *Expectancy - the belief a person has that certain effort will lead to outcomes that get rewarded.*

This means that adult learners will be most motivated when they believe that they can learn the new material (expectancy) and that the learning will help them with a problem or issue (instrumentality) that is important in their life (valency).'
(Vroom and Jago, 1995)

These factors, particularly instrumentality and expectancy, were frequently cited by mentors as being relevant. In response mentors stated that their strategies, which were reciprocal in nature, this included linking the material to be learned to a purpose such as learning to teach or passing the ITT course. In the case of poorly motivated student teachers mentors reverted to taking a more proactive role by assisting in student teachers' planning and personal focus. This is consistent with what Vroom and Jago (Ibid) suggest might occur if a leader adopted autocratic as opposed to participative behaviours.

A further significant finding obtained through the interviews was that many of the mentors agreed with Knowles *et al.* (Op cit) that there was a clear link between motivation and self-directed learning.

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Conclusions

Before setting out my conclusions on this section it is worth restating Knowles' (1984)

view of the principles of andragogy:

'While each principle of andragogy is important as a set they must be viewed as 'a system of elements that can be adopted in whole or in part. It is not an ideology that must be applied totally or without modification. In fact an essential feature of andragogy is 'flexibility'.' (Knowles, 1984: 418)

It follows that whilst being described above in terms of six discrete components there would almost certainly be some overlap and interaction between these components in practice, as indeed was the situation in the case being studied.

Despite a lack of knowledge of espoused theories, as has been set out in the previous section of this chapter, mentors quite clearly recognised and described their use of the principles of adult learning proposed by Knowles *et al.* (1998). The statistical analysis carried out was useful in identifying the high degree of recognition by mentors of the principles of adult learning, however, because of this level of uniformity of views no differences within the case were discernable.

The context of the learning by student teachers, i.e. working within a school environment, was considered to be essential by many mentors. This reflects the views of Tripp (1993) who considers that:

'Reflection is always informed by a view of the world which is created by our culture, values and experiences. This forms a circularity that reinforces our existing view of the world: determined by our existing world view. It is this tendency which means that we have to do something other than merely reflect upon our practice to change it or view it differently. We first must change our awareness through deliberately setting out to view the world of our practice in new ways.' (Tripp, 1993: 12-13).

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One of the key features of the environment identified by mentors was the requirement for assessment, with the corresponding need for feedback by mentors. This clearly led into the use of reflection, both by mentors and student teachers. These features of the mentoring process had visible links to Lewin's (1952) cycle and the work of Kolb (1984) into experiential learning.

Mentors considered that student teachers prior experiences, particularly but not exclusively at university, had made them more open to new learning, and thus to become '*double-loop learners*' (Argyris, 1982) and able to '*reflect-on-action*' (Schön, 1987). Nonetheless mentors also believed that student teachers still required guidance and assistance from them in order to make the most of the new information that had been obtained as part of the learning process. Again this encouraged dialogue with mentors, as well as further reflection, and introduced '*reflection-about-action*' (Schön, 1987) on the part of mentors into the learning process.

As part of the process of guiding and facilitating the learning of student teachers, mentors used the techniques of support and challenge or support and direction, with their clear links to the works of Daloz (1986) and Pratt (1988), both of which sit in the field of developmental theory. It is, however, noteworthy that few mentors expressly use the terms '*challenge*' or '*direct*', instead they use the terms '*guide*', '*steer*' and '*facilitate*'. Clearly the mentor student relationship is considered to be very important by mentors and they do not want to introduce unnecessary friction into it by being seen as too controlling. However, many of the more experienced mentors are prepared to take such action if they consider it necessary for the student teacher's learning.

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Self-direction on the part of student teachers was considered to be very important to the learning process. As a consequence mentors looked to encourage this by goal setting and facilitation. There was also evidence of mentors matching the teaching and learning orientations of student teachers. This was largely achieved by mentors suppressing their own natural preferences in order to allow student teachers to find their own style and strategies, i.e. what suited them best, rather than forcing them to imitate their mentors. Such a process very closely follows that described by Tomlinson (1995), with the roles of reflective coach developing teaching and reflective skills, and an effective facilitator with a counselling role ascribed to the mentor. This process of facilitation also follows Brookfield's (1986) model of learning.

The overall pattern of instructional design used by the mentors fits quite closely with that described by Ertmer and Newby (1993: 60) of educators who adopted a Cognitivist approach. This is particularly clear with regard to their emphasis on the active involvement of student teachers in the learning process and the creation of learning environments that allow and encourage the student teachers to make connections with previously learned material.

6.4 THE MENTOR'S ROLE

6.4.1 Introduction

In order to facilitate discussion on the role of the mentor interviewees were offered 6 options in Section 1 of Interview Schedule 2 (see Appendix 5). These options were assessing; developmental; coaching; role modelling; instructing; and other. The first 5 roles were derived from the research of Jones *et al.* (2004: 8), who identified them as

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the most commonly cited roles for mentors, whilst the last was offered to allow mentors the opportunity to propose alternative roles. Jones *et al.* (Ibid) also identified other, less commonly cited roles; these were not included for reasons of complexity.

It was originally intended that these roles be used as the basis for the thematic analysis of the interview schedules. However, in practice the 5 codes identified by Jones *et al.* were supplemented by another 6 codes which were suggested by mentors during the interviews. The roles used as the thematic codes for my research, were assessing; developing; coaching; role modelling; guiding; instructing; supporting; collaborating; management; facilitation and challenge.

In looking to explain these features of the role of the mentor in more detail this section is divided into three parts, the first is statistical analysis of the mentor's role compared with the mentor variables; the second is an explanation of the results of thematic analysis carried out on the data obtained from the interview schedules; and finally the summary looking to the variations within the sample, the use of adult learning theories and the context for their use.

6.4.2 Analysis of the Mentor's Role

The ranking of the mentor roles identified by the interviewees is set out in Table 6.5 below. The explanation of the mentors' views on the different roles is set out in the next part of this section.

Ranking	Mentor's Role	Percentage Agreeing
1	Assessing	100%
2	Developing	95%
3	Coaching	85%
4	Role Modelling	80%
5	Guiding	50%
6 =	Instructing	45%
6 =	Supporting	45%
8 =	Collaborating	40%
8 =	Management	40%
10	Facilitation	25%
11	Challenge	20%

Table 6.5 - Analysis of Mentor Responses on Role of Mentor

In large part these findings are consistent with those of Jones *et al.* (2004) in terms of the relative importance of the mentor's roles.

Three statistically significant results were obtained, the first being that 100% mentors agreed that their role included assessing student teachers, and the second being that all younger mentors, i.e. younger than 35 years old, saw their role as acting as a role model, whilst only 56% of older mentors agreed. The latter result had a 2.6% chance of being an error. The final significant result was that 66.7% of less experienced teachers (those with less than 10 years experience) saw supporting student teachers as a role whilst only 12.5% of more experienced teachers did. This result had a 2.8% chance of being an error.

6.4.3 Thematic Analysis of the Mentor's Role

Assessing

A consistent response as to the importance of the mentors' role as assessor was obtained from all respondents. Given the acknowledged importance of this role there was common agreement amongst all mentors that the influence of the assessment criteria was such as to require mentors to make sure the student teachers could evidence what they had done during TP even if this meant adjusting their own programme. The inevitable consequence was that mentors felt that they had to work to the criteria. For example, it was stated (Harriet Brown) that it was important for student teachers to *"have the opportunity to do all those things whilst they're here."* The rationale for this approach (Abigail Phillips) was that *"you do not want to fail somebody who's worked for a year towards an entry into a career. ... We prioritise on what they need to meet that they haven't experienced in their first placement."*

Whilst there was common agreement as to assessment being one of their roles it was also stated by a number of mentors (Katherine Taylor, Rachel Naara) that it was not their main role. Indeed many regarded it as a bureaucratic exercise, in which *"hoops have to be jumped through"* and all boxes ticked (Harriet Brown). As a consequence mentors did not always see it in a positive light, and some considered that it could become a dominating influence, and *"You tend to get on that treadmill if you're not careful, and you are filling out forms and you are doing the assessments"* (Chris Smythe).

In contrast, one of the younger and more inexperienced mentors (Harriet Brown) found the Standards, as reflected in the Partnership assessment criteria, helpful when planning

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student teachers' lessons. Another mentor (Richard Warner) expressed a similar positive view of the standards, stating that he would *"target two or three [Standards] for each lesson and make sure [during] the Teaching Practice that all views are assessed. And then we look at what they have and haven't achieved."* In addition some mentors (Sarah Hunter and Chris Smythe) found the assessment criteria to be useful as a discussion document when working with the student teacher, which could subsequently be used by the mentor to provide an objective assessment. This was considered (Chris Smythe) to be a very important aspect of the mentoring process and was not seen as being judgemental, which was seen to have negative connotations.

There was also a view expressed by another younger mentor (Sarah Hunter) that standards were necessary for the student teachers to gain an idea of what it is really like to be a teacher. However, a major concern amongst mentors was that student teachers should not feel overwhelmed by them.

However, the assessment criteria around which the role of assessor was built were not always seen in a positive light. It is also perhaps significant that this role created the most discomfort for mentors, particularly in respect of the requirement to assess a student teacher as failing, and was seen to be the hardest aspect of their role (Harriet Brown). As a consequence one mentor (Lawrence Adams) stated that he did not feel secure in this role, and considered that this aspect of his role required him to keep a professional distance from student teachers.

A structured weekly meeting between the mentor and the student teacher was described (Lawrence Adams) as key elements in the assessment process, as it is at this point that targets are agreed and progress reviewed. It was noted (Sarah Hunter) that mentors

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try to give "*helpful targets*", in order to "*move them on*", (Katherine Taylor). According to one mentor (Sarah Hunter), this was in order to develop them further.

A number of mentors (Abigail Phillips, Katherine Taylor) also considered that through the assessment process the needs of the student teacher could be ascertained and the means by which they could be dealt with addressed. Accordingly, it was asserted (Lawrence Adams) that mentors wanted to pass student teachers, but at the same time wanted to give an assessment that reflects how they are doing. However, it was also stated (Harriet Brown) that mentors look for student teachers to be proactive, in particular, that they can prove what they have done. She then amplified this, saying:

"I think they are aware that they have to tick all the boxes before they pass the course so therefore it is in their interest to be pro-active about it and make sure that they can prove that they have done it. We have been through [it] and said how are we going to get evidence of this and actually speak out and say I could go and see Mr So and So and ask them to do this and this."

Whilst a student teacher's time in school culminated in an assessment leading to the award of QTS it was recognised (Lawrence Adams) that this assessment was an ongoing process, with mentors assessing on a daily basis, even if only informally. One mentor (Katherine Taylor) described the process as being a joint one, in which the "*pro's and con's*" of levels of achievement were discussed. It was also noted (Lawrence Adams) that this element of the mentors' role was also carried out by colleagues of the mentor, and not just the mentor.

