MASTER TEACHER EXPERIENCES OF MENTORING TEACHERS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my own work and has not been previously submitted for any degree in any other university.

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As a supervisor I agree that this dissertation is submitted with/without my approval.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the experiences of the master teacher in mentoring teachers. Education officials have acknowledged that capacity and skill gaps are impeding progress in education, especially at schools. Within the school context many teachers are either under-qualified or poorly qualified for their job description and this to a large extent has contributed to the schools being dysfunctional. Therefore a well-structured mentorship programme is integral in upgrading education. Within the new occupation specific dispensation (OSD) for educators in the public sector, the category of master teacher has been created to fulfill their roles as mentors in schools.

The purpose of the study therefore attempts to critically examine and explore the experiences of the master teacher in a mentoring role. The rationale for choosing the study (**"Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers"**) is that I am presently a master teacher at Stanger South Secondary, a school 75 kilometres north of Durban, in the KwaDukuza area of KwaZulu-Natal. However the mentoring role by the master teacher, which has been in existence at schools for over two years, is in some cases non-existent or done in a very fragmented way. The phenomenon of the master teacher as a mentor is relatively new in the context of South African education. Hence very little or no research has be done in this domain. Moreover, most of the literature on mentoring focuses on the plethora of definitions of mentoring, the role of the mentor and the experiences of beginning teachers in the induction programmes at schools and very little research on experiences of mentors, especially within the context of education in South Africa. A qualitative methodology was used using the phenomenological approach. The study employed a purposive sampling technique, choosing 3 respondents from 3 different public schools in the Ilembe district of KwaDukuza area (viz. Cranbrook Secondary, Greyridge Secondary and Doesberg Secondary), who are each subjected to a semi-structured interview.

The analysis of the data revealed that three master teacher mentors embraced the discourses of collaboration, collegiality and critical dialogue in their mentoring relationship with their

mentees, which forms an important part of the radical humanistic approach to mentoring, which is a shift from the rigid functionalist approach to mentoring that emphasizes conformity and maintaining the status quo.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

The popularity of mentorship as a strategy for professional development, has recently become part of the vocabulary of most organizations, and is a particularly appropriate strategy in the South African management context, given the country's bitter legacy around education management, which is characterized by hierarchal, authoritarian and non-participatory approach (Waghid & Louw, 2008). Waghid & Louw (2008) also argue that as a strategy for professional development, mentoring is a desirable and beneficial process rewarding the participants and the organization as well. The different experiences of the role of the mentor, the conversational experiences of the mentor and mentee and the induction experiences of novice teachers are integral aspects of mentoring. Collectively these contribute to the professional enhancement of an organization and its participants. In pursuit of achieving these goals, the recent initiative by Department of Education on career pathing has resulted in the creation of what is termed as senior and master teachers (level 1 teachers) who are meant to fulfill these roles. They become an integral part of providing continuous professional development to staff, which is a part of their contribution at this level as they fulfill their mentoring role (Education Labour Relations Council, 2008; Department of Education, 2006).

Traditionally, progression within the teaching career has been conceptualised as being promoted into the position of head of department, deputy principal or principal (ELRC, 2008). However, the career track of "Teaching & Learning" introduces an alternative path for teachers interested in enhancing the quality of educational services offered within the classroom context through drawing on their expertise in a particular subject or learning area, a particular classroom methodology (learning, teaching and assessment practices), or a particular school phase of educational development (ELRC, 2008) – hence the creation of the category of senior and master teachers. The latter have specific duties and roles in mentoring colleagues around professional development related to teaching and learning issues, and are expected to foster a critical engagement with the

lived experiences within a particular school. Mentoring at this stage should attempt to develop a more deep reflection on the goals, orientation, values and practices within a particular school (ELRC, 2008). The novice teacher (mentee) should be encouraged to draw on his or her own initial teacher education and engage in critical comparison with the everyday world of schooling, with the mentor teacher encouraging the sharing of various aspects of the present school context to be interrogated: for example, the assessment processes, assigning of duties and responsibilities, school policies on admission of learners, HIV/AIDS policy etc. (ELRC, 2008). The mentor teacher should also be confident enough to challenge the novice teacher, whilst at the same time receptive to potentially different ideas, values and beliefs as presented by the novice teacher (ELRC, 2008).

The intensity and direction of the mentorship should develop according to the progression of the teacher along the career of teaching. Mentorship could therefore be said to continue as a parallel feature of all further development of the professional teacher (Department of Education, 2006). It should be supportive of the concept of life-long learning, where experiential learning is given the same status as formal education.

This study on mentoring experiences of master teachers is important in that it offers an opportunity towards contributing a professional dialogue amongst a community of practitioners with the aim of enhancing the quality of professional judgement (ELRC 2008; Department of Education, 2006) through shared reflection of, in and for practice. The study could also provide insight into the dynamics of mentoring in the school context, especially with regard to the professional challenges experienced by the mentors and mentees. Mentorship constitutes a key professional leverage for facilitating professional development of teachers at different stages of their professional career (Department of Education, 2006). Understanding the experiences of master teachers in a mentoring role would also contribute in promoting Continuing Professional Teacher Development (Department of Education, 2006) within the school context.

The Teaching and Learning Career Path allows teachers to share their own experiences in designing appropriate quality interventions to activate classroom practice, develop learning programmes and teacher and learner support materials (ELRC, 2008). Such sharing of expertise between the master teacher mentors and mentees is a powerful means of peer-driven professional development (ELRC; Department of Education, 2006). Whilst this form of collegial support has been present in schools for a while, career pathing initiative by the Department of Education recognises this role – hence the creation of master and senior teachers. (ELRC, 2008).

This chapter presents a background for the study, the purpose of study, a summary of the body of scholarship and theoretical framework and a brief motivation for the choice of methodology used in the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Efficient human resource management is paramount in the provision of high quality educational experiences – to ensure quality, commitment and performance in respect of people who work at schools (Dayaram, 2002). In most South African government departments the buzzwords are capacity building. There is also recognition by education officials that capacity and skills gaps are hindering progress in education, especially at school level (Department of Public Service & Administration, 2006). Therefore a well-structured mentorship programme is of paramount importance in upgrading education. Within the new occupation specific dispensation (OSD) for public educators in public education, there is strong emphasis on master teachers fulfilling their role as mentors in their school (ELRC, 2008).

Inspite of the OSD identifying the mentoring role of master teachers, there appears to be no blueprint relating to the critical processes of induction (managing to give people the best possible start) and mentoring (giving the best kind of support). Although mentoring is done in a fragmented manner in most schools, some form of mentoring is taking place in our schools. The experiences of master teachers in their mentoring role is my area of

concern hence the topic of the study: **Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers.**

1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of my study is to explore the master teacher experiences in mentoring teachers. "To explore" suggests that the research undertaken may be qualitative in nature (Vithal & Jansen, 2006). Hence my study will employ a qualitative methodology, using semi-structured interviews to collect data.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to focus and refine the statement of purpose, it is necessary to identify the research or critical questions for the study. The research question identified in the study on mentoring is as follows: *What are the experiences of master teachers in mentoring teachers?* The body of scholarship and theoretical framework illuminates the experiences of mentors in the mentoring process.

1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.5.1 PERSONAL REASONS FOR THE STUDY

This study will advance my knowledge on mentoring by providing me with in-depth understanding of mentoring and mentorship within a theoretical discourse as well as to provide me with insights on my role and responsibility as Master Teacher within the context of professional development.

1.5.2 CONTEXTUAL REASONS

In light of the decline in the quality of education in the country, despite the significant increase, since democracy, in the size of the educational budget, questions must be asked

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as to why educational outcomes are not as envisaged. A part of the problem lies in the quality of educators, which in turn is dependent upon their experience and knowledge. The intervention of mentoring is a way to bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical, and provide much needed support to new incumbents, thus helping to make them more effective when they execute their duties with learners. In light of this, this study seeks to probe this relationship to see if this takes place. Structures and policies on mentoring are in place within the school system and therefore this study will contribute to the greater understanding of how these policies and structures are implemented, experienced and promoted. The study could, therefore, enhance the understanding by the school management team of the role mentors play, in both enhancing the professional lives of educators and contribute to national policy by proposing how the system can be improved.

1.5.3 GAPS IN THE CURRENT LITERATURE

The phenomenon of the master teacher as a mentor is relatively new in the context of South African education. Hence very little or no research has be done in this domain. Moreover, most of the literature on mentoring focuses on the plethora of definitions of mentoring, the role of the mentor and the experiences of beginning teachers in the induction programmes at schools and very little research on experiences of mentors, especially within the context of education in South Africa. This study will contribute greatly to the body of scholarship.

1.6 BODY OF SCHOLARSHIP AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A brief discussion on the body of scholarship (literature) and theoretical framework is necessary at this stage of the discussion as both these aspects of the study have important implications for the methodological orientation of the study and the analysis of the data (Mouton, 2001). Integrating the analysis of data with the body of scholarship and theoretical framework are necessary for a coherent study. Choice of methods and

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methodology are also strongly influenced by the theoretical framework. Both the body of scholarship and theoretical framework of the study will be briefly examined.

The master teacher in a mentoring role is actually a post level 1 educator, who possesses a four year diploma/degree and must have achieved 3 "good" performances in terms of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and who provides classroom instruction inclusive of academic and administrative duties and is one who also facilitates extramural activities at school (ELRC, 2008). The mentoring experiences of mentors are manifested in the various roles that mentors perform, the processes and manner in which novice teachers are inducted in school, and the mentoring conversations between mentor and mentee.

Numerous roles played by mentor teachers have been identified in the literature. In the study by Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005), overwhelming attention is given to the mentoring role as a provider of feedback, which represents an emphasis on the provision of pragmatic and craft-oriented advice to develop the pedagogical skills required of novice teachers, while the other roles such as critical friend, counsellor, equal partner etc. appear to be peripheral to most mentors.

In terms of the mentor's induction experience the support provided to beginning teachers at this time is critical to the quality of their professional growth as well as long-term professional learning – hence mentoring in education is viewed by many as one such form of professional support enhancing the professional growth of teachers (Carter & Francis, 2001).

Timperley's (2001) argument about conversational experiences between mentor and mentee are valid when he contends that a constant 'zig-zag' of action and discussion with someone more expert helps the workplace learning of novice teachers. It must be noted that the issues that were highlighted from the body of scholarship, such as collaborative endeavours between mentor and mentee, dialogue and conversations between mentor and

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mentee, critical friend, equal partner are also issues that are emphasised in the theoretical framework.

It is important to understand that any theoretical framework is informed by a particular paradigm (Popkewitz, 1984). Therefore any theoretical knowledge that is generated will be consistent with the view of "reality" that the paradigm endorses (Popkewitz, 1984). The paradigm employed in this study is an interpretive paradigm, which is based upon understanding relations between individuals in a social context, is of relevance in my study whereby relationships between the mentor and mentee are examined.

Waghid and Louw (2008) claim that existing mentorship models are based on the functionalist approach to professional development – an approach which advances the concept of professional development, maintaining the status quo and viewing learning as the transfer of knowledge to the protégés but an approach very vulnerable to criticism (Waghid & Louw, 2008). This study ("Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers") will use the radical humanistic perspective (Waghid & Louw, 2008) to understand the term mentorship. The radical humanistic perspective which is a paradigm shift from the traditional functionalist approach to mentorship is based on Paulo Freire's ideas of the culture of silence, rejection of the banking concept of education, problematising the status quo, dialogical learning between the learner and teacher, a shift from authoritarian power relations which entrenches the status quo, domination and oppression (Waghid & Louw, 2008). Mentorship within a radical humanistic perspective emphasises the need for a critical co-learner and critical dialogue between mentor and mentee, provides a critical analysis of power relations and illuminates issues of social justice (Waghid & Louw, 2008).

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

With regard to my study ("Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers"), a qualitative methodology is employed using a **phenomenological approach** to understand the phenomenon of mentoring and in particular the master teacher experiences as a

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mentor, which is a new phenomenon in South Africa. The phenomenological study of master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers is informed by the interpretive paradigm which is based upon understanding relations between individuals in a social context (Popkewitz, 1984). This approach is deemed appropriate for this study, given the subject area and the need to capture lived experiences of the subjects, which are critical to the assessment.

A **purposive sampling strategy**, which is characteristic of qualitative research, is used. The sample size is three – each subject from three different schools of the KwaDukuza area (Ilembe district) namely: Cranbrook Secondary; Doesberg Secondary; Greyridge Secondary.

A **data collection plan** which sets out parameters for the critical question ("What are the experiences of the master teacher in mentoring teachers?") is an important aspect of the study. Decisions about what data to collect from whom, how often etc. are an integral part of the data collection plan.

Semi-structured interviews are used to collect the data from the 3 subjects. The semi-structured interviews provide an opportunity for in-depth probing, elaboration and clarification of items and eliminates the possibility of non-response which may happen in the case of questionnaires (Vithal & Jansen, 2006). Interviews also facilitate responses to opinions, attitudes and perceptions which are integral to the study.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Although the OSD identifies the mentoring role of the master teacher (ELRC, 2008), South African schools are not guided by any formal prescription or resolution and that there are no official guidelines against which to judge the effectiveness of the school's mentoring or induction programme.

While literature exists on mentoring in education abroad, there is unfortunately very little literature within the South African context. This is probably attributed to the fact that mentoring in education is a relatively new concept in South Africa. This study seeks to address this by providing a grounded assessment of the relationship, which will then indicate how it works in the South African context, and also point to areas that need attention.

Another limitation of the study, is that the emphasis of the research was focussed on the mentor's experiences, while the voice of the mentee was ignored. Finding out how mentees experienced their roles in the mentor-mentee relationship would have added great value to the entire study. Corroborating findings from the interview by using an open-ended questionnaire (triangulation) (Gay, 1987) would have added greatly to the coherence of the study.

The study is also confined to 3 schools in the KwaDukuza area (Ilembe district) and no attempt is made to compare the mentoring to other schools in the same area or rest of the province. Choosing a sample size of 3 has limited generalisability. However, given the similarity of context and subject, this should still provide valid data for extrapolation.

The study focussed on the exploring the phenomena of mentoring and in particular the master teacher experiences is his or her role as a mentor – hence the choice of using a phenomenological approach. This study was not intended to establish trends and therefore representativity was not an area of concern.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF STUDY

The study is made up of five (5) chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the study and gives an overview of what is to follow.

Chapter 2 examines the theoretical framework and scholarly body of knowledge. It emphasises the boundaries of the literature review and the theoretical framework. It begins with a definition of 'master teacher' followed by a plethora of definitions of mentoring. It proceeds to explain the role of the mentor. Thereafter the mentorship programmes and the induction of novice teachers are critically analysed. The literature review concludes by examining the conversations between mentor and mentee. Chapter 2 concludes with the theoretical framework and a critical look at the radical humanistic perspective to mentorship (Waghid & Louw, 2008) which is a paradigm shift from the traditional functionalist approach to mentoring.

Chapter 3 provides an explanation of the methodology used to gather data for the study. It describes the population and sampling process and the semi-structured interviews as measuring instruments and also provides discussion on method of analysing the data.

Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation and analysis of data. This chapter is informed by the scholarly body of knowledge and theoretical framework. It is hoped that the findings from the study have some synergy with the theoretical framework and the literature that has been reviewed.

Chapter 5 focuses on the extension of the data analysis within the context of the literature on mentoring and theorizes about mentoring and experiences of the master teacher mentor. The chapter also concludes with a brief summary of the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the entire study. It also highlighted the main idea of the thesis and pointed out its relevance. The theoretical framework, scholarly body of knowledge and research design were briefly examined. These aspects will be dealt in more detail in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER TWO:LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter, apart from critically examining the theoretical framework, is to provide a literature review on the subject of mentoring, in order to frame this study. By elaborating upon the key concepts and arguments on mentoring, the basis for the subsequent analysis is laid. In analysing the literature present, a clear picture emerges regarding the experiences of mentors in their roles of mentoring student teachers, how mentorship programmes at schools contribute to the induction experiences of novice teachers, how conversational experiences between mentor and mentee influences student teacher learning. An attempt will be made to critically examine these issues and how it impacts on mentoring in education. Further, as there are varying interpretations and meanings of mentoring, a literature review on the definition of the concept mentoring and master teacher will be provided. An attempt will also be made to provide a critical analysis of other research trends and dynamics in mentoring.

Mentoring and mentorship appears to be concepts and processes that are prevalent in most organisations where workplace learning is a crucial component for efficiency, growth and development. Hence it is applicable across worksites. The most obvious interpretation of mentoring and mentorship appears to be a one-way relationship between an experienced and informed individual and a novice. However, the current literature suggests an increasing destabilisation of this notion of mentoring and mentorship. This destabilisation will be explored in greater depth in this chapter.

The chapter concludes with an exploration of theoretical frameworks that inform the field of mentoring and mentorship with a view to providing a lens through which the research data production and analysis will unfold, enabling deep insights on mentoring by master teachers within the South African school context.

2.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

There is a need for operational definitions to inform the study, and these are presented below.

A definition or description of the terms viz. master teacher and mentoring, is essential at this stage of the discussion as it will contextualise the focus of this study. The term **master teacher** in the South African school context, is actually a post level 1 educator, providing class teaching, inclusive of academic, administrative, educational and disciplinary aspects and facilitates extra and co-curricular activities and to mentor and give guidance to inexperienced educators (ELRC, 2008). As a consequence of grade progression along the career track, the master teacher would have sufficient years of experience of teaching in a school. In terms of the educational qualification, a master teacher must possess a basic four year diploma/degree in education or equivalent qualification that allows for registration with the South African Council for Educators (SACE). To become a master teacher a teacher must have 3 "good" performances in terms of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) (ELRC, 2008).

Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) describe **mentoring** within teacher education as a journey and a process of collaborative work. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) also add that mentoring is both a relationship and a process involving two parties, the mentor and mentee (or protégé or student teacher) – with the mentor who is normally the experienced teacher who takes up the responsibility of looking after the mentee when he/she does internship in a school. However, a criticism of this approach is the suggestion that the relationship between mentor and mentee is 'one way' relationship where the mentee learns from the mentor, due to their inexperience The problem with the protégé concept, is that it implicitly assumes a superiority and expertise resides in the mentor. This is often untested, as chronological experience does not necessarily tantamount into expertise. Often such a situation can simply result in the reproduction of conventional behaviours and result in conformity with the status quo, but without challenging the status quo which may in the fist instance be the problem Mentoring can also be 'planned' or 'natural' –

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whereby natural mentoring occurs in an environment of friendship, collegiality, coaching and counselling while planned mentoring occurs through structured programmes in which mentors and participants are selected and matched with a purpose and intention through formal processes (Kwan & Real-Lopez, 2005).