Developing

Developing was identified as one of the most important role of the mentor according to those interviewed, with 95% (19 out 20) mentors referring to it. Whilst one mentor

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(Nick Hyde) considered that the term coaching also included developing this was a minority view. Consequently these roles have been kept separate.

In terms of where '*developing student teachers*' fits into their overall schema one mentor (Sarah Hunter) saw it as part of the Teaching Practice, building upon the student teacher's School Experience. This view was founded upon the assumption that the student teacher had built up their confidence during this period.

As with most of their other roles most mentors saw their development role as a variable, which depended upon the individual needs of their student teacher. This was explained by a very experienced mentor (Nicola Francis), who said that development involved *"starting from where they are and taking them forward, reflecting on what has already happened and how much progress they have made by a certain date."* Another mentor (Alison Carter) explained this in terms of *"You tend to have to step back as they step in."* It was also considered possible (Natalie Jones) that some student teachers would not require much developing given their progress, in these circumstances it was stated that the mentor's role would have involved more assessment and less development. As such development was seen (Rachel Naara, Paula Roberts) as including a constant setting of realistic targets so that student teachers could see their own development as a teacher.

In describing the nature of their development of student teachers one mentor stated (Nick Hyde) said that it consisted of *"helping them to learn skills to teach."* However, in doing so another mentor (Abigail Phillips) stated that she provided *"guidance as to the path through which to direct their ... learning, but with guidance they should be able to direct their own learning."* A third mentor (Chris Smythe) described this role in terms of *"moving them on, and moving them from different phases of being a student teacher."*

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Most mentors concurred with these views and looked to facilitate student teachers' learning, with a reluctance to direct that learning process unless they were struggling; this was because they saw their role as one of nurturing student teachers rather than imposing a prescriptive solution.

Coaching

Coaching was one of the top five roles of the mentor according to the mentors surveyed, with 85% (17 out of 20) mentors referring to it as part of their role. However, one mentor (Chris Smythe), who had received training in coaching stated that he did not consider the mentor's role to include coaching as it was not *"reflective in the true coaching sense."*

Whilst mentors often referred to coaching and instructing, most were strongly in favour of the term *'coaching'*, as a significant number of mentors saw terms *'instructing'* and *'instruction'* as having a negative view. In part this was due to coaching being seen to be a more collaborative or supportive activity; roles which mentors considered to be very important to their practice. In contrast instruction was often viewed as being too directing, and inappropriate for use with student teachers.

In addition the role of coaching was seen by most mentors as being variable depending on the individual requirements of student teachers. The general view was that mentors would coach student teachers in the early stages, particularly when they needed to learn things. This was explained by one mentor (Abigail Phillips) in terms of *"with coaching you are teaching ways and methods of doing things. And that means you have to be shown, and nobody has the answers entirely within themselves. They have to come from outside ... and with the best students they do begin to develop that ability to*

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almost self-coach." This description of coaching was complementary to that of another mentor (Lucy Green) who stated *"you are going to pick up on things that need help, and to give ideas, coaching on how to improve it."*

In a more general sense coaching was also described (Katherine Taylor) as a *"supportive thing"* and (Nicola Francis) *"working alongside, encouraging, giving lots of ideas so that people can adopt strategies that will suit their own teaching."* The requirement to coach was generally seen as one that reduced as the student developed confidence and their own strategies. An ongoing requirement for coaching was identified (Melissa Collins) if student teachers were *"finding a certain subject or particular lesson difficult."*

Role Modelling

Role modelling was another of the top five roles of the mentor according to the mentors surveyed, with 80% (18 out 20) mentors referring to it. This role was universally seen as having positive connotations and many mentors thought it to be essential for the development of student teachers, not least in terms of setting expectations as to how to behave.

A number of mentors saw role modelling as one of their earliest roles, particularly during the observation phase of the student teacher's TP, and which was said to provide mentors with a platform for modelling good practice, in particular *"how we show our professionalism"* (Sarah Hunter). In addition it was stated (Katherine Taylor) that one aspect of role modelling was providing *"a good example of how to behave professionally and [model] good practice in the classroom."* As a consequence some mentors (Abigail Phillips, Rachel Naara and Lawrence Adams) closely linked this role to observation by student teachers.

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Looking to the rationale for role modelling another mentor (Abigail Phillips) suggested that *"role modelling is very important, as is the assessing, because people cannot develop unless they have got something to judge themselves against. And the role modelling and assessing gives them both of those skills."* Clearly developing was also linked to the requirement for assessment of student teachers.

In looking to the abilities required by mentors in order to role model it was considered (Lucy Green, April Collins) that a mentor had to be *"a good teacher."* This was because it was considered that student teachers had to watch and observe them. Another mentor (Cerys Edwards) expanded upon this, saying *"I think that the more a student teacher watches professional teachers, or even unprofessional teachers, the more they learn."* As a consequence she considered that even though student teachers might not know how to do things better than the teacher they were observing, and that they would be able to make a judgement about things they would not repeat. However, this view relied on student teachers being able to discern the difference between good and bad practice.

Apart from learning good practice by observing it, one mentor (April Collins) thought that role modelling would provide motivation, and *"be a real boost"*. Another (Nicola Francis) stated that *"if you have an inspirational mentor, that is going to pull you forwards and continually make you want to aspire to be a good teacher, not just a satisfactory one"*.

It was also noted (Cerys Edwards) that role modelling was not necessarily a conscious activity on the part of the mentor, as student teachers *"will probably learn from you without you even realise [sic] they are doing it."* In addition it was recognised (Paula Roberts) that it was important that student teachers also learnt from teachers other than

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their mentors. This was seen (Nicola Francis) as vital as student teachers had *to "pick out the facets that will work for them"* which would probably not be provided from one source.

As a consequence most mentors saw role modelling being provided by a range of teachers and not just the student teachers' mentor. Many mentors stated that their department, or even all departments in the school, were made available to student teachers for this purpose. This approach was very closely linked to the view that it was for the student teacher to observe and find what approach best suited them, and that it should not be imposed by the mentor.

Guiding

Guiding was identified as one of the mentor's roles by 50% (10 out 20) of the mentors surveyed. When describing the context in which this role occurred mentors suggested that it was closely related to their role of managing the student teachers' experience. Additionally it was considered that guiding was a variable, which could be used as part of a portfolio of skills, with Abigail Phillips stating that *"Some need coaching, some need guiding, some need encouraging, some need reining in a little bit."*

When referring to this role mentors reiterated their primary objective of ensuring that student teachers obtained experience of teaching. This objective was to be achieved by the mentor being a guide to the student teacher. It was acknowledged (Chris Smythe) that this affected the strategies used by mentors.

Instructing

Instructing was identified as one of the mentor's roles by 45% (9 out of 20) of the mentors surveyed. However, it was the only role which had negative connotations from a significant proportion of respondents. A number of explanations for this were given by different mentors. It was said (Rachel Naara, Lucy Green) that whilst instructing might be necessary they did not like the word as it was restrictive, and that it suggested that the student teacher had to teach in the same way as their mentor. Instead they preferred to use the term "*advise*" rather than instruct. Another mentor (Katherine Taylor) agreed, stating that she preferred coaching to instructing.

This underlying objection to the use of the term instruction was based upon it being seen as too prescriptive and suggesting domination of student teachers by mentors rather than being "*a shared experience*" (Lawrence Adams). As such it was considered (Clair Benstead) that a mentor's role did not include instructing.

In addition the context in which instructing was used was limited, for example it was stated by one mentor (Cerys Edwards) that mentors started by instructing, but finished by supporting. This explanation was expanded upon by another mentor (Paula Roberts) who said she "*instructed student teachers as required, as some did not require instructing whilst others required instruction on an almost lesson-by-lesson basis.*" The difference between the two types of student was that some had "*got the skills there, they are just not particularly well developed, or they are not finding it easy applying the skills in the new circumstances of the classroom.*" Thus the need for instruction was considered a function of individual needs.

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In a more positive context a science mentor (Cerys Edwards) considered that instructing was appropriate for practical situations, such as where student teachers were unfamiliar with certain experiments. Another situation where instruction was considered to be appropriate by this mentor was when a science student teacher had to teach a subject with which they were unfamiliar with as they had specialised in only one of the three subjects being taught in that school.

Supporting

Supporting was identified as one of the mentor's roles by 45% (9 out of 20) of the mentors surveyed. In the widest sense the mentor's role was described as being *"to provide support in whatever shape or form required for the student teacher to attain QTS"* (Harriet Brown). One word frequently used to describe this role was *"guide"*, which was in turn qualified as being *"friendly"* and *"not dictatorial"*. The sense of being a friend or colleague to the student teacher was common to many mentors. Therefore in describing the mentor's function there was common agreement that it was enabling, with some mentors considering the provision of support to student teachers to be their prime role.

Support was seen to have two aspects, firstly as enabling the student teacher to settle into the school environment, and secondly to develop their professional role as a teacher. The former aspect was seen as facilitating the latter, which was considered to be the key purpose of the student teacher's placement in school. In addition emphasis was placed on the student teacher being *"well briefed on what is expected of them"* (Abigail Phillips).

There was agreement amongst the mentors that the provision of support was part of a phase that was intended to *"develop their self confidence"* (Richard Warner) so as to enable student teachers to move to being progressively more independent, and take

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responsibility for their own development (Harriet Brown). Mentors identified two stages of the student teacher's development of their teaching role subsequent to their induction. The first was when they observed experienced teachers at work, and the second was when they taught. Mentors stated that during the latter stage of TP student teachers progressively became more confident and independent, and thereby required less support.

Two types of support were described by mentors, the first being emotional, and the second being professional. In terms of the emotional support a number of elements were described, the most common elements being encouragement (Lawrence Adams) and building a student's self-confidence (Abigail Phillips). As regards professional support this varied from the mentor being a provider of basic information (Alison Carter), to providing a timetable of what the student teacher was to do (Chris Smythe), to helping with lesson plans (April Collins) or when things were not going well (Clair Benstead).

Initially the nature of the support provided by mentors was aimed at building a student teachers' confidence. This was described variously as being *"positive, which is vital, fundamental and important"* (Lawrence Adams) and that *"we try and give as little negative feedback as possible, and we try to develop their own presence in the classroom, and develop their confidence in the classroom"* (Richard Warner). Having built up the student teacher's self confidence it was considered that other skills could then be developed by the mentor. From that point most mentors looked to reduce their support, with one (April Collins) stating *"I always try to step back a bit ... especially in their second teaching practice when they tend to be more confident anyway."* Another

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(Melissa Collins) said that as the Teaching Practice moved on she started to harden them up and *"to make them realise that they have got to get these things done without me being there."*

In contrast one mentor (Cerys Edwards) stated that she started by instructing and finished by supporting. In reviewing the usage of the term support by this single mentor it is probable that she was using the term in the context of being backup for a student, much like the other mentors, and not in an intrusive manner. This understanding would be consistent with the usage by other mentors.