Megginson & Clutterbuck (cited in Dayaram, 2002) on the other hand, suggests that mentoring appears to be of value to people at all ages and walks of life, from young to the old. For someone starting a new job, the support of someone more experienced is invaluable. Mentoring can also be useful at all levels, for novice educators as well as educators newly appointed to a promotion post (Dayaram, 2002). Coleman (cited in Dayaram, 2002), remark that mentoring is not restricted to new entrants into the profession but it is increasingly being recognised as being of benefit to mature adults who are entering a new chapter of their life or a new job, particularly where promotion and increased responsibilities are concerned. Hence mentoring is an integral aspect of continuous professional development. This definition allows for the all important life-long learning notion, and moves away from the concept that the new are the only ones that must be inducted. In a dynamic environment, it is essential that both new and existing teachers are subject to mentoring.

Hobson (2002) argue that in the context of modern-day initial teacher training (ITT) mentoring is defined as assisting student-teachers to learn how to teach in school-based settings, whereby mentoring is undertaken not merely by teachers holding the title 'mentor' or 'teacher-tutor' but also by other teachers whose advice and support may be sought or whose teaching and interactions with pupils may be witnessed by student teachers or trainees.

The Department of Public Service & Administration (2006) define mentoring as a process of deploying experienced people to provide guidance and sound advice that will help to develop and improve the careers of mentees allocated to them. They elaborate by saying that mentoring involves the development of a relationship between a seasoned and wise person – the mentor – who supports a less experienced person to achieve personal

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growth so that he/she can achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness and productivity within an organisation (DPSA, 2006). This definition cuts across occupations, and central to its definition is the question of providing guidance and sound advice, with the purpose of helping career pathing.

It is quite clear from the discussion that there no consensus on the definition of mentoring, given that it is defined differently depending on the context. It thus appears that the mentoring is a relative term and that the context of a situation shapes how mentoring is defined. In most definitions of mentoring, the role of the mentor is alluded to. The discussion to follow will reflect critically on the various roles of the mentor.

2.3 THE ROLE OF MENTORS

Mentoring may be seen as a process that helps novice or beginning teachers become professional teachers (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). In order to realize the latter, numerous roles played by mentor teachers have been identified in the literature. In this context an analysis of the research done by Kwan and Lopez- Real (2005) and Jones (2001) will be illuminated. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) study focussed on a study of a school-university partnership scheme on mentoring within the Unified Professional Development Project (UPDP) at the Hong Kong University while Jones (2001) focussed on a cross-cultural study of mentors' perceptions of their roles in England and Germany.

In the study by Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005), overwhelming attention is given to the mentoring role as a provider of feedback – which represents an emphasis on the provision of pragmatic and craft-oriented advice to develop the pedagogical skills required of novice teachers. The other roles such as critical friend, counsellor, equal partner etc. appear to be peripheral to most mentors (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). In the study by Jones (2001), her cross-cultural study of German and English mentors also reveals the different roles played by mentors and how it influences the development of beginning teachers.

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In Germany, the idea of preparing professionals is central to the training process of novice teachers and is described as "preparatory service for teaching" – here the philosophy underpinning this model is centred on the concept of developing reflective professionals rather than training in a technical sense (as compared to the provider of feedback in Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) study) which provides a framework for a relationship based on mutual trust and respect that bind the mentor and mentee together (Jones, 2001). In England, the role of the mentor is more diverse and is located within different conceptual paradigms which are reflected in 3 models of mentoring viz: apprenticeship model (mentor acts as the master teacher to be emulated), competence model (mentor relates training and assessment to pre-determined standards of practice) and reflective model (mentor adopts the role of the critical friend who assists in the evaluation of teaching) (Jones, 2001).

Influenced by structural and cultural factors of the respective settings, mentors perceive the various aspects of their roles differently, but also show convergence in some of their interpretations (Jones, 2001). A high level of agreement is reflected in their perception of their main role as the trainees's advisor, whereas divergent views emerge in relation to their responsibilities as assessor, trainer, partner etc.

The research by Jones (2001) views mentoring as a democratic culture of collaboration and mutual trust enhancing the professional development of both the mentor and mentee. However, in the research by Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) mentoring is largely a one-way process and not a negotiated relationship. The trend is to move from the experienced to the non-experienced.

Orland-Barak and Yinon (2005) argue that mentor's roles both at pre-service and in-service levels, range from modelling and instructing to information sources, co-thinkers and inquirers, evaluators, supervisors and learning companions. Orland-Barak and Yinon (2005) add that mentors' reasoning and behaviour fluctuates between a novice and an expert, depending upon the nature of the situation and the type of mentor-mentee interaction that the mentor is confronted with. In their reasoning, the 'expert mentor' are

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opportunistic and flexible, sensitive to task demands and to the social situations surrounding them while solving problems, representing problems in qualitatively rich and deep ways (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005). Experts are also flexible and autonomous in changing representations fast when it is appropriate to do so; they are not rigid in their conceptions and are not confused and misled by ambiguity and are challenged to reinterpret and reorganise their thinking when they experience dissonance (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005).

By contrast, 'novice mentors' reasoning is characterised by rigidity, by their need to adopt a single, homogenous perspective on a problem, by a need to be accountable to authorities, a lack of sensitivity to how different contexts call for different kinds of solution and can easily be misled and blocked by the experience of dissonance brought about by new and unfamiliar situations (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005). Such rigidity and an inability of the mentor to respond to multifaceted situations can lead to a potentially dysfunctional mentoring relationship (Scandura, 1998). This is clearly manifested in ineffective mentoring processes which may impede the succession planning process when a protégé or mentee is not properly coached into his her next position (Scandura, 1995). Scandura (1998) adds that mentoring relationships run into trouble when the interests of the parties change, differences in judgement exist between the mentor and mentee, or mentors and protégés have undue involvement in each others personal problems.

The above roles suggest that context influences how mentors work. In the same manner, the South African educational context is to a large extent marked by a situation of high pressure upon educators in schools and thus limited time to support. It is also a context where resources are often lacking, there is ill-discipline, and unlike the contexts of countries cited above, traditional mentoring may be regarded as a marginal activity, at times an irritation which needs to be complied with. Within this context, this study questions how mentoring works, and seeks to identify context specific recommendations to enhance the practice.

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2.4 MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES AND THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE TEACHERS

When a novice teacher begins work at school, he or she is usually expected to exhibit performances and take on responsibilities as veteran colleagues and is often disadvantaged by being allocated the least desirable and most difficult teaching assignments (Carter & Francis, 2001). At the same time the beginning teacher is expected to understand the way the school functions in terms of rules, ways of behaving and established relationships that give a particular school its unique character (Carter & Francis, 2001). Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also add that novice teachers assume responsibilities similar to those of experienced teachers while learning their job with limited experience and preparation resulting in attending to classroom management and procedures instead of learning how to teach well and improve student learning. Novice teachers are encouraged to contextualize their subject and pedagogical preparation and concomitantly be members of a school community and adjust to its organisation and culture (Wang, Odell & Schwille, 2008). Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also claim that while the focus of many induction programmes is that of helping novices adjust to the cultures of their schools, simply adjusting to the existing context does not automatically lead one to be an effective teacher. There is thus much expected of a novice teacher, and it is thus prudent to allocate him/her to a mentor, to rapidly assist them to get oriented to the job.

Starting to teach resembles a process of transition which is often described as 'reality shock' for beginning teachers (Carter & Francis, 2001). The support provided to beginning teachers at this time is critical to the quality of their professional growth as well as long-term professional learning – hence mentoring in education is viewed by many as one such form of professional support enhancing the professional growth of teachers (Carter & Francis, 2001). Dayaram (2002) also recognize the importance of professional support during the induction phase, by arguing that a mentor is valuable to a newly qualified teacher (NQT) in the induction process by providing classroom support,

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being a classroom analyst and a collaborative planner (where the mentor and NQT have joint curriculum planning sessions) (Dayaram, 2002).

Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also reflect on mentoring in the induction phase having a growth-producing experience such as co-thinking with beginning teachers about teaching, instead of being an expert who imposes ideas; focussing beginning teachers on basic instructional issues that they may not have recognized, such as how children think, and connections between theory and practice; helping novice teachers frame their self-identified teaching problems and articulate reasons for them; and modelling teaching that demonstrates principles of good teaching. Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) argue that these mentoring conceptions and skills are crucial in effecting beginning teachers' teaching and that learning to teach is an enquiry process contextualised in beginning teachers' practice that needs to be assisted by an experienced other.

Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also claim that beliefs about children's thinking was important to developing effective teaching and affirmed that mentors should help novices focus their attention on children's thinking – mentor's skills included analyzing and assessing students by using rhetorical questions, follow-up probes, and suggestions as a co-thinker during conversations.

Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also view induction and its components not as isolated structures but as part of a teacher development continuum, whose processes and results are influenced by what and how beginning teachers learn in their initial teacher preparation e.g. collaborative norms and dispositions that beginning teachers develop in their pre-service teacher programmes contribute to their learning to teach in the induction period. Moreover, teacher induction will not be effective in supporting novice teachers' learning without building their knowledge of effective teaching – hence pedagogical content knowledge is a crucial part of teachers' knowledge that helps teachers learn to teach. The views of Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) clearly indicate the importance of induction in improving teacher effectiveness and mentoring thus becomes a vital part of assisting in this process.