There was no disagreement between mentors that if a student was having problems or seen to be failing that they would look to step in notwithstanding the point in the student teacher's placement. Accordingly, emphasis (Katherine Taylor) was placed upon the fact that *"the student teacher still receives plenty of support ... even at the end of the TP."* This approach was consistent with the stance adopted by most mentors of letting student teachers experiment and learn through their mistakes, with the mentor being able to *"come in afterwards and sort the mistakes out"* (Nick Hyde).

It was said (Alison Carter) that in a minority of cases, support was not provided to student teachers as either the mentor or the student teacher felt they did not need support. However, that mentor admitted that it was *"quite difficult when they say they don't need the support that is there for them."*

Collaborating

In contrast to instructing a collaborative approach was universally seen by mentors as being very positive, and identified by 40% (8 out of 20) of the mentors surveyed as being one of their roles.

Mentors often used the word "*approachable*" to describe how they wanted student teachers to see them, and most stated that they worked within "*a strong relationship*" (Rachel Naara). The relationship between the mentor and the student teacher was often described as a collaborative one, with many mentors preferring to use the term "*we*" rather than "*they*" or "*I*" in describing their activities when working with student teachers, particularly when providing feedback and agreeing targets for subsequent teaching by student teachers. In addition the relationship was described in terms of equality.

In describing when and how they were collaborative one mentor (Lawrence Adams) said it was from the beginning. However, most mentors described it as being part of an ongoing approach and an integral part of their way of working with student teachers. Most significantly mentors stated that it extended to the selection of strategies being used by student teachers. In terms of the approach used by mentors (April Collins, Paula Roberts, Sarah Hunter), this meant that the choice of strategies to be used by the student teacher was agreed by the mentor and student teacher, with the mentor not imposing their style or opinion on the student teacher.

However, many mentors stated that they advised or guided student teachers, and expected their advice to be taken. As such it was stated (Abigail Phillips) that "*it would be a good idea to discuss alternatives to them or asking them for their ideas.*" Another

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mentor (Alison Carter) considered that the extent that this process was circumscribed by the ITT curriculum stating *"so I suppose we are working to a system that is prescribed."*

This collaborative approach extended (Lawrence Adams) to agreement of targets for the student teachers, many of which were the outcome of the strategies previously agreed. According to a number of mentors (Katherine Taylor, Nicola Francis, Lawrence Adams) the setting of the targets, in particular the wording and how they were to be measured were set by the mentor. In addition the writing up of the mentor's assessment also involved a collaborative approach, with it being said by a mentor (Chris Smythe) that he told the student teacher *"this is why I think you are here, this is the evidence we have got, this is the evidence you are providing, are you happy with that?"*

Management

Less than half the mentors interviewed recognised management as one of their roles, but those doing so linked it with facilitation. As has already been identified earlier in this section older mentors were likely to consider their role to include management of student teachers, whilst younger teachers were less likely to do so. This suggested that older mentors were able or willing to manage student teachers, in contrast to younger mentors. Lawrence Adams described this in terms of *"it is like having an extra member of the department, managed in the same way but perhaps with a little more close attention and support in the way it is required obviously."* However, Natalie Jones noted that management of a student teacher, who was an adult, was quite different from that of a pupil.

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In describing the context of the management of the student teacher another mentor (Nicola Francis) stated that it related to the use of achievement targets by the student teacher.

Facilitation

Approximately 25% of mentors considered that they had a facilitative role, both in terms of the introduction of the student teacher into the school environment and their development. Significantly they considered that they were working on behalf of the school as a whole, but that they were *"the person bringing it all together"* (Lawrence Adams). A noticeable feature of the mentors' facilitative role was an unwillingness to instruct student teachers. For example one mentor (Richard Warner) stated that it was for the student teacher to *"experiment with different styles and methods in order for them to find out what suits them best."*

As a general rule mentors looked for student teachers to take responsibility for teaching themselves, with mentors providing them, *"as many opportunities as possible to try out different styles"* (Rachel Naara). This was expanded upon by a second mentor (Richard Warner), who told student teachers *"You listen to what I say and then you make your opinions based on what I've said, but do not do what I do word for word."* He stated that was because *"As a mentor you're passing on advice rather than instructions."*

However, some mentors felt compelled to take a more proactive role than they wanted to. In large part this was seen to be as a consequence of a lack of maturity in student teachers (Richard Warner). A second mentor expanded upon this, stating that sometimes she found that she had to give directions due to a lack of understanding or

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common sense of student teachers, but found the need for this approach to be "*wearing*" as she believed that her advice should be taken by the student teacher.

Whilst the adoption of a leading role by mentors was seen by some mentors to be forced upon them by the lack of maturity or motivation on the part of student teachers others instinctively took this role. For example, one (April Collins) stated that "*I let them know straight away how a lesson should be conducted in my classroom*" and "*I smother them with all the information they need to be a good teacher.*"

Challenge

Relatively few mentors considered that their role included challenging student teachers. However, of those that did, most considered that as student teachers moved from observing the practice of experienced teachers to developing their own practice the mentor's role changed, with challenge being introduced. Whilst the use of challenge was common to most mentors the approach taken by mentors to its use was varied. One mentor (Sarah Hunter) stated "*I believe in putting them in at the deep end ... I think it's good to give them a challenge ... because these are the demands that they're going to have to meet every single day when they have a fulltime job.*" Another mentor (Rachel Naara) concurred and said that student teachers had to "*find their own way through*" as part of their development.

This contrasts with the more gradual approach endorsed by other mentors, the detail of this approach was amplified by another mentor (Abigail Phillips), as "*You've got to give them realistic challenges, challenges that they can actually achieve.*" It is significant that in both of these examples the mentors emphasised that they supported the student teachers, and worked within a highly supportive school environment. This approach

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underlined the targets being agreed between the mentor and the student teacher at their weekly meetings, and not unilaterally imposed by the mentor.

Whilst mentors emphasised the support they provided, and the use of realistic targets, there was an underlying recognition of the progressive development of student teachers over time as they gained in experience. The biggest contrast between mentors related to the rate at which they expected this development to take place, with those mentors advocating that student teachers should have a "*steep learning curve*" (Lawrence Adams) often following their own experiences as student teachers. Other mentors stated that they took the same approach because they did not believe in "*spoon feeding*" the student teachers (Abigail Phillips).

Conclusions

There was also a common view amongst mentors that their primary roles were to assess and be supportive to the student teacher. This is not surprising since *Qualifying to Teach* (TDA, 2006) sets out at requirement R3.1 that mentors are to act as assessors to the student teachers, and under requirement R2.3 student teachers are to be "*given the support they need to succeed.*"

Whilst assessment was seen as an important role it also had negative connotations with some mentors. Indeed many mentors, particularly older and more experienced mentors, did not see assessment as the most important part of their role, and instead saw the assessment criteria and requirements a bureaucratic waste of time. However, a number of younger mentors found them useful and quite influential in their practice as mentors. Whilst this difference may reflect the different levels of experience between the two groups it may also be explained by the embedding of mentoring practice into schools

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over recent years, as suggested by Youens and Bailey (2004). However, it was very noticeable that mentors were reluctant to fail student teachers, which corresponds with the view of the head of PGCE course set out in Section 6.6.2 above.

In addressing these issues Grimmett and Crehan (1992: 56) recommend that "*when making moves to establish closer co-operation between teachers and their colleagues ... that help be disassociated from evaluation. This [they argue] is important for instance in the design of professional growth programmes.*" This approach was widely recognised and used by mentors.

Mentors also recognised that one of their roles was the development of the student teacher, and accordingly showed a clear understanding of the developing nature of student teachers and their different stages of concerns, as identified by Fuller (1969). However, there was also strong resonance in the interviews with the work of Kelehear (2003), who proposes that educators could adopt reciprocal levels of support and stretch so as to match the development of their students, and Daloz (1986), who identifies three stages of development whereby the mentor guides, challenges and supports.

Another role frequently mentioned by mentors was that of a leader, albeit not in a dominating way, but rather in terms of leading by example, and being facilitative. This role was also described as providing opportunities for the student teacher, and was seen as an important function by some mentors.

It was also apparent from the interviews that most mentors, when considering their multiple roles, saw themselves as being guides within the school environment, facilitating the development of the student teachers they mentored. A significant aspect of this process is the belief that it was for the student teachers, through observation of

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experienced teachers, to develop an understanding of the styles and methods observed. From this observation, followed by experimentation in the teaching role, student teachers were expected to develop their practice, and thus their own identity as teachers. Corresponding with the development of the student teacher, mentors saw their role changing according to progress or lack of progress by the student teacher, with clear evidence being provided of changes of strategies according to the student teachers needs.

It is interesting that through the medium of assessment, which was described as being an ongoing process and was most often focussed during the weekly meetings between mentors and student teachers, initiated a process of reflection and self development, as identified by Brooks and Sykes (1997). Clearly the context in which the mentors were working within impacted upon and drove this process.

Whilst few mentors described facilitation as one of their roles it was evident from both their words and actions that they saw their overall role as being facilitative, thus following the practice described by Brookfield (1986) and encouraging the development of self-directed and empowered adults. As suggested by Brookfield many mentors also saw their facilitative role as being one in which they took the lead.

Indeed across the various roles and actions described by mentors, rather than individual roles used for the thematic analysis, most of Brookfield's central principles can be identified, namely mutual respect, collaborative respect, praxis, critical reflection and self direction. Whilst voluntary participation was not identified in this section it was identified through the analysis in subsequent sections of this chapter.

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Kwo (1994; 125) suggests that the apprenticeship model of teacher training has generally been discarded as outdated because of its simplistic assumptions about learning and its narrow adherence to the transmission mode of teaching. However, the practices of the mentors in relation to the development of the student teacher are also very similar to the cycle of observation, teaching, feedback and support described by Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) as *'the application of the apprenticeship model.'* Cochran-Smith and Paris's (1995) description of an apprenticeship model, as set out in Section 3.2.6 above, is consistent with that used by Ertmer and Newby (1993: 66), who suggest *'a student placed in the hands of a constructivist would likely be immersed in an "apprenticeship" experience.'* On this basis the mentors interviewed took a constructivist stance.