The research by Stanulis and Flodin (2009) whose focus is on capacitating novice teachers through intensive mentoring is worth noting as they reflect on teaching in high-poverty districts where turnover is the highest resulting in quality of school cohesion and performance being negatively affected when teachers leave. This is also very characteristic of the context of majority of schools in South Africa. Stanulis and Flodin (2009) argue that creating a quality induction programme can make a tremendous difference in teacher satisfaction, growth, retention and impact on students. Comprehensive induction programmes are a way to accelerate this process and minimize the amount of time it takes for a beginning teacher to be most effective in promoting student learning and strong induction programmes that provide opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision making and that have strong administrative support along with support to develop strong classroom management can help teachers in the profession (Stanulis & Flodin, 2009). Such programmes support organizational and instructional conditions and combat high attrition rates help novices develop as high quality teachers early in their career (Stanulis & Flodin, 2009).

Stanulis and Flodin (2009) have identified three components of induction: teaching of worthwhile content, excellent classroom management that engages students and strong motivation and scaffolding of student learning compose the basis of the vision of teaching that is the intended outcome of the mentoring in the induction programme. Within the induction programme with intensive mentoring, preparation of mentors focussed on helping novices enhance student achievement through development of effective balanced instructional practices and such 'educative' mentoring places emphasis on engaging novice teachers in joint enquiry with a mentor to help novices understand the importance of learning from practice while providing tools useful for studying teaching, including observation, feedback and analysis of student work (Stanilus & Flodin, 2009). This guidance goes beyond instructional tips to place the mentor in a teaching role to build on knowledge and experiences gained at university or college. It involves careful preparation and support during which time mentors learn to have instructional conversations with novices that include understanding their subject matter (Stanilus &

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Flodin, 2009). This helps to bridge the gap between the theoretical base that mentee has and the experiential base that mentors need to transmit. The preparatory period is thus critical for orientation purposes, and to ensure that there is an alignment between the aspirations and requirements of the two parties in this relationship.

Carter and Francis (2001) also argue that mentoring as a process mitigate against teacher isolation, promoting an educative workplace which leads to understanding of consensual norms in a school. This allows for a process of dialogic learning, between the mentor and mentee – learning should not be one way but negotiated between the mentor and mentee. Through the latter, mentors also have the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching, knowledge, beliefs and practices that widen their professional knowledge (Carter & Francis, 2001). In the South African scenario the problem of isolation can be pronounced, with inexperienced teachers often having to work at high levels without requisite support. Unless there is proper induction, teachers can become frustrated as they may feel unsupported. Learners also tend to deal with new teachers with less patience and respect than the more seasoned ones.

The provision of effective induction support by mentors, together with the provision of training and development for mentors, is related to the issues of leadership development, school development and the fostering of school environments that value teacher enquiry and learning (Carter & Francis, 2001). Workplace learning restricted to simple hierarchical apprenticeship serves only to replicate the past and entrench the conservatism and conformism that is characteristic in many schools (Carter & Francis, 2001). Therefore mentoring relationships that promote collaborative inquiry, co-operative practice and reflection are paramount to workplace learning for novice teachers that moves beyond the transmission of the past and existing practice. Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also suggest that novice teachers in a collaborative school environment reported that their mentors made greater impacts on their professional development as compared to those reported in an individualistic school culture that the influence of mentors on beginning teaching was limited because the relationships were not supported in the school culture.

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Having made arguments as to why mentoring is important, the discussion now probes the actual interaction, by examining the issue of conversations and dialogue.

2.5 CONVERSATIONS BETWEEEN MENTOR AND MENTEE

Conversations between mentors and the novice teacher are crucial in developing the novice teachers'cognitions that underlies their personal knowledge and performance (Timperley, 2001). Timperley's (2001) study on mentoring conversations is worth noting as he claims that mentoring conversations should involve both the mentor and mentee in setting the agenda (on what issues to raise) and in the stage of disclosing and evaluating observations mentors summarise their evaluations and ask the novice teacher for their critical reactions and once agreement on certain issues are reached then the next stage of diagnosing difficulties and working out a strategy for doing something different, is executed.

The constant 'zigzag' of action and discussion with someone more expert about that action helps the workplace learning of novice teachers (Timperley, 2001). This collaborative environment that is created between the mentor and mentee is also supported by McNally and Martin (1998), who argue that collaborative mentors combines support and challenge in ways which empower their novice teachers to engage in learning to teach as a critically reflective process – and in this collaborative atmosphere mentors see their main task as one of being able to tune in to the individual needs of the novice teachers in a way that recognises them as future colleagues, yet also to extend their experiences and their thinking about teaching and learning.

Timperley (2001) also contends that conversations between mentors and student teachers done in a collaborative way help to improve the quality of the actual conversations. This means that there is a greater opportunity for professional learning of student teachers to take place. It is important that the conversations are done in a context of respect, and not instructional. If the mentee feels intimidated by the mentor, which can happen given the

age difference, it will not be a conducive learning experience. In fact the question of collaboration and participation are essential features of democracy, and there is greater sensitivity to these issues in SA, given the dictatorial past that the country is trying to move away from. However, the relationships have potential problems as noted below.

Smith's (2007) research on challenges faced by a cooperating teacher (mentor) and student teacher during their collaborative planning sessions is worth noting. Smith (2007) contends that situated in the classroom of the cooperating teacher or classroom-based mentor, student teachers learn thinking and problem-solving skills through guided and carefully scaffolded experiences – for the student teacher, teaching becomes an educative experience whereby cooperating teachers and student teachers openly communicate and negotiate their ideas about teaching during collaborative planning sessions. Situated in the context of conversations, co-planning provides an authentic context for student teachers to learn (Smith, 2007). Mediating clashing teaching ideas is difficult to do, however, in the context of the evaluative and hierarchical student teacher-cooperating teacher relationship (Smith, 2007).

Smith's (2007) thoughts on co-planning conversations are revealed in her microethnographic study of Mark (cooperating teacher) and Kate (as the novice teacher) in the subject English. Following the videotaped and audio-taped co-planning conversations, private interview sessions with the cooperating and student teachers were executed to gain insight into the thoughts, feelings and intentions behind their words and actions and also illuminated the participant's point of view and significant verbal and nonverbal communication cues (Smith, 2007).

The analysis of Mark and Kate's conversations reveals the tensions and struggles encountered in an uneven power relationship and their desire to sustain a comfortable working relationship, coupled with their interpretation of their roles as expert and novice planners, resulted in a series of planning conversations which focussed on etiquette rather than engagement with the subject English (Smith, 2008). Kate's understanding of her role as the novice planner, discouraged her from confidently presenting and discussing her

thoughts and the questions and uncertainty that surrounded the presentation of her ideas prompted Mark to provide answers instead of discussion which inadvertently reinforced his own practice and discouraged Kate from pursuing divergent ideas (Smith, 2007). Together, there are limited opportunities for Kate to develop as an English teacher (Smith, 2007).

Smith (2007) also claims that student teachers and cooperating teachers' conflicting teaching philosophies and diverse perspectives may be attributed to the university-school divide - student teachers encounter this divide as they attempt to reconcile the teaching practices endorsed by their teacher preparation programme with those in practice. Caught in the middle of these two worlds, student teachers must find ways to carve out their own space within it (Smith, 2007). A second and related explanation of Mark and Kate's problem lies in the hierarchical and evaluative nature of the cooperating teacher-student teacher relationship – conflict and power could be largely eliminated if teacher preparation programmes removed evaluation from the cooperating teachers' role (Smith, 2007). On the contrary, removing the evaluative role from cooperating teachers is not an ideal solution, since cooperating teachers are in the best position to effectively judge the performance of student teachers (Smith, 2007). Smith (2007) also adds that removing the cooperating teachers' evaluative role would not eliminate the reality that student teachers must design and enact curriculum as guests in an experienced teachers' classroom.

Smith (2007) argues further that to expand cooperating and student teachers' conceptions of their roles as expert and novice teachers is to shift their thinking about the concept of expertise in teaching and learning to teach, which would necessitate that cooperating and novice teachers see expertise as the outcome of thoughtful co-inquiry and deliberation about practice – expertise would arise, from the joint exploration of teaching ideas. Cooperating and student teachers would benefit from interaction that allows them to move in and out of their positions as expert and novice planners by being able to take turns sharing ideas and questions about teaching (Smith, 2007). Both experienced and novice teachers can lend innovations to teaching, and expertise can arise from such thoughtful conversations (Smith, 2007). As the responsibility for suggesting and

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approving ideas becomes shared between cooperating teacher and student teachers, the discourse around teaching needs to change from traditional teacher-student talk to a more collaborative building of knowledge – helping cooperating and student teachers embrace different conceptions of their roles, and the discourse that accompany these roles requires us to better prepare them for joint work (Smith, 2007).

Schools and universities should develop a share agenda, for teaching to equipping those involved at the intersection of these institutions, with the tools and capacity to engage in open dialogue, negotiation and conflict resolution (Smith, 2007). Rosaen and Schram (1998) add that in university classrooms, teacher candidates engaged in collaborative projects (e.g. collaborative unit planning, team teaching etc.) can learn and practice the skills of presenting and negotiating ideas as they engage in curricular conversations with their peers. Cooperating teacher training is an ideal venue for cooperating teachers to learn to facilitate planning to explore their own teaching ideas; explore questions and uncertainties about teaching; and assist novices who bring new ideas to the table (Smith, 2007). Finally, university supervisors/tutors can be trained to facilitate conversations between cooperating teachers and student teachers that explore their various approaches to planning and teaching and help student and cooperating teachers to develop their theories and philosophies of teaching through joint inquiry and reflection (Smith, 2007)

It is evident from the discussion that the role of mentor in the induction of student teachers is crucial to the enhanced professional growth of the student teacher. However, the role that the mentors employ, in conversations with their mentees on personal and professional matters, must promote collaborative inquiry, challenging the status quo, co-operative practice and critical reflection.

The issues of dialogic learning, collaborative culture between mentor and mentee and a paradigm shift from technical and routine skills will also be illuminated in the discussion of the theoretical framework which informs this research study.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before an attempt is made to unpack the theoretical framework used in this study, it is necessary to first understand that a theoretical framework is informed by a particular paradigm. Unless we understand the existence of different world-views or paradigms (which include the three elements: ontology, epistemology and methodology), we cannot embrace the different types of research methodologies (Popkewitz, 1984; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). A paradigm may therefore be defined as a framework of epistemological assumptions and methodological procedures that governs the conduct of inquiry and the interpretation of data (Popkewitz, 1984). Therefore any theoretical knowledge that is generated will be consistent with the view of "reality" that the paradigm endorses (Popkewitz, 1984).

A phenomenological approach, which is informed by an interpretive paradigm, will be used in my study. The interpretive paradigm which is based upon understanding relations between individuals in a social context (Pokewitz, 1984), will be relevant in my study whereby relationships between the mentor and mentee are examined.

Waghid and Louw (2008) claim that existing mentorship models are based on the functionalist approach to professional development – an approach which advances the concept of professional development but very vulnerable to criticism. Thus the conceptualisation of mentorship in South Africa has a strong element in maintaining the status quo, the mentorship relationship is framed in a language of paternalism and dependence deriving from power-dependent hierarchal relationships aimed at maintaining the status quo and that the relationship between mentor and mentee is further characterised by uncontested assumptions of knowledge – where learning is viewed as simply the transfer of knowledge to the protégés (Waghid & Louw, 2008).

This study ("Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers") will use the radical humanistic perspective (Waghid & Louw, 2008) to understand the term mentorship. The radical humanistic perspective which is a paradigm shift from the traditional functionalist

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approach to mentorship, is based on the Freire's ideas of rejection of the banking concept of education and culture of silence, problematsing the status quo, critical consciousness, dialogical learning between the learner and teacher, a shift from authoritarian power relations which entrenches the status quo, domination and oppression (Waghid & Louw, 2008). Given the context of transformation that we face, this is the most appropriate approach, as the question of mentorship is value-laden, and one cannot assume that there is an apolitical environment, devoid of contextual considerations.

Freire (1970) expands the 'banking' concept of education when he contends that education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher the depositor and instead of communicating, the teacher issue communiqués and makes deposits which students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. Freire (1970) adds that in the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing – projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. It is no surprise that the banking system of education regards men as adaptable, manageable beings (Freire, 1970). The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world and the more completely they the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them (Freire, 1970). The aim of banking education is to minimize or annul the students creative power and to stimulate their credulity which serves the interests of the oppressors, who care neither to have the world revealed nor see it transformed (Freire, 1970) and thus react instinctively against any experiment in education which stimulates and enhances the critical faculties of teachers and learners (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985).

Freire (1970 also argues that the humanistic revolutionary educator engages students in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization and his efforts are imbued with a profound trust in men and their creative power and must be a partner of the students in

their relationship with them. Freire (1970) also reflects that oppression leading to overwhelming control is necrophilic – nourished by love of death, not life – thus the banking concept of education, which emphasisies the interests of oppression is also necrophilic. Whereas, the banking system of education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality, with the former maintaining the submersion of consciousness and the latter striving for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality – students, that are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge and because they apprehend the challenge as interrelated to other problems within a total context, not as a theoretical question, the resulting comprehension tends to be critical and less alienated (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985). Their response to the challenge evokes new challenges, followed by new understandings and gradually the students come to regard themselves as committed (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985).

Mentorship within a radical humanistic perspective emphasises the need for a critical co-learner, critical dialogue between mentor and mentee and endorses the sentiments of Freire's humanistic revolutionary educator and the thoughts of Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) - teachers and students possessing critical faculties, and also provides a critical analysis of power relations and illuminates issues of social justice (Waghid & Louw, 2008). The relationship between mentor and mentee within the radical humanistic framework is transformed to an interactional, mature and interdependent relationship between colleagues who may transcend individual roles or may create new roles (Waghid & Louw, 2008).

Jones and Straker (2006) also concur with the latter when they argue that both the mentor and mentee should be encouraged to engage in critical dialogue and reflection not only within the boundaries of the mentoring relationship but also within the wider community of practice. For this to take place, mentors need to adopt a reflective-reflexive approach to their own practice as teachers and professionals, encourage trainees to identify issues

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related to their teaching and education as a whole and engage in critical dialogue with them to develop appropriate strategies (Jones & Straker, 2006).

McLaren's (2003) thoughts on the issue of hegemony are integral in understanding power relationships that exist between a mentor and mentee within either a functionalist or radical humanistic perspective (Waghid & Louw, 2008). Hegemony refers to the moral and intellectual leadership of a dominant class over a subordinate class achieved not through coercion (ie. threat of imprisonment or torture) or wilful construction of rules and regulations (as in fascist regime or dictatorship), but rather through the general winning of consent of the subordinate class to the authority of the dominant class (Mclaren, 2003). Hegemony is a struggle in which the powerful win the consent of those oppressed, with the oppressed unknowingly participating in their own oppression eg. students not questioning the values, attitudes and social practices of the dominant society in a sustained and critical manner actually preserves the hegemony of the dominant class and the unequal relations of power and privilege remain hidden (Mclaren, 2003). This can be extrapolated to the mentor-mentee relationship, whereby the mentee refuses to question the authority of the mentor and rigidly accepts the status quo of the school. This is characteristic of a functional approach (Waghid & Louw, 2008) to mentoring relationships.

The challenge for teachers is to recognise and attempt to transform those undemocratic and oppressive features of hegemonic control that often structure everyday classroom existence in ways not readily apparent (Mclaren, 2003). Mentoring relationships operating within a radical humanistic framework (Waghid & Louw, 2008) is also involved in the business of transforming oppressive and undemocratic hegemonic control.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has contextualised the need for mentorship, but argued critically that it needs to be pursued in a manner which advanced learning, rather than simply reinforcing the

status quo. The discussion has intersected with issues of power and rank, collaborative conversations between mentor and mentee, induction of novice teachers etc. and brought in the particular context to demonstrate that whilst mentorship is desirable, it could be unproductive if not properly implemented. It also illuminated the components of the radical humanistic model to mentoring which is a shift from the traditional functionalist approach to mentoring (Waghid & Louw, 2008).

The methodological orientation of the study which is informed by the theoretical framework will now be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The choice of methodology in any research is influenced by the way the researcher views the world and knowledge and this suggests that ontological assumptions gives rise to epistemological assumptions which in turn leads to methodological decisions and finally informing issues of data collection and instrumentation (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Therefore, unless we understand the existence of different world-views or paradigms (which include the three elements: ontology, epistemology and methodology), we cannot embrace the different types of research methodologies (Popkewitz, 1984). Popkewitz (1984) also adds that in order to see both the limitations and potential of different forms of research, we need to first understand the foundation (i.e. paradigm) on which one builds knowledge and then we need to look at different methods before choosing the one(s) for best solving the problem.

Before I unpack the methodological orientation of my study, it is important to differentiate between the concepts "methodology" and "method". The latter refers to techniques and procedures used in the process of data-gathering which is used as a basis for inference, interpretation, explanation and prediction, while the aim of the methodology is to describe approaches, kinds and paradigms of research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Wiersma, 1991). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also add that methodology helps a researcher understand in the broadest possible terms not the products of scientific research or inquiry but the process itself. Some of the instruments used for collecting data are interviews, questionnaires, observation, tests, biographies, simulations etc., while the kind or methodology of research to undertake involve a survey, an experiment, action research, in-depth ethnography, case study research etc. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). It is important to note that research methodologies may range from the two extremes of objective, scientific (quantitative) research styles to the subjective, interpretive, more constructive (qualitative) styles (Wiersma, 1991). In terms of my study ("Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers"), a qualitative

methodology will be employed, which is context specific and involves interpreting facts and values as inextricably linked (Wiersma, 1991).

3.2 CHOICE OF PARADIGM

A phenomenological approach, which is qualitative in nature, will be used in the study to understand the phenomenon of mentoring and in particular the master teacher experiences as a mentor, which is a new phenomenon in South Africa. It must be understood that a phenomenological approach maps the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive and understand phenomena in the world (Marton, 1988) – hence the use of a phenomenological approach to understand the different experiences of the master teacher in his/her role as the mentor.

In a phenomenography, researchers try to describe, analyse and understand how people think about specific phenomena and do not claim to be describing how reality actually is but, rather, how it is conceived (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also concur that phenomenology advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one views behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather by external, objective and physically described reality. They further argue that phenomenology also means finding out how things appear to the individual rather than through the media of cultural and symbolic structures – this involves 'putting the world in brackets' or free oneself from the usual way of perceiving the world (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In phenomenographical analysis, the aim is to find new meaning of the phenomenon in question based on the empirical material collected; meaning and thought forms that lie between the general and idiosyncratic (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996). If the actual point or thought behind the line of reasoning can be identified in reality e.g. in mentoring dialogue, this can be said to be a way of validating the description of the conception (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996). There can also be said to be a point in trying to describe such a complex phenomenon as mentoring with the help of descriptive categories, where the categories are not particularly refined but nevertheless shed light on significant aspects of this phenomenon (Franke & Dahlgren, 1996).