Accordingly, my research suggests that the apprenticeship model, as defined by Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995), who use it in the context of educational psychology and not education, is still in use. This further suggests that either Kwo (Op Cit) is incorrect in stating that the apprenticeship model has been discarded, or that Kwo has a different definition to Cochran-Smith and Paris of the apprenticeship model. Given the reference that Kwo makes to simplistic assumptions about learning, and the transmission mode of teaching, it would appear to be the latter.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) consider that the apprenticeship model is the first of three models used by mentors, before they move on to the competency and reflective models, with the model depending on the stage of development of the student teacher. This suggests that mentors also adopt other models, and not just the apprenticeship model, for student teachers' learning. This would not be very surprising as the mentors have

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stated that they see their role as varying according to the stage of development of the student teacher.

I also believe that it is very significant that the mentors described no one role for a mentor and that the roles they described evolved as the student teacher progressed through their Teaching Practice. However, it was noticeable that their wide range of experience as mentors and teachers within the sample had a significant impact on the mentors' views. Nonetheless there was common agreement that the role was very demanding and dynamic, with the various roles they described constantly changing and their boundaries blurring. As such the models of learning such as those advanced by Lewin (1952) and Kolb (1984) probably more fully reflect the lack of distinct boundaries between phases and the iterative nature of learning.

6.5 STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY MENTORS

6.5.1 Introduction

The initial set of questions posed to the mentors, as set out in Section 1.1 of the first interview schedule (Appendix 4), related to their use of strategies whilst mentoring student teachers. The first question posed was '*What strategies do you employ?*' In order to assist and focus their responses they were all given a list of the ten strategies, namely referring to theory; feedback and discussion (reflection); self-evaluation by students; collaborative practices; challenge; team teaching, setting demanding tasks; observing me/other experienced teachers; setting problem-solving tasks; and modelling good practice. Whilst these strategies were derived from the research of Jones *et al.* (2004) the stated purpose of my research was to go behind the purpose of the use of

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these strategies as part of my examination of the use of learning theories by mentors and not to validate the work of Jones *et al.* Rather the use of these strategies was to facilitate engagement with mentors and assist in the thematic analysis of the data obtained.

In looking to explain the strategies used by mentors in more detail this section is divided into two parts, the first is statistical analysis of the mentor’s role compared with the mentor variables; the second is an explanation of the results of thematic analysis carried out on the data obtained from the interview schedules.

6.5.2 Analysis of Mentors’ Strategies

The ranking of the strategies adopted by mentors, as identified by them is set out in Table 6.6 below. The explanation of the mentors’ views on the different strategies is set out in the next part of this section.

Ranking	Strategy	Percentage Agreeing
1	Feedback and Discussion (Reflection)	100%
2 =	Modelling good practice	95%
2 =	Observing	95%
4	Self Evaluation by students	90%
5	Collaborative Practices	80%
6	Team Teaching	55%
7	Challenge	45%
8 =	Setting Demanding Tasks	40%
8 =	Setting problem Solving Tasks	40%
10	Referring to theory	10%

Table 6.6 - Analysis of Mentor Responses on Strategies used by Mentors

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Looking to the similarities in the strategies used by mentors, all mentors used feedback and discussion (reflection) as one of their strategies.

Taken as a whole these findings suggest that older teachers were more likely to use both support and challenge, as advocated by Daloz (1986), as part of their strategies than younger teachers. However, it is not possible to explain why this happens.

6.5.3 Thematic Analysis of Mentors' Strategies

Feedback and Discussion (Reflection)

As identified in the statistical analysis above all mentors considered that feedback and discussion was relevant to their practice as mentors. Not only was this strategy used by all mentors but, additionally, it was seen as being very important. Nicola Francis explained this in terms of *"I think a reflective teacher is a developing teacher. That is my objective when I use that [sic]; I want to produce a reflective teacher who will look at their own practice and seek to improve that practice. That is the basis of much of my mentoring – feed back and discussion."*

In describing the process of feedback and discussion a number of mentors used the terms *"reflective"* and *"reflection"* to describe it. For example Paula Roberts talked about the need to *"develop reflective and self-evaluating practices"*, Nicola Francis about *"reflecting on what has already happened"* whilst Melissa Collins stated that *"they did reflect"*. In addition Adrian Murphy suggested that it was open and part of a collaborative process.

Most mentors described feedback and discussion occurring on two occasions, the first after the student teacher had taken a lesson (Sarah Hunter, Nicola Francis), whilst the

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second was after they had observed a lesson (Sarah Hunter, Harriet Brown). The process was facilitated by the use of observation sheets by the mentors and the use of diaries by student teachers. The latter clearly suggested that the partnership looked to focus the mentors on to this strategy through the framework for the instructional design provided to them.

Whilst it was stated that student teachers reflected, the way in which they did was not always seen as being effective, with Melissa Collins stating that *"I don't feel that they understand what good reflection is or good self-evaluation is, but it is something I try to help them with after each lesson I observe. I think they will get better with that."*

Commenting on the feedback and discussion they provided, mentors took care not to be too negative. This was a conscious decision on the part of many mentors, although it was acknowledged (April Collins) that constructive criticism was necessary as part of the process.

The interviews clearly indicated that mentors considered that this strategy was closely related to other strategies, principally observing and self-evaluation.

Modelling good practice

A number of mentors used the term *"role model"* to describe this strategy, thus identifying the term as both a role and a strategy for mentors. Modelling good practice, which was described as extending beyond merely working in a classroom environment, was widely acknowledged by mentors as being one of their key strategies when working with student teachers whilst being seen (Clair Benstead) as *"the best way to learn yourself and improve."*

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It was also seen as being one of the earliest strategies that a mentor would use as it was considered to be an essential part in building up a student teacher's confidence. Adrian Murphy described it being typically part of the "*the observation period of the mentoring*", and this provided a reference point for the student teachers for their practice in a school setting. One mentor (Katherine Taylor) even suggested that "*the majority of learning about how to become a good teacher comes from working in a school for the first year and largely copying the methods used by a good head of department.*"

One of the benefits of the use of role modelling by a mentor was, according to Chris Smythe, that it illustrated "*the way that the professional teacher should behave and the standards that are expected*" of them. In addition Abigail Phillips suggested a link to assessing, stating that "*The role modelling is very important, as is the assessing because people cannot develop unless they have got something to judge themselves against and the role modelling and assessing gives them both of those skills.*" Another mentor (Paula Roberts) saw role modelling part of developing student teachers. She also saw it as a way to explicate her knowledge, as "*otherwise I wouldn't know what to talk about to a trainee.*"

However, many mentors were self deprecating about their own performance in the classroom. This was keenly felt by one young teacher (Clair Benstead), who was in her first year as a mentor and stated that "*I definitely didn't project my role as being the most amazing teacher in the world and all the way through her PGCE placement I would always say, I still do things wrong, I'm not that brilliant and I'm sure you could pick out several things from my lessons which weren't perfect, but that's the way it is.*"

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In contrast another mentor (Lucy Green), who had only been teaching for 2½ years, believed the ability to role model was critical as *"You have got to be a good teacher to be a good mentor. You have to be, because they have to be able to watch you, observe you, and see you doing it."* Katherine Taylor agreed, saying *"I don't see how you can be a mentor if you are not setting a good example of how to behave professionally, and [exhibit] good practice in the classroom."* Conversely, not all mentors believed that a good teacher would automatically make a good mentor even though they might provide an example of good practice in the classroom, and so would merit observation by a student teacher.

Some mentors, such as Jamie King, who taught science, modelling of good practice was part of a structured programme. He described this in terms of *"[W]e all model a three-part lesson, and model how to use lesson outcomes effectively and various teaching strategies effectively."*

Mentors also made a point of ensuring that student teachers saw practice by other teachers, particularly those who were more experienced than themselves if they were relatively inexperienced. Adrian Murphy noted that as a consequence he felt that *"[Y]ou are sending out your student teacher to observe teachers and sometimes they are not absolutely certain of what they are observing, so that for the most part you hope it is always going to be good practice, but what in a sense can be [is that] when they come back you then discuss with them what they observed."* It was thus clear that there was a linkage between the modelling of good practice and feedback and discussion.

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Observing

Observing was seen equally as important as modelling good practice, with which it was closely linked, by mentors. Typically student teachers observed other teachers as well as their mentor. Clair Benstead described how her student teacher *"did lots of observations and I tried to get her to observe as many different teachers as possible from what I knew of other teachers in the department, and she also observed within the rest of the school as well."* Other mentors also saw observations of a wide range of teachers as being important, and not just in their own subjects, with Jamie King describing how in his school mentors made sure that student teachers *"go and observe other subject areas as well, and they track a class as well so they see a whole class with different teachers in different subjects."*

The benefit of this approach was described by Nick Hyde as being that student teachers saw *"completely different teachers doing different things, the same subject completely different ways and you find out what works, what doesn't work, what works for one person and you can see if you can try it out and if it works for me then great."*

However, whilst observation was seen as being important it was also seen by Lucy Green as limited in itself as student teachers do not get a huge amount from it until they actually started teaching. She explained this by saying *"It still doesn't have the same meaning, you still have not done it yourself and also it gets extremely boring and you will sit there and realise you have missed half the lesson because you have just been sat there and you have not taken any notice because you have had no participation."* This view raised the question as to when observation by a student teacher was most effective, with a few mentors suggesting that it should be left until later in the practice. Chris

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Smythe explained the rationale for this approach as being "*although you want them to observe, sometimes they're observing but they don't know what they're observing.*"

Looking to how observation could be applied as a strategy Abigail Phillips stated that she often asked a student teacher who was having difficulty with a particular aspect of teaching to observe teachers who were particularly good at that particular aspect.

Alison Carter linked the process of observation with the ability to be critical, and for the student teacher to be able to evaluate their own practice, which was another of the strategies identified by mentors. In addition Sarah Hunter linked observation with the feedback and discussion in order to ascertain what had been learnt from it. Nicola Francis agreed, suggesting that observing her allowed student teachers to understand the need for reflection, and thus assist in their development.

Self Evaluation by Student Teachers

This strategy was used by 90% of mentors, and was considered to be important by many of them. It was noted by one mentor (Jamie King) that student teachers were encouraged by the Partnership to evaluate themselves on paper at the end of each lesson they taught. Nonetheless most mentors saw self evaluation as one of the strategies that they should actively use as part of the mentoring process.

Explaining how mentors got student teachers to evaluate themselves Clair Benstead stated that she would start with a question, namely "*How did you feel that lesson went?*", and try and get the student teacher to work it out for herself. April Collins suggested student teachers had to be encouraged to consider not only "*what*" but also "*why*". She

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explained *"you've got to try to explore why to be able to develop as a teacher and to get it right next time."*

Nicola Francis considered that self-evaluation could be used at many different times, and explained that *"I use it very frequently, I use it in mentoring sessions, I use it at the end of lessons when we might be evaluating a lesson or I might be doing an appraisal and I will look at how I may have done an appraisal and actually say 'appraise your own lesson' – How do they compare? Do we agree? Are we talking about strengths and weaknesses in the same area? If not, let's discuss the bridge."* She concluded that her objective was to produce a reflective teacher. Nick Hyde also suggested that feedback and discussion, and thus reflection, went with self evaluation.