The phenomenological study of master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers is informed by the interpretive paradigm. Popkewitz (1984) views the interpretive paradigm as a symbolic approach to science and rather than making the behaviour of people the 'facts' of science, attention is given to interaction and negotiations within social situations through which people reciprocally define expectations about appropriate behaviours. In order to understand the language that enables individuals to participate in a world of collective symbols and shared meanings the use of the interpretive paradigm is of paramount importance (Popkewitz, 1984). The interpretive paradigm is also based upon understanding relations between individuals in a social context (Popkewitz, 1984). This is relevant to the research focus of mentoring, whereby relationships between the mentor and mentee are examined.

3.3 SAMPLE

Selecting an appropriate sample and sampling technique is strongly influenced by the methodological stance a researcher adopts. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also add that that the success or failure of any research is not only determined by the appropriateness of methodology and instruments for data collection , but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) claim that when deciding on the sample four factors need to be considered viz. the sample size, the issue of representativeness, access to the sample and the sampling strategy used. In my study, a purposive sampling strategy will be used, and the sample size will be 3. Purposive sampling is a characteristic of qualitative research, whereby researchers handpick cases to be part of the sample on the basis of their typicality or peculiar characteristic (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This also applies to my study which focuses on master teachers – therefore only master teachers will be part of the sample and as the name suggests (purposive) the sample is chosen for a specific purpose. All three respondents are from public schools that form part of the Ilembe District in the KwaDukuza area, 75 kilometres north of Durban. Cara (mentor 1) is from Cranbrook Secondary, Terina (mentor 2) is from Greyridge Secondary and Krishna (mentor 3) is from Doesberg

Secondary. The three teachers selected reflect the demographics of South Africa. The three teachers are also from different socio-economic environments and this heterogeneity would add greatly to the analysis of the research findings.

3.4 RESEARCH PARAMETERS

A data collection plan which sets out the parameters (decisions about what data to collect from whom, how often etc.) for the critical question of the study (Vithal & Jansen, 2006) will now be discussed. With regard to my study, one critical question has been identified: *What are the experiences of the master teacher in mentoring teachers?*

The parameters for the critical question will be explained using a table (see table).

CRITICAL QUESTION: *What are the experiences of the master teacher in mentoring teachers?*

QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A DATA COLLECTION PLAN	A DATA COLLECTION PLAN
Why is the data being collected?	To determine the experiences of the master teacher in mentoring teachers (e.g. their challenges and opportunities)
What is the research strategy?	Semi-structured interviews were used to gather the required data.
Who will be the sources of the data?	Master teachers, employed as such by the Department of Education, within school were interviewed.
How many of the data sources will be accessed?	Three master teachers were interviewed, one each from three

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	secondary schools in the Kwa-Dukuza area in the Ilembe district of KwaZulu-Natal.
How often will the data be collected?	All the respondents were interviewed once and thereafter follow-up telephonic interviews were held with participants to obtain data clarity and further information.
How will the data be collected?	The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and was tape-recorded.
Justify this plan for data collection.	The semi-structured interviews provided opportunity for in-depth probing, elaboration and clarification of items and eliminated the possibility of non-response which may happen in the case of a questionnaire.

The choice of participant for the study was based on convenience of access to me as I reside and work in this district. As master teachers were the subject of exploration, the three teachers chosen were from this rank of employment. Further, as the sought to explore the experiences of this group of teachers regarding their mentoring responsibilities, the choice of participants was also informed by the ability of these teachers to articulate their experiences. This ability was ascertained through prior knowledge of and engagement with these participants, as being colleagues working in the same district we interact on a regular basis. This could be a limitation for this study as it had the potential to influence the data production and analysis thereof. Recognising this as a potential limitation, I used different strategies to manage the data production and analysis. The subsequent telephonic interviews with participants provided me the opportunity to clarify and correct my interpretation of the data collected. Further, the use

vignettes to present the teachers experiences provided to opportunity to limit my influence and knowledge of the data produced and the interpretations thereof.

3.5 THE INTERVIEW AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR DATA PRODUCTION

The interview protocol is integral to a successful qualitative research study. Some of the aspects with regard to the interview procedure are illuminated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) which are: the conduct of the interview should be explained (what happens, and how, and the structure and organisation of the interview); how responses may be recorded; the biases and values of the interviewer during the interview should not be revealed; interviewer should avoid being judgemental and finally the that the interview is a social, interpersonal encounter and not merely a data collection exercise. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also reflect on the advantages of using the interview method viz. interviews can be matched to individuals and circumstances; increases the salience and relevance of questions; interviews remain fairly conversational and situational; respondents answer the same questions, thus increasing the comparability of responses; data are complete for each person on the topics addressed in the interview; Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also identify weaknesses inherent in interviews viz. interviewer flexibility in sequencing and wording questions can result in substantially different responses, thus reducing comparability of responses; little flexibility in relating the interview to particular individuals and circumstances; standardised wording of questions may constrain and limit naturalness and relevance of questions and answers.

Once data from the interview have been collected, the next stage involves analysing them.

3.6 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The true test of a competent researcher in qualitative research is demonstrated in the analysis of the data that requires analytical craftsmanship and the ability to understand the data in writing (Henning, 2004). Henning (2004) argues that the analysis process is

the "heartbeat" of the research process and requires the analyst's quality of thinking. In qualitative data the data analysis in most cases is interpretive, hence the data analysis is less a completely accurate representation (as in the positivist traditions) but more a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualised data that are already interpretations of a social encounter (Henning, 2004; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).The tension in data analysis is maintaining a sense of holism of the interview and the tendency for the analysis to fragment the data – to separate them into constituent elements, thereby losing the synergy of the whole, and in the interviews the whole is greater than the sum of the parts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In qualitative analysis of interview data in the study, the transcribed texts will be coded or segmented into units of meaning in one or more sentences and then categorised or organised into appropriate themes (Henning, 2004). Once the data is coded and categorised the following questions will be asked: What are the relationships between all these categories?; What do they say together?; What is missing?; How do they address the research question(s)? etc. (Henning, 2004).

In this study vignettes (a short character sketch or story) are used to analyse the data (Henning, 2004). In this situation, the researcher studies the data and selects information that will help him/her to tell a story from the thread she has seen in the data (Henning, 2004). Henning (2004) adds that the story is not fictional, but rests squarely on noted data and is told by the researcher as an organising mechanism and an important point to note is that the participant did not tell the story and also did not intend the information as a story. Henning (2004) also argues that the use of vignettes does not mean you impose a storyline where there is no narrative but for the researcher to use their representational facilities to put the data together in what is acceptably a story.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

How complex the nature of work may, researchers must seriously contemplate the effects of the research on the participants and act in a way to preserve their dignity as human beings – such is ethical behaviour (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). With regard to

my study the necessary protocol were followed in terms of ethical clearance. Letters detailing the scope and nature of the research were given to principals and respondents. There were opportunities for participants to withdraw from the research process should they feel so. Permission were sought from the respective gatekeepers as well as from the participants.

In terms of the research process, I being a Master teacher had the potential to influence both the participants and the data. This insider perspective was explained to the participants prior to data production in the hope of neutralising any undue influence on the participants or the data produced thereof. The methods of data production as well as the process of data handing and reporting provided added caution on any influence that I may have brought to the research process.

3.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The nature of interview makes it difficult to satisfy the issue of reliability and validity in qualitative research. Reliability in interviews will be enhanced by careful piloting of interview schedules with the same format and sequence of words and questions for each respondent and use of member checks (respondent validation) (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). A practical way of ensuring validity using interviews, is to minimise the amount of bias, especially from the interviewer who tends to seek answers from the respondent that support preconceived notions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Gay, 1987; Wiersma, 1991). In this study, the interview schedule was piloted with a master teacher outside of the identified participants. Special attention was paid to the sequencing of questions to the participants and to repetition of data generated through the various questions. Arising out of this pilot process, some questions were deleted from the interview schedule. Further, more sub-questions were identified as probing questions to allow for the respondent to reflect more deeply on their experiences of mentoring.

Trustworthiness and rigor are further entrenched through the critical use of vignettes (through the actual words spoken by the subjects) as they are typical of mentor-mentee

relationships (in this study the master teacher assumes the role of mentor) which would be applicable in any context. Vignettes also capture the moment of experiences of master teachers and apart from adding to the richness of data, they give a good context. As a research tool vignettes adds credibility and contributes quite significantly to the issue of reliability and validity in this research study.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The research process is viewed as a sequence of activities, with the possibility of some overlap among the activities (Wiersma, 1991). The exercise of devising a strategy and putting a plan in place for data collection enhances the understanding of the researcher of the connection between the purpose of the study, the critical questions, literature review, the theoretical framework, and the methodology used in the study. Coherence is fundamental in any research and an efficient data collection plan contributes immensely towards a clear, unambiguous, coherent research.