However, whilst mentors looked to encourage self-evaluation by student teachers they did not always get it. Abigail Phillips explained that this was because some students were good at self-evaluation whilst others were not so perceptive although the ability to self evaluate could though, be developed over time. In support of this view Lucy Green suggested *"To start with she lacked confidence but as time went on she started to actually be able to evaluate her lessons much better and she'd say to me, this didn't actually and I go yes, I know and say I think this went well, yes it did."* In this case an increase in self-confidence on the part of the student teacher was linked with their ability to evaluate themselves.

In contrast Harriet Brown considered weaker students were less willing to evaluate, stating that *"The ones who are doing it well can pick out their weaknesses straight away, but the ones who are not so good don't seem to be so forthcoming in identifying what went bad and why, particularly why."* In addition self evaluation by students was not

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always simple or successful. Rachel Naara explained that this was because they get bogged down because they have to evaluate every single lesson, and as consequence she did not think that it was always productive for them.

Collaborative Practices

Collaborative practices were identified by 16 mentors (80%) as a strategy that they used when working with student teachers. However, in many ways this term was used by mentors as a collective description for a number of other strategies such as team teaching and observing in which they worked with student teachers. In addition it was used (Nicola Francis) to describe working with other teachers, rather than just a mentor. Clearly the term had different meanings to different mentors.

Other mentors, one of whom was Adrian Murphy, saw collaboration as an approach which he described "*[U]sually I would give her the opportunity to see how she would approach a particular unit over a number of weeks and she would sketch that out, and then we would sit down together and look at things which she might consider, different resources that she might incorporate into that and how she would use the main text and then develop something beyond that.*" Other mentors (April Collins, Melissa Collins and Harriet Brown) agreed with this view giving the example of jointly planning the student teachers lessons. However, as with many of the strategies identified, there was common agreement that it depended very much on the trainee's needs.

Team Teaching

11 mentors (55%) stated that they used team teaching as a strategy when working with student teachers. However, some mentors felt very strongly against using it. One

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example was Sarah Hunter, who stated "*I hate team teaching. I can't bear it.*" In this case her personal feeling about the effectiveness of this strategy was emphatically stated. Others simply did not use this strategy.

In looking to when team teaching might be used Clair Benstead suggested that it was used early in the TP, she explained that it would "*ease her into her lessons. I would start the lesson off and get the pupils quiet and then she would demonstrate a practical and then she would go through that practical and then I would finish off.*" She identified the benefits that it would give the student teacher extra ideas as well as helping with discipline in the classroom. Other mentors (Adrian Murphy and Lucy Green) also identified team teaching as a way to ease student teachers into their TP. Lucy Green explained that whilst she would initially work together with the student teacher she would "*gradually ease off and let her go for it.*" This correlated with the view that this strategy was used early in the TP.

Another reason given for its use early in the TP was given by Nicola Francis, who stated that "*experience has shown that it has undermined the student teacher and they are just seen as 'the student' and I don't find it to be very beneficial to use it in the straight sense.*" However, team teaching was also seen (Paula Roberts) as a means of assisting student teachers "*when a student teacher is finding themselves utterly, utterly snowed under that you can say, 'well, look just do that bit of that lesson' and see what you can do with that, I'd really like to see you doing that bit of that lesson, I think it would be really good for you, but it is a way of not giving up, it is a little bit of a prop.*" Significantly, she did team teaching when she was on her teaching practice, again

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indicating the impact of personal experience on mentors. In addition she felt comfortable with the strategy.

However, team teaching was not seen as an easy option for mentors. Abigail Phillips explained that *"[I]f you're going to be in a team teaching situation then you've got to make sure the students are well briefed on what you expect to happen and what you want their role to be."* In addition, this was not seen by another mentor (Melissa Collins) as being easy to do, explaining that in her school the pupils did not like it, as they did not know who was in charge.

Challenge

Challenge was identified by 9 mentors (45%) as a strategy that they used. In part this relatively low number might be because it was seen as too aggressive. Adrian Murphy suggested that *"I wouldn't say challenging, because it [mentoring] is not putting anybody on the spot, but getting them to think a little bit further, maybe, what potential extensions you might incorporate in this activity if some boys finish early, for example, and give them the opportunity to think that through and think of potential scenarios and how she might respond to that."* Clearly this mentor was uncomfortable with the use of the word *"challenge"*, possibly because he considered it too threatening to the student teacher or the mentor/student teacher relationship.

One mentor (Alison Carter) explained why she did not use this strategy: *"The job itself is challenging without offering any more to it."* In contrast she considered that student teachers needed *"a lot of encouraging and bolstering up"*.

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Looking to the rationale for the use of challenge with student teachers Nicola Francis stated that she used it *"in order to move them on."* She explained that its use was particularly important in areas that student teachers were ignoring, were weak or not confident in. She thought that the latter was the most obvious area for challenge, but saw a need to support them at the same time, for example by positive feedback. She also saw challenge as an ongoing activity on the part of the mentor and that *"the challenging of the students is in setting their targets week on week, because those targets should be challenging in order to move them on."*

Another reason for the use of challenge in relation to tasks was given by Sarah Hunter, namely that it reflected the demands that they were going to face on a daily basis in a fulltime job. She also linked challenge to the setting of problem solving tasks. It was also considered that mentors had to be careful in the use of challenge. Abigail Phillips stated that *"[Y]ou've got to be careful as well when you're setting challenges for students because you've got to give them realistic challenges, challenges that they can actually achieve."* Paula Roberts agreed that setting realistic targets was essential when challenging student teachers.

It was also considered (Harriet Brown) that the use of challenge required the setting of very specific goals and targets. As a consequence Jamie King saw it as part of the whole process of mentoring and feedback, and that *"the setting of targets causes that to happen as a matter of course anyway."*

Setting Demanding Tasks

Setting demanding tasks for student teachers was identified by 8 mentors (40%) as a strategy that they used, and some mentors linked it to the use of challenge, which was

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used by a similar number of mentors. Accordingly, Nicola Francis described it in terms of tying in with

"[C]hallenging students with targets and in putting timetables together will choose a range of classes so that there will be some more difficult and more challenging classes within the timetable but there will also be some classes who will be a delight to teach so that the whole timetable, therefore, sets different demands on the students. And I think sometimes though it is important in setting demanding tasks not to be too demanding."

She also suggested that whilst demanding tasks could be set, that they had to be realistic in terms of the workload and ability of the student teacher.

Looking to the areas in which demanding tasks might be set Adrian Murphy suggested that they were most effective in areas which the student teacher was less familiar or confident with. In explaining how he managed setting the task he stated that together with his student teacher he looked at how she could break the task down and how she could convey it to pupils.

As with challenge many mentors were reluctant to specifically set demanding tasks as they considered that the student teacher's TP was inherently demanding and that they did not want to impose additional burdens on them. However, Abigail Phillips differentiated it from challenge in that she considered it tended to have a longer term nature. She described setting a demanding task in terms of *"Here's a unit, you're responsible for the delivery of this unit, you will be working with other teachers who will take some of the lessons but I want you to put together a scheme of work for this unit and to brief the other members of staff as you go along as to what you're expecting them to do. You take charge."* A key feature in her use of this strategy was that it had to be related to some practical skill they needed to master.

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Setting Problem Solving Tasks

8 mentors (40%) identified setting problem solving tasks for student teachers as a strategy that they used; this was the same level as for setting demanding tasks. As with that strategy most mentors did not see it as a discrete strategy on the grounds that students' TP was largely based upon problem solving and that they did not see the need to add to this workload.

One example of how this strategy was employed was given by two mentors (Nick Hyde and Melissa Collins), namely through role play of a potential problem. One indicated that this had been suggested to her during mentor training. However, they were divided as to its effectiveness.

In describing what was being sought from this strategy Adrian Murphy stated that he was looking for less *"didactic ways of approaching [a problem] and more open-ended ways of approaching it and looking at a variety of ways in which you could drive a piece of work forward."* This suggested an acceptance that there was no single route to the right answer.

Referring to theory

Referring to theory was identified by 2 mentors (10%) as a strategy that they used. One of these mentors, Nicola Francis, stated that whilst she referred to theory she did not *"have a great lot of time to do that, and therefore a lot of that I leave to university. I will discuss it with the student and hope that the student will feed that back to me and talk about how my practice might relate to that theory, but it is not a high priority,*

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because it is difficult as a teacher for me to do that. Inevitably, theory comes into things but it is a lot more practical for me anyway."

Most mentors saw the latter point, that teaching was mainly practical in nature and experience based, and was the main reason for them not referring to theory whilst mentoring. Even the other mentor (Abigail Phillips) who referred to theory whilst mentoring suggested that she tended to talk about teaching "*from experience rather than theory*". In addition many teachers did not consider that they used theory in their own teaching. Indeed one mentor (Nick Hyde) stated, when referring to the theories that he learnt whilst training, that he did not consciously put any of them into practice. However, he qualified this stating "*maybe they are there because it is what you just do, but I'm not sure if consciously I put them into practice.*" He concluded that he left this area to the HEI.

Significantly Abigail Phillips stated that when mentoring she was working "*very much sort of along the lines of my own educational theory I go back to*" and that "*you actually lead out from ... what is already there.*" Clearly this mentor was relying heavily on her own experience as the basis for her practice. Other mentors frequently made the point that they were practical and not theoretical people and left the theory to the HEI, who they considered were the specialists in the area and had the time to devote to it.

Another explanation given (Chris Smythe) as to why mentors did not refer to theory was "*[B]ecause there is a danger that theory is detached from practice. Theory is something that happens in universities or in books and it has no place [in schools]. If you speak to a lot of more experienced colleagues they will say, we never did that. Did the essay in*

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Uni. and that was it." However, that mentor did acknowledge that theory "*often leads to professional practice and even challenges their professional practice.*"

Analysis and Conclusions

Whilst the analysis of the mentors' responses took place within compartmentalised strategies it quickly became apparent that their use was closely connected, for example observation and role modelling, and setting tasks by mentors and feedback and discussion.

Feedback and discussion was clearly the single most important strategy used by mentors, both in terms of the frequency with which it was used and its significance. However, its use as a strategy cannot be taken in isolation as it was used in response to an action or thought by the student teacher, with the former being clearly dominant. In following this pattern mentors were following the path indicated by Tripp (2003), who states:

'And in the reflective practitioner tradition (now associated with Schön, 1983), teachers tend to draw on personal and general rather than specialist theoretical knowledge as the basis for their judgements.' (Tripp, 2003: 7)

In addition the process described by mentors was part of a cycle of reflection of learning following practical experience, much as Brookfield (1985) described it:

"Praxis is placed at the heart of effective facilitation. Learners and facilitators are involved in a continual process of activity, reflection upon activity, collaborative analysis of activity, new activity, further reflection and collaborative analysis, and so on." Brookfield (1985: 10)

This correlates with the work of Tracey *et al.* (1995) who suggest that feedback systems, for example by way of reviews or assessments, '*remind and instruct learners transfer behaviours*' from the environment in which the learning will be applied.

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However, the use of feedback and discussion as a strategy by mentors did not occur in isolation, rather it was clearly linked to other strategies such as observation and self evaluation.

Role modelling was also seen by mentors as being an important strategy, much as would be expected given that most teacher educators regard themselves as role models (Lunenberg and Korthagen 2003: 5). However, given that changes in the behaviour of the learner is considered necessary as part of the learning process (Schön, 1983: Brookfield, 1985) it is also significant that role modelling is seen to play an important part in effecting that change, justifying the importance given to it in practice by mentors. Indeed Tessmer and Richey (1997) consider that:

'Perhaps one of the most effective transfer cuing devices is that of modelling. Behaviour change is often evident in keeping with the extent to which peers and supervisors model the desired behaviours.' (Tessmer and Richey, 1997: 101)

Looking to when and how this strategy was applied by mentors, there was clear correlation with the apprenticeship model described by Maynard and Furlong (1993), both in the use of role modelling and its occurrence early in the mentoring process. As would be expected, its use was concurrent with observation by student teachers, both their mentors and other teachers.

When considering the use of self evaluation by students as a strategy some mentors stated that the rationale for its use to be in order "*to produce a reflective teacher*", thus linking it to reflection and the work of Schön (1983). Within this model Stuart (2002) considers that:

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'The 'reflective practitioner' model requires students to take an inquiry-oriented approach to their teaching and expects them to use what they have learnt to develop their own personal theories and repertoires.' (Stuart, 2002: 370)

Self evaluation occurs elsewhere in literature on mentoring. For example Fuller (1969) suggests that in the third phase and final phase of a student teacher's concerns, i.e. when they are more developed, one of their focuses is on self evaluation. Whilst observing this to be a phase of a student teacher's development Fuller does not explain why self-evaluation is of benefit. However, Lowry (1989) suggests that one of the ways in which adult educators can assist learners in becoming self-directed is through self-evaluation of their work

Looking to why self evaluation may be important Zimmerman (2002: 67) states that it is *'the self-directive process by which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills.'* He considers (Ibid: 69) that it specifically refers to *'comparisons of self-observed performances against some standard, such as one's prior performance, another person's performance, or an absolute standard of performance.'* Clearly there are many similarities between this description and the position in which student teachers were described by the mentors interviewed.

Looking to the weakness of novice learners, whom student teachers are clearly one category, Zimmerman (Ibid: 69) suggests that they *'[T]end to rely on comparisons with the performance of others to judge their learning effectiveness.'* Again this is clearly a position student teachers are in, with mentors and other teachers' role modelling good practice. However, Zimmerman considers that by making comparative self evaluations novice learners can experience reductions in their level of self satisfaction due to their

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perceived '*ability deficiencies*', prompting '*defensive reactions*', which in turn undermine their efforts to learn. Again mentors described experiencing this phenomenon, particularly with less confident or "*weaker*" students, and responding with support and reassurance in order to increase the student teacher's confidence.

From their descriptions of the on-going process of building of student teachers' self confidence, mentors recognised the need for their input into self evaluation by student teachers, and the long term gain they experienced, namely increased self-direction. This also correlates with Fuller's (Op Cit) view that self evaluation only occurs in the final stage of the student teachers development, i.e. when they are no longer novices.

Whilst some mentors considered that they did not use collaborative practices it was clear that in fact, and demonstrated by their actions, they generally worked collaboratively with student teachers. Indeed Martin (1996: 67) suggests that mentors are inclined to stress the interpersonal and supportive aspects of mentoring to the detriment of other aspects such as evaluation and challenge. However, one way in which mentors demonstrated collaborative working was through team teaching. The benefit of this particular strategy was, according to Edwards and Protheroe (2003), that it enabled student teacher's '*peripheral participation and access to teachers' decision-making while teaching.*'

Turning to the use of challenge as a strategy, which was used by less than half of the sample, mentors were clearly very sensitive in its use and saw the need to be particularly focussed when using it. Cameron-Jones and O'Hara (1997: 20) consider that this may be because '*teachers involved in school-based work with students do not appreciate the role of challenge as a stimulus to learning.*'

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Another relevant factor to the use of challenge is that literature suggests (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1993, Zeichner, 1992) that there was a tendency for more challenging or confrontational interactions to be avoided. Burgess and Butcher (1999; 34) appear to sum this nervousness up when they note that '*The mentor/student relationship is perceived as a sensitive one.*' As a consequence whilst the need for challenge is recognised Elliott and Calderhead (1995; 44) identified that '*Very few [mentors] openly challenged their novices ideas and images of teaching.*'

However, those mentors that used challenge also were conscious of a corresponding need to support the student teachers, reflecting the views of Martin (1996: 44) who states that '*Mentoring novice teachers requires an appropriate mix of support and challenge.*' Mentors also strongly agreed with her qualification (Ibid: 51) that '*The key is to make challenges appropriate for individual novices.*'

The importance of setting learners demanding tasks is underlined by Tessmer and Richey (1997) who state that:

'Goal setting has learners determining their own cognitive and learning goals for a particular training experience. The act of goal setting, the types of goal set, impact both learning and transfer by establishing preparatory cognitive and affective states in the learner.' (Tessmer and Richey, 1997: 228)

Zanting *et al.* (2001: 61) expand upon this view and suggest that, following the regulation perspective, intentional learning does not take place automatically. They state '*In this view of learning, teachers should stimulate learners to be active and develop learning activities in order to learn.*' They support this with the observation that '*policy makers and educators are increasingly striving for an increase of self-regulation by the learner and a decrease of external regulation by the teacher.*'

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However, both setting demanding tasks and problem solving tasks featured relatively low in the list of strategies used by mentors. In their research Jones *et al.* (2004) questioned the low level usage of problem solving tasks or reference to theory within the range of strategies used by mentors. They suggest that this *'raises the question to what extent mentor strategies reflected their "espoused theories", expressed in the form of explanations or justifications or "theories in use", implicit in their classroom practice.'*

In considering the lack of use of problem solving as a strategy, it is worth noting that Perkins and Salomon (1989: 212) consider that *'specialized domain knowledge'* is a necessary basis for problem solving. In such case there is a likelihood that mentors do not perceive that student teachers possess such specialist knowledge, and thus consider the strategy inappropriate.

As I started this analysis with the view that the strategies described by the mentors are interlinked I believe it worth considering Brookfield's (1985) views, which in many ways are overarching. For example he links reflection with challenge:

'Central to the effective facilitation of learning is the development of powers of critical reflection, and this means that adults will frequently be challenged by educators...to consider alternative ways of thinking, behaving, working, and living.'
Brookfield (1985: 13)

In addition he sees role modelling being a pre-condition for self directed learning:

'A point noted when he states that the 'successful self-directed learners ... place their learning within a social setting in which the advice, information, and skill modelling provided by other learners are crucial conditions for successful learning.'
Brookfield (1985: 10)

Echoing Brookfield the mentors interviewed clearly understood the correlation between their strategies and through the interviews, demonstrated that they used them as part of

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a flexible '*toolkit*', to be used according to the circumstances, context and requirements of the individual student teacher.

6.6 SUMMARY

6.6.1 Introduction

I believe that these interviews were critical to answering the operationalised questions raised by my research and in assisting in illuminating the meanings of events in my chosen group, particularly through their own eyes. By using this tool, I was able to clarify the stated aims of my work, as well as being able to compare mentors within the Partnership.

Although case studies can offer a wealth of information, the information gathered in this research project is specific to the situations being investigated, so I have recognised the need to be very careful when drawing general conclusions. However, as Merriam and Caffarella (1998) and others have stated, it is possible to use the mine of information obtained in case studies as a '*working hypothesis*' for comparable situations. With this in mind, I will summarize my findings and formulate a number of such hypotheses.

My findings are in three parts, namely of the variations between participants within the sample the context for the use of learning theories and the use of learning theories by mentors. These findings are set out below.

6.6.2 Variation within the Sample

The sample was homogenous in a number of ways. Firstly, when considering the influences on mentors nearly all mentors agreed that their professional practice was

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important to them as mentors, whilst most also agreed that their experience as student teachers was important. Secondly, when looking at the recognition of the principles of adult learning all mentors recognised most of the principles, with all agreeing that the learners need to know and readiness to learn were important. Thirdly, describing the mentor's role all mentors acknowledged their role involved the assessment of student teachers, whilst most also saw it involving developing, coaching and role modelling. Finally, when looking at the strategies adopted by mentors all mentors used feedback and discussion, and most modelled good practice, used observation by student teachers, self evaluation by student teachers and collaborative practices.

6.6.3 The Context for the Use of Learning Theories

'If educational leaders use intentional adult education principles they can increase the possibility that mentoring will enhance professional learning, not only for new educators but for the more experienced practitioners as well.' (Wesselink *et al.*, 2003: 201)

In the previous chapter I identified that it was apparent that mentors within the case had no reason to be familiar with adult learning theories. Indeed from my observations of mentor training there was no intention on the part of the HEI Partnership for them to be provided with any substantive training in these theories.

This was subsequently confirmed in respect of my case during the semi-structured interviews with the mentors, when they almost universally acknowledged that they had limited training in learning theories, particularly adult learning theories. However, few mentors considered this knowledge to be either important or necessary for their role. Instead they stated that most of their knowledge largely came from their own practical experiences, both as student teachers and as practicing teachers.

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Mentors were unanimous in identifying their professional practice as teachers as their primary source of training and knowledge for their role as mentors. The only variance between mentors was to the extent to which they relied upon their professional practice. Some mentors stated they relied upon it wholly whilst others regarded it as the "*first port of call*" or the starting point for working with student teachers.

Many mentors found their experience as student teachers to be one of the most important elements of preparation for their role as mentors, albeit less important than their professional practice. However, some older mentors found their experience as student teachers less relevant, with one saying she only vaguely remembered that experience as it was approximately 25 years since she had been a student teacher.

In contrast Mentors gave a mixed response as to the usefulness of mentor training to their role as a mentor. About one half of the mentors considered that they had not received any relevant training, whilst two others considered that it only informed the administrative side of their role. In addition the majority of mentors stated that they did not read anything on mentoring, and in large part this was a consequence of time pressure, although one said he actively avoided it unless it was in the workplace.