Therefore an understanding of the dynamics of data collection lays the foundation for the formulation of a solid research proposal, facilitates the compilation of the masters or doctoral dissertation and can also stimulate the researcher for further educational research. In the context of the current research using a qualitative methodology enhances the understanding of the researcher with regard to the reasons for the data being collected, choice of research strategy used, sources of data and the manner in which it will be accessed and collected.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents vignettes, produced through applying the phenomenological methodology, of the experiences of the three master teacher mentors together with an analysis of these vignettes as it relates to their experiences and to the research question. The choice of the use of vignettes in the presentation of the data has been argued for in the methodology chapter. The vignettes captures the experiences of the master teachers according to how they managed tensions – their success and failures, experiences in engendering critical dialogue, experiences of engaging collaboratively with teachers and providing collegial support, master teacher experiences and the induction of novice teachers, creating an open teaching and learning environment, transgressing the culture of silence and rejection of the banking system of education, experiences of master teacher mentors in promoting continuous professional and personal development, constraints impacting on the mentoring relationship. These categories that informed the various vignettes were influenced by the literature review on mentoring as well as from a first level exploration of the data produced through the interviews. Hence, both apriori and grounded categories of analysis influenced the construction of the vignettes.

The vignettes are written up as thematic ensembles to highlight the discourses operating within the mentor-mentee relationship and provide a platform to ask questions about mentor activities that master teachers engage with within a school context and the enabling and disabling factors that impact upon mentoring. It must be noted that in order to add meaning, coherence and understanding, some of the vignettes have been edited. The edited vignettes were subjected to member check process for maintaining validity and reliability protocols in the study design. Further, the names of the participants and their mentees have been changed in order to maintain anonymity within the research design.

4.2 COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COLLEGIAL SUPPORT

Collaboration and collegiality are discourses integral in the mentoring relationship that takes a teacher beyond dependence on outside experts but to a point where teachers can learn from each other, sharing and developing expertise together (Hargreaves, 1994)

Cara (mentor 1), through her mentoring experience of mentoring Shunmugam, a Maths specialist but without any teaching experience in Maths at the secondary school, began to engage her mentoring responsibilities through a context of collegiality and collaboration that promotes respect, humility and trust. The following vignette of her experience shows how she was successful in engendering an atmosphere of collegiality and collaboration:

My understanding of being a mentor teacher is to be a good role-model not in terms of my subject but in other aspects of being a good teacher, having good values of honesty, extreme humility and being a leader. Respect is integral for me when I interact with fellow teachers and pupils. A mentor is vital in enhancing the mentees self-esteem and confidence and instilling a sense of peace, happiness and enthusiasm in the workplace. I was never tentative or lacked confidence when I engaged with my mentee but felt relaxed and encouraged an atmosphere of love, collaboration and free will. Even my mentees felt comfortable with me.

Terina (mentor 2), encouraged a shared relationship with her mentee, who was already fifteen years in the profession. The mutual love and respect she displayed for her mentee during her mentoring, also contributed greatly to the collaborative and collegial atmosphere. The following vignette shows how she engendered a spirit of mutual love and trust:

When someone mentors you that person become special to you because that person has seen your plight and what makes that person special is not disclosing confidential information to other people, meaning that you feel confident in confiding with that person. My mentor also confided in me as well and this allowed me to advise back. It was actually a two-way

relationship. Even with my mentee, who was a lady teacher and a friend to me, there was mutual trust between us and she felt very comfortable when I approached her problem with extreme confidentiality..

Krishna (mentor 3) engaged with a governing body appointment (Kavitha) as his mentee. Initially, Krishna, did not find it comfortable talking to Kavitha as an adult but as time went on, the relationship grew with trust and understanding. Although Kavitha, was his ex-pupil, Krishna did not assume a dominant, authoritative role in the mentoring relationship but encouraged a two-way relationship. The following vignette demonstrates the love, trust and understanding that characterised the mentoring conversations between Krishna and Kavitha.

As a mentor I had a very collaborative experience with my mentee. It was a shared relationship based on humility, love and collegiality where both of us saw each other as equals. We spoke about our future plans, our sporting interests, the books we read and how to improve teaching in class. When it came to teaching a section we agreed to unpack the section together, because we taught the same things to both of our classes. This facilitated harmony.

The three vignettes unambiguously reveal the desire and commitment of the three mentors in facilitating a collaborative and collegial atmosphere with their mentees as a way to enhance the mentoring relationship. The love and trust are aspects that are emphasised by all three mentors in creating the collaborative and collegial atmosphere.

4.3 TRANSGRESSION OF THE CULTURE OF SILENCE AND REJECTION OF THE BANKING SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Cara through her collaborative and collegial endeavours strived to transgress the culture of silence and opposed the rigid discourse of the banking education, which required mentors to make regular deposits and then at the end require the mentee to show that she has guarded that deposits (Freire, 1970). Cara's mentoring style was founded on an epistemology that sees knowledge being derived out of questions and the roles of the mentor and mentee changing dramatically. The following vignette reveals Cara's

endeavour to encourage her mentees to question knowledge and discover principles for themselves, in collaboration with others.

A unique aspect of my father's mentoring style was that he encouraged self-discovery and independent thinking. When I engaged with my mentee I always felt relaxed and encouraged an atmosphere of free will and endless questioning and my mentees also had something to offer, which I could learn as well. I don't really focus on the mistakes in a maths class, when I am observing my mentees. Correcting someone in class, would obviously dampen the spirit of the teacher and allow pupils to disrespect the teacher. I would allow the mentee the opportunity first, to bring it to my attention, that he had probably erred on some part of the lesson. My mentee would respect my approach and feel confident in my company and not be threatened by my presence. Maths is a subject that lends itself to critical inquiry. I as a mentor is always at loggerheads with my HOD about issues of schooling, the subject matter etc. I always question things and expect my subordinates to be part of the questioning culture. My easy, relaxed approach also enhanced their confidence and they were not hesitant in questioning me about professional or personal issues – this greatly enhanced the rapport between us and created a fertile ground for collegial and collaborative interaction.

Terina, was initially tentative about allowing her mentee to transgress the culture of silence in terms of questioning the status quo but her attitude towards her mentee changed as Terina evolved from being a novice mentor to a mentor that was knowledgeable about the discourses that shape the mentor-mentee relationship. The following vignette reveals how Terina changes her attitude towards her mentee about questioning the status quo.

You actually change your approach as you move through the years as a mentor. When you do it for the first time you don't really know whether you get the desired results. You initially may want your mentee not to question things or challenge the status quo of the school but later on as you develop more practical experience and knowledge about mentoring – your mentee is free to explore the education terrain together with you. You may encourage questioning and independent thinking as you as a mentor reach a stage of a so-called 'expert'. When you look at a problem you don't see the problem with closed boundaries but as a challenge that can be interpreted and solved from different angles. I would also encourage my mentee to question the

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structure of the curriculum and engage in debates with the head of department and subject advisors. One of the outcomes of the NCS curriculum is that of critical thinking.

Krishna, inspite of the fact that he was mentoring his ex-pupil, Kavitha, allowed his mentee to develop a critical approach to teaching. Being a non-conformist himself, impacted on the manner in which he positioned himself in the mentoring relationship with his mentee. This is clearly demonstrated in the following vignette.

For me I never take things lying down. I always question things so I always encourage anyone never to take things lying down. People can always manipulate your thoughts and therefore having a critical mind, which involves challenging and questioning the status quo, is important. Always questioning makes you grow and develop professionally. My advice to any young teacher is to question respectfully. I will also allow my mentee to reflect on those aspects of teaching that has challenged her. In terms on reflecting on those aspects of teaching it will give her a chance to develop on her own rather me as a mentor pointing out her inadequacies – hence her critical reflection.

The three vignettes clearly demonstrate the ability of the three master teacher mentors to foster a culture of questioning as a means to transgress the culture of silence and problematise the status quo.

4.4 TENSIONS IN THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

In any relationship, be it teacher-pupil, teacher-teacher, teacher-principal or teacher-mentor, collaborative and collegial support is not always present. Tensions and conflict do arise because one individual may want to impose a form of hegemonic control over the other person in the relationship because of age, patriarchy, experience, superior knowledge etc. Mutual trust, respect and love are lost and conflict may be the consequence of the relationship.

Cara appeared successful in managing conflict and tension in her relationship with her mentee, by establishing a collaborative and collegial atmosphere. Her mentee appeared to

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have a conflict-free working relationship with Cara and the vignette below clearly demonstrates the happiness, love and humour that prevailed between the two.

A mentor is vital in enhancing the mentee's self-esteem and confidence and instilling a sense of peace, happiness and enthusiasm in the workplace. I was never tentative or lacked confidence when I engaged with my mentee. I always felt relaxed and encouraged an atmosphere of love and collaboration. We were able to laugh at something humorous. We enjoyed the outdoors and sports which gave us more time to explore our personalities together. I also made him feel like my equal and he never felt threatened by the fact that I was a senior, experienced teacher. He also had something to offer, in the form of computer skills, an area which I felt inadequate in. We worked as a team and this team approach neutralised any form of power relationship. Even when my mentee was on duty for soccer, I would participate in officiating with him. This really enhanced the mentoring relationship. When there were problems and challenges, I consulted my other colleagues whom my mentee got along with. I never made a problem an 'office issue'.

Terina, inspite of creating a collegial and collaborative atmosphere with her mentee, did encounter some tensions in the mentoring relationships as is revealed in the vignette below. However, these tensions did not lead to a dysfunctional mentoring relationship.

The only thing that I can think of that strained the mentoring relationship was that she was too strict with the classes she taught. She used to say "no talking", "you are out of turn" etc. – as compared to me I was very relaxed with my pupils – often referred to them as "sweetie pies", "my darlings" and so forth. I did tell her after the lesson that she was too firm with her pupils. She continued to maintain her firmness inspite of me telling her to soften up. She is a friend now and felt very comfortable when I approached her problem with extreme confidentiality.