The majority of mentors also stated that they did not use theory as part of their mentoring, with one mentor stating that he doubts whether he referred to any theory as his work as a mentor was so "*experience based*."

Mentors largely relied on their professional practice as teachers and their prior experience as student teachers in order to carry out their role. However, it would be misrepresenting the case to suggest that that their instructional design excludes the use of learning theories. This is because it is largely structured by others, principally the

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TDA and the HEI Partnership. The consequences are that they operate within a competence-based system, in which they are ascribed the role of assessor, and through this they provide feed-back to student teachers. This feedback is, at the instigation of the HEI, often provided in a regular and systematic manner. The inclusion of this practice within their instructional design is significant, however, the question is, "*In what way is the context in which mentors operate significant?*"

6.6.4 The Use of Learning Theories by Mentors

Being strongly driven by their own practical experiences, both as teachers and student teachers, mentors placed an emphasis on student teachers learning through personal experience. A consistent pattern of practice across the mentors interviewed was recorded, with the consistency almost certainly due to the HEI Partnership working to national standards and criteria for ITT set by the TDA.

Whilst competence-based education can be either Behaviouristic or Cognitivist in its nature, each with its own characteristics, it was illustrated above (see Section 6.3) that the model within which mentors were actually working to was largely cognitivist in nature. This was because of mentors' emphasis on the active involvement of student teachers in the learning process, the use of critical reflection (Brookfield, 1985) and self-direction (Elias and Merriam, 1995) as underlying principles, and the creation of learning environments that allow and encourage the student teachers to make connections with previously learned material.

Within the analysis of mentor interviews two aspects stand out, namely the use of facilitation and reflection by mentors. The former was accompanied by mentors allowing or encouraging student teachers to take progressively more responsibility for their

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learning. On a number of occasions the latter correlated with the form of reflection that relates to active learning experiences, which is described by Coombs and Smith (1998) as '*conversational constructivism*', and requires the learner to conversationally deconstruct and reconstruct their learning experiences in order to arrive at a new model of understanding.

In contrast, reflection started with student teachers observing the mentor and other experienced teachers, and often included the modelling of good practice by mentors, followed by student teachers teaching, with feedback and discussion on the lesson taught by the student teacher, and finally reflection by the student teacher on the lesson that they had taught. This was usually followed by further teaching by the student teacher, and further feedback and discussion with the mentor.

This approach to development of the student teachers described by mentors is consistent with that described in Kolb's (1984) model, with its use of Lewin's cycle of adult learning. This model, would suggest in the context of this research that the mentor has to '*chase*' the learner around the cycle, asking questions to encourage reflection, conceptualisation and ways of testing ideas. The concrete experience, i.e. teaching by the student teacher, would occur during the student teacher's teaching session.

The cycle of observation, teaching, feedback and support described above by the mentor teachers interviewed in large part echoed the findings of Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995), when they identified one way in which the apprenticeship model, following the educational psychology usage, was applied in the United States. This use of the term "*apprenticeship*" corresponds with what Collins *et al.* (1989) as "*cognitive*

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apprenticeship", in which *'teachers deliberately deploy the embedding circumstances of knowledge to help students construct robust understanding'* (Brown *et al.*, 1988: 2).

The work of Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995) also has some resonance with the findings of Maynard and Furlong (1993), who state that mentors often use an apprenticeship model, and of Furlong (2000), who sees the opportunity to learn through the apprenticeship of collaborative teaching as one of the strengths of school-based teacher education programmes. This also fits a competence based system of ITT and should not be surprising given the emphasis over the last 15 years on school based training for student teachers, and the constant message that teachers should be *'reflective practitioners'*.

In addition many of the mentors looked to take a developmental role in relation to student teachers' pedagogical skills, with their input and its nature varying according to the individual student teacher. A common aspect to the interviews was the expectation that the mentor's role would change over time from leading the student teacher to one in which they took more of a *'back seat role'*, progressively allowing the student teacher more independence as the student teacher gained in experience and confidence. Significantly mentors would expect a far greater degree of independence to be shown by student teachers than even the oldest of those taught in schools, with one mentor emphasising that *'they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development.'*

Furthermore the progressive development of student teachers' capabilities by mentors followed the practice recommended by Tomlinson (1998: 13), who states that *'the acquisition of practical capability requires cycles of plan-attempt-feedback-replan, a*

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process which when done with the same action unit tends to produce a gradual tuning ... that makes it accurate, economical and intuitive.'

It also has to be remembered that Vygotsky and his view of learning suggests that learners interact with their environment. This approach is developed by Lave and Wenger (1991), who postulate that apprenticeship is an example of '*situated learning*.' In this view of learning it is considered that behaviour is situationally determined, and that content knowledge is embedded in the situation in which it is used. For this reason they consider that it is critical that learning occurs in realistic settings and that the selected learning tasks be relevant to the students' lived experience. An essential context in this view is that learning takes place in a context and that the context forms an inexorable link with the knowledge embedded in it (Tessmer and Richey, 1997).

Accordingly, my research shows that mentors apply the principles of adult learning theories, the most prominent of which are:

- Adult Development Theory. Clear links can be established to experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), which was seen as very important, to support and challenge (Daloz, 1984), and facilitation (Brookfield, 1986).
- Reflective Coaching. Reflection (Schön, 1984) was seen as being very important.
- Apprenticeship Model and Situated Learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 KEY FINDINGS

It is not intended that this final chapter repeats findings that are expressed elsewhere in this thesis, rather it looks to synthesise those findings into major messages learned from the investigation.

One of the most important findings from this research project is the discovery of patterns of material strategies of mentoring, and these strategies appear to reflect principles that have been presented as adult learning theory. In addition there is evidence that all mentors recognise that the mentor/student teacher relationship is one between two adults, and not an adult and a child, and reflect this in their choice and use of strategies. Taken together this evidence confirms that mentoring of student teachers within ITT exhibits many of the practices ascribed to adult learning in literature. If this is true in teacher training, one has to ask is it also true in other professions within the public sector such as social work or nursing?

Given the range of strategies used by all mentors, and that these strategies are adjusted according to the needs and abilities of the student teacher, and the context that they are working within, mentors' practice largely correlates with that advocated by the OECD (2003) concerning variation in the use of pedagogical strategies by educators when working with adults. This is also consistent with the findings of Maynard and Furlong (1993) who identify that mentoring is dynamic, moving and changing, and as student teachers' needs vary and change, mentor's strategies, and thus the use of learning theories, vary accordingly. My research concludes that these strategies largely reflected a cognitivist orientation to learning.

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This finding is significant as whilst much of ITT is competency-based, it is through the mentoring relationship that it has moved into a developmentally cognitive domain. Indeed it is through the mentors themselves acting as a set of professionals that a true mentoring role has been taken on. Rather than limiting themselves to the role of assessor as set out for them by the TDA (2006b) mentors have through their practice and use of the instructional design provided to them by the HEI Partnership created a different, and arguably better, role than was ever intended for them. From the evidence gathered I consider this process, which is underpinned by the use of cognitivist learning theories in their instructional design, to have been done intuitively by mentors and in the absence of training in the theories described in literature (Hansford *et al.*, 2003) as providing the conceptual basis for mentoring.

Thus, the mentors have influenced a model of mentoring that could have been reductionist (Boreham, 2002) and behaviourist (Biemans *et al.*, 2004) into a much more cognitivist and reflective model. This has largely been achieved through discussion and feedback, and reflection on practice with student teachers. Another way in which this has taken place is through the use of developmental strategy by mentors to plan the experience for their student teachers, e.g. at the beginning of the teaching practice more guidance is provided, whilst as student teachers progress they are strongly encouraged to be self directed. Thus, mentors are using a thoughtful and critically reflective philosophy about how new teachers should evolve.

Whilst my research indicates that the mentor training element of the Partnership under scrutiny was limited, largely due to constraints of time and funding, this has not held back the transition of ITT to a reflective model. However, I perceive that given the lack of a

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coherent theory of mentoring being made available to mentors through any structured training programme the context they are working in has a large impact, as does the instructional design provided by the HEI Partnership that they use. Failing anything else, mentors assess whether the student teacher is meeting the professional standards for QTS (TDA, 2006b) and follow the procedural framework provided by the HEI Partnership; in the case of a number of young and inexperienced mentors this is indeed forms a larger element of what occurs in the mentoring relationship. However, a majority of mentors in the case studied had a depth of professional experience to fall back on, and used this experience to form the basis for their practice. Thus experiential learning occurs with mentors and not just with the student teachers, in large part because other means of broadening the basis for their practice or making it more sophisticated are not there.

In the case of experienced mentors, their professional practice as teachers appears to provide a '*spring-board*' for their cognitive development. As a consequence these mentors reflect on their practice, question their own competency and skills, change their schema where necessary, and thus provide evidence of double loop learning (Argyris, 1982).

A further finding from my research is that the use of these strategies and principles of adult learning by mentors appear to have been largely unconscious on their part and in spite of the competence-based model used in ITT England and Wales, with its inherently reductionist and behaviourist approach. The pattern of behaviour emerging from mentors' practice in an almost unconscious manner, and which could be ascribed to a whole range of reflective models of adult learning theory, appears to result in the application of good practice as it develops reflective practitioners with the ability to be critical. However, the impact of the instructional design provided by the HEI Partnership cannot be understated.

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It must also be remembered that a mentor is a mentor for only part of their time; mentors are teaching for most of their working week and taking this role as an extra responsibility, often as part of their personal development. This may explain why the whole process of mentoring in practice is vague and poorly defined.

Many mentors in my sample demonstrated through their professional practice that they think reflectively and deeply about the mentoring process. These mentors, because they are thinking and being reflective, are very good, intuitive educators, come up with their own good practice and personal theories to help them. However, it would be very helpful for the less creative and less reflective mentors, particularly those who have less experience to rely on, if they had something rather than nothing to work with. This means, moving it away from just happening to these mentors capable of being reflective and theorising, and moving to developing this capability in all mentors by making this knowledge available to them in terms that they can comprehend.

Clearly there is a need to extend existing mentor training and to add coherent and theoretically underpinned support to all mentors and to facilitate the sharing of good practice and developing the National Framework for mentoring established by the DfES (DfES, 2005), particularly if government intends to fulfil its intention to build mentoring and coaching capacity (CUREE, 2005).

In this context it is also important to note that whilst the use of standards has remained a key component in government requirements for ITT over the last 15 years, with the official role of mentor teachers being limited to that of an assessor, government has now recognised the need for teachers generally, and mentors specifically, to have structured training.

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Indeed, it is significant that TDA (2005: 7) now acknowledges that '*it is desirable to have more teachers following accredited programmes leading to Masters' degrees and higher*'. When considering the content of current Masters' level programmes many of them contain modules on mentoring, which in turn contain details of learning theories, and thus reflect the conclusions of an investigation by the DfES (2001) into the need for study support and its content. This reverses the movement away from teachers having no need for knowledge of theory apparently started by Circular 09/92 (DfES, 1992).

Looking to the attitudes of student teachers and mentors, and applying the principles of adult learning theory to them, in particular the need to know and the motivation to learn, I believe that mentor training needs to start from practice and to then lead to theoretical links. By such a process enhancement of mentor capabilities is easily possible through extended training which involves identifying good practice and potential barriers to that practice. Given my observations of mentor training within the Partnership studied this would be best provided through a combination of practical exercises involving role play and reflective development of good practice.

7.2 IMPLICATIONS

7.2.1 Implications of My Findings

Given the lack of research in teacher education (Lunenberg and Korthagen, 2003), in particular the '*knowledge base for teacher education*' and the view of Jones *et al.* (2004: 4) that there is little '*evidence of the codification of mentors' knowledge*' I believe that this research project has assisted in illuminating the knowledge mentors possess and their practice. Indeed the initial findings (Rice, 2007), as presented at the 2007 BERA conference,

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have already been peer reviewed and included on the Teacher Training Resource Bank [TTRB] and these findings have already being fed back into the teaching community.

This research may assist in the understanding of mentors' practice and the design of training for mentors and prospective mentors, both by HEI Partnerships and by providers of CPD training. In addition by making the use of adult learning theories a conscious part of mentors' knowledge their practice may be improved, as already acknowledged as being desirable by DfES (2001) in '*Study Support in Teacher Training and Professional Development.*'

7.2.2 Strengths and Limitations

When developing my research strategy I was conscious of being a single researcher with a finite period of time to conduct my research. As such this dictated my research design in many ways and constituted a limitation to my research. However, in recognising this limitation I focussed my research on a narrow but deep case study which would enable me to provide an answer to my research questions, albeit with limited generalisability.

Conversely conducting a narrow but deep case study has allowed my research to fully consider my research questions and inform further research in this area. Accordingly, the contribution of this research project to the body of knowledge has been to increase the understanding of mentors' knowledge and the strategies that they use when working with student teachers.

7.2.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Further research should be undertaken to investigate the source of the learning theories used by mentors, and whether they arise from mentors' personal constructs or are a

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function of the framework and instructional design provided by the HEI Partnership. In addition this research could be extended to cover other professions such as social work and nursing, where CPD is used in order to develop and improve professional practise and lifelong learning as seen as highly desirable.

A more extensive study, both within one institution and across a number of institutions, would allow the findings to be generalisable. In addition a large study, possibly longitudinal in nature and using qualitative and quantitative paradigms, would provide a dataset able to constitute an effective means for researching differences between mentors by age, by subject taught, and by experience as teachers and mentors. By carrying out such studies it may be possible to determine any developmental trends within this area.

Further studies may be worthwhile to see if there were any differences between the practices of mentors within HEI Partnerships working with student teachers undertaking a PGCE, as in this case study, and those following employment based Initial Teacher Training [EBITT] such as the Graduate Teaching Programme [GTP] or undertaking School Centred Initial Teacher Training [SCITT]. Such studies may also be of use in other areas, particularly those in the public sector such as nursing and social work which employ competence based frameworks for staff development and CPD.

7.2.4 Reflections

Having entered this investigation with no preconceived ideas as to whether mentors used learning theories, and adult learning theories in particular, it was satisfying to be able to come to a conclusion and answer the research questions posed. In addition it was pleasing to find interest in my area of research at various conferences, particularly the BERA annual

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conferences of 2006 and 2007. At a more practical level my research has enabled me to grow as a researcher and as an educator, this time of teachers and mentors.

It was also satisfying to find that since my research project started in October 2003 there have been a number of important developments in the field of mentoring, firstly that a national framework for mentoring and coaching has been published (DfES, 2005). In addition the relevance of knowledge of learning theories to mentors has been recognised by government, and training incorporating this content has started to be provided to teachers and mentors through the medium of Masters level programmes in HEIs. Finally, additional resources setting out best practice have been made available to practising mentors through the TTRB and TDA websites.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – TEMPLATE CONSENT LETTER

I confirm that I have been advised of the following:

- 1. The purpose and procedures of the research, and the potential benefits and costs of participating, e.g. the amount of my time involved, has been fully explained.
- 2. The full identity of the researcher, i.e. a PhD student at the School of Education of the University of Nottingham, had been made known to me.
- 3. That data collected will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be reported in anonymised form, but that the researcher will be forced to consider disclosure of certain information where there are strong grounds for believing that not doing so will result in harm to research participants or others, or the continuation of illegal activity.
- 4. Contact details of the researcher and those of her supervisor have been made available.
- 5. That I may freely withdraw from the project at any time without risk or prejudice.
- 6. That my views as a participant in the research will be respected.
- 7. Data generated by the research, e.g. transcripts of research interviews, will be kept in a safe and secure location and will be used purely for the purposes of the research project including dissemination of findings. No one outside of the researcher and her supervisor will have access to any of the data collected.
- 8. I will have the right of access to any data kept on me.
- 9. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the privacy and ensure the anonymity and non-traceability of participants, e.g. by the use of pseudonyms, for both individual and institutional participants, in any written reports of the research and other forms of dissemination.
- 10. Where possible I will be provided with a summary of research findings and an opportunity for debriefing after taking part in the research.

I hereby give my consent to participating in the research, and for Rosalind Rice to hold and use personal information obtained from this research project.

Name: (Signed)
.....(Capitals) Date: 2006

School:.....

Note: One copy to be retained by participant and one copy by researcher

APPENDIX 2 – TEMPLATE PERMISSION LETTER

The University of Nottingham

School of Education
The Dearing Building
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham
NG8 1BB

[Insert Date].

The Headteacher
*** School

Dear ***,

I am currently carrying out a research project at the University of Nottingham as part of a PhD, which is looking at the pedagogical strategies of mentor teachers. As part of my data collection for this project I am interviewing mentors. I have spoken to *****, who has kindly agreed to take part in my research project which will involve two interviews to be arranged at a mutually convenient time and negotiated in a way that seeks to minimise disruption to schedules. Accordingly, I am writing to confirm that this is acceptable to you.

I would be happy to provide you with a copy of my current University of Nottingham School of Education Statement of Research Ethics disclosure document should you so wish. In addition my supervisor is Dr Peter Gates and he can be contacted on 0115 951 5151.

I will be operating within the University of Nottingham's Code of Conduct for research and any interview information will remain confidential and the identities of all participants will be anonymised at all times.

Yours sincerely,

Rosalind Rice
Doctoral Research Student

APPENDIX 3 – SCHEDULE FOR INTERVIEW HEAD OF PGCE COURSE

1. Training of Mentors- What training takes place? Does it include a run through of Partnership requirements and assessment criteria?
2. Selections of Mentors - Are there experience/age requirements?
3. What are your perceptions of what mentors do?
4. Matching of mentors with mentees?
5. Is this course typical of most HEI partnerships?
6. Do you perceive that student teachers here at the HEI are treated as '*fellow adults*' and colleagues or as less in-experienced trainees?
7. What is the age-range of the Student Teacher intake here at the HEI?
8. When looking at the mentor/mentee relationship does this vary as the relationship develops and the student teacher gains experience?

APPENDIX 4 – MENTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE No. 1

1. Strategies Employed

1.1. What strategies do you employ? Why do you use them and what are your objectives?

(Mentor to be provided with a printed copy of list to refer to)

- Referring to theory.
- Feedback and discussion (reflection).
- Self-evaluation by students.
- Collaborative practices.
- Challenging students.
- Team teaching.
- Setting demanding tasks.
- Observing me/other experienced teachers.
- Setting problem solving tasks.
- Modelling good practice

1.2. How much variability is there in your strategies?

1.3. What role does the assessment criteria set by the Partnership have on your choice of strategies?

1.4. Do you provide a scheme of mentoring individual to each student teacher? If not, what are your thoughts about this?

2. Influences on Mentors' Pedagogic Strategies

- 2.1. Do you rely on your professional practice as a teacher? In what ways?
- 2.2. Can you tell me about any mentor training that you have had?
- 2.3. How much help and support have you had from colleagues in your school? Could you describe it for me and give me some examples?
- 2.4. Has CPD or Inset Training helped you develop your teaching strategies?
- 2.5. Does your school provide any time for mentoring beyond the weekly mentor meetings whilst mentoring a Student Teacher?
- 2.6. Do you hold any roles or responsibilities outside school that might influence your professional practice as a teacher?
- 2.7. Has your experience as a student teacher affected your mentoring?
- 2.8. What other sources or influences have affected your mentoring strategies?
- 2.9. Have you developed your own theories through your teaching experience? If so how important are they to you?
- 2.10. Does the meeting of external standards and the assessment requirement for mentoring student teachers influence your strategies?
- 2.11. Do you have time to do all the things required by the ITT Partnership handbook?
- 2.12. Do you have to prioritise what you do with the student teachers'?
- 2.13. Do you consider you have adequate knowledge, skills and understanding to fulfil your role as a mentor?
- 2.14. Do you believe that mentoring strategies vary according to different subject areas?

APPENDIX 5 – MENTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE No. 2

1. The Role of the Mentor

1.1 What is mentoring in ITT? Just look at the list below and from your experience if you were to describe mentoring in these terms where would it sit?

Instructing

Coaching

Developmental

Role modelling

Assessing

Other

1.2 Could you describe what you actually do as a mentor?

1.3 Does the current system of mentoring draw on all your professional skill? To what extent?

1.4 Do you think a good teacher would automatically make a good mentor? In what ways?

1.5 To what extent is mentoring student teachers similar or different to teaching pupils?

1.6 How has your training and/or experience prepared you to work with adults?

2. Views on learning by Student Teachers

2.1 The learners need to know

Although the Partnership handbook prescribes the learning content for student teachers, do you share the choice of the strategies being used with the student teacher or do you set them?

2.2 Self-directed learning

- a. Are student teachers capable of directing their own learning, and if so to what extent?
- b. Are they capable of taking control of the goals of their learning and ownership of it?

2.3 Prior experiences of the learner

What are the similarities and differences in the ways in which student teachers and senior pupils learn?

2.4 Readiness to learn

Does the pattern to mentoring change during the period the student teacher is in school?

2.5 Orientation to learning and problem solving

To what extent do you think being in school enhances student teachers' capacity to learn?

2.6 Motivation to learn

How well are student teachers motivated to learn the new material presented to them in school? Does it depend on an issue being important to their teaching?

APPENDIX 6 – TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

The following transcripts are included on the attached CD.

A6.1 Interview with head of PGCE Course at HEI Partnership

A6.2 Interview Schedule No. 1

A6.3 Interview Schedule No. 2