The strong collaborative and collegial characteristics were also present in Krishna's relationship with his mentee. There was no documented evidence of tensions that existed between the two of them. The harmony, trust and love that prevailed between Krishna and his mentee were overwhelming and are clearly demonstrated in the vignette below.

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At times you do not realize that you have this sterling quality in you and as a mentor you want to bring out the best in people and not the worst. There was extreme humility, understanding and respect between me and Kavitha, when we had a reason to communicate. When one is chosen as a role-model, you cannot have one behaviour for one minute and another behaviour for another minute. There must be a level of consistency. Humbleness was characteristic of Kavitha's behaviour. Even at a last minute notice she would proxy for a teacher for sports duties or sports meetings. This humbled me as mentor – there is a person who could never say no. When it came to teaching a section in Afrikaans we would unpack the section together, because we taught the same things to both of our classes. This facilitated harmony amongst us and the pupils. If we worked at different levels the kids in the class would have been compromised. There was nothing at all that I could think of that had a negative effect on the mentoring relationship.

The three vignettes clearly demonstrate the importance the three mentors attached to values of love and trust as essential ingredients to develop a collegial relationship with their mentees and reduce conflict and tension.

4.5 EXPERIENCES IN FOSTERING CRITICAL DIALOGUE

Cara did not view education in a technicist way (manifested as a transmission of knowledge), but encouraged critical thinking and solving problems in an interactive and collaborative manner. Cara did not view that knowledge was only in the possession of the teacher and also discouraged her mentee's over-reliance on textbooks as a source of knowledge. The following vignette clearly reveals Cara's attempt to engage her mentee in critical dialogue.

My mentee displayed extreme humility even in our discussion about professional matters. My easy, relaxed approach also enhanced their confidence and they were not hesitant in questioning me about professional or personal issues. Maths lends itself to critical thinking and especially with problem-solving there are so many approaches to the problem. I also encouraged my mentees that during our discussions on professional matters – they must not agree with everything I say. Their knowledge which is new, could add greatly to the debates during our professional discussions. This approach encouraged them to solicit other resources

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when tackling challenges with respect to the subject matter. Taking Maths out of the class was paramount and I encouraged my mentees not to confine Maths only to the classroom. Knowledge is therefore never static but always changing to meet the needs of the situation.

Terina also emphasised the need for critical dialogue as a tool to enhance the professional development of her mentee. Being a slave to a textbook was discouraged and consulting other resources when teaching Life Science were emphasised. Terina also stressed on integration with other subject disciplines as a strategy to inculcate the elements of critical dialogue with her mentee. These strategies to enhance critical dialogue are revealed in the following vignette.

When we are looking at the syllabus, I would say to her that this is a science subject and certain things are not covered by the textbook, so I encourage her to consult other sources of information so that when you are teaching in the classroom the kids are fully informed. I also told her that this approach would also spur pupils not to only rely on textbooks but other sources of information which would enhance the critical faculty of the pupils. I also allowed her to reflect on my work as a mentor – we would have conversations about a subject matter I taught she would be taught to provide a critical analysis about an issue. I never wanted her to believe that my knowledge was supreme and correct but that I am also fallible. I would also canvass her views about how to teach and in this collegial spirit we grew together professionally. We also exchanged learning materials – the learning materials that I used in my classroom were used in her classroom as well. We also worked together compiling worksheets. I also emphasised to her the need for an integrative and holistic approach to teaching as spelt out in the NCS curriculum. I also encouraged my mentee to question the knowledge disseminated by the office and also critically analyse the hegemonic control of the school – keeping with the spirit of our democratic constitution and curriculum.

Krishna, who always challenged authority, also fostered critical thinking with his mentee by emphasising the need to question the status quo by opposing undemocratic hegemonic control in school, developing critical reflective behaviour, enhancing debating skills and transgressing an over-reliance on textbook information. His intellectual capacity and experience of being a Master teacher provides him with the capacity to resist forms of

power and subvert the dominance of oppressive reason. He invests in his ability to engender a critical dialogue with his mentee and this is revealed in the vignette below.

I always question things so I always encourage anyone never to take things lying down. Sometimes the principal will discuss a directive from the department, for example an item on IQMS which may not make sense. I will not be afraid to challenge the principal on the matter and ask him to get better clarification before the directive is implemented in the school. People can always manipulate your thoughts and therefore having a critical mind which involves questioning and challenging the status quo is important. I also impressed upon Kavitha, that questioning the status quo of the subject, the authority and administration of the school is important as these skills develops you professionally. However, I did inculcate into her that questioning must be from an informed position and done with extreme respect. Being an experienced teacher, teaching in Transvaal during my early years, and gaining further experience through my post-graduate studies at university, and now for the last two years assuming the status as master teacher has enhanced my intellectual capacity and given me enough wisdom to understand how authority works at school. I am not afraid of challenging authority if I know I am right about an issue. I am wiser now than before, especially dealing with the department and their confusing directives. I am well-read about policies and also encourage my mentee to familiarise herself with school policies as this adds to her knowledge base and enhances critical awareness of the subjects taught at school and the general functioning of the school.

Challenging the status quo and developing a critical mind were characteristic of all three mentors as revealed in the three vignettes.

4.6 CREATING AN OPEN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Cara's mentoring relationship with her mentee was shaped by the discourses of collaboration, collegiality, subversion of the culture of silence and dialogical learning. These discourses are also integral in creating an open environment for teaching and learning. The following vignette reveals Cara's experience as a master teacher mentoring Shunmugam in an open teaching and learning environment.

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I always encouraged Shunmugam not to be closed in his thinking and the manner in which he approached tackling a Maths problem. I always impressed upon him to use a open and multi-dimensional approach to teaching a maths problem as this would encourage Shunmugam to research other forms of knowledge to arrive at a solution. My opposition to a closed environment which restricted one to exploring different methods to teaching Maths was greatly influenced by my father, Maths Munsamy, who always encouraged the skills of self-discovery and independent thinking. I always encouraged an atmosphere of love, trust and endless questioning with my mentee and this really made my mentee feel very comfortable. We were able to laugh at something humorous and exercise professionalism about issues relating to the subject matter or policy documents.

Terina, who is attempting her masters degree in education (which is her second masters degree), has had experience of teaching in Swaziland and in the United Sates of America. She has also taught in rural schools in the Maphumulo district, in northern KZN. Her experience of teaching in an advanced first world country and teaching in third world countries with experiences in impoverished rural schools and the fact she was highly qualified for her job as a master teacher, would have impacted positively on her intellectual capacity to also invest in her ability to resist the rigid school environment that was shaped by apartheid discourses but opt for a more open school environment. Her ability to influence her mentee to operate within an open school environment is demonstrated in the vignette below.

I believe that in order to be good and an efficient teacher, you must develop a sense of ownership and passion. I instilled in my mentee a sense of ownership, empowerment and the potential for change. I would rather have my mentee do their own reflection after the lesson and let them first critically analyse the lesson. If I am asked to participate in the critical analysis I would engage collaboratively with the mentee. I would also insist that my mentee question knowledge disseminated by the office and also have frequent debates with the HOD on issues relating to the subject or routine school matters. I also allowed my mentee to reflect on my work as a mentor – we would have conversations about a subject matter I taught and she would be encourage to provide critical comments about that issue. My mentee was a very intelligent person and facilitated us working together by exchanging learning materials which both of us used in our classrooms.

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Krishna, who encouraged his mentee to approach teaching as a subversive activity, created an open pedagogical space with his mentee and it is in this spirit of openness that some of his shortcomings were exposed. This is contrary to a rigid approach to education which inhibits critical inquiry and problematising the status quo. The ability of Krishna to create an open teaching and learning environment is captured in the vignette below.

Mentoring is also something involuntary, informal and the type of advice you would give is something you want to do on the spur of the moment. We critically try to unpack the problem together and it is in this process of critical journey that some of my inadequacies are exposed by the mentee. I was not threatened or lost my confidence by these consequences, as I felt that such interactions with my mentee will be beneficial to my professional growth as well. It also deepened our deep sense of connectedness and enhanced our commitment to work and both me and my mentee were winners in this case.

All three vignettes clearly reveal the passion and enthusiasm the three master teacher mentors have in fostering a culture of teaching and learning in an open environment. Self-discovery, independent thinking, critical reflection and a questioning culture contributed to a large extent to an open teaching and learning environment.

4.7 MASTER TEACHER EXPERIENCES AND THE INDUCTION OF NOVICE TEACHERS

The effective implementation of an induction programme at school is of paramount importance, as beginning teachers are usually expected to exhibit their professionalism like their experienced counterparts in the various domains of school activities, ranging from teaching to intramural and extramural activities at school. Some are also challenged by being allocated the least desirable and most difficult teaching assignments. It appears that in all three schools where the master teachers (subjects) taught, very little or no induction programme was put in place for the novice teacher on his/her arrival at school..

Cara who expressed disappointment at her school that did not provide an effective induction programme for novice teachers did emphasise the need for novice teachers to be made aware of procedural and routine matters at school, which denies the opportunity for the novice teacher to develop intellectually. This contradicts Cara's attitude towards developing the professional capacity of her mentee as demonstrated in the vignettes that were presented earlier in the discussion. Cara also maintains that poor remuneration and disillusionment with the Department of Education as major factors for a high turnover of novice teachers. Cara's claim that novice teachers should be socialised into routines of the school, her reasons for a high turnover of teachers and her strategy for the retention of teachers are captured in the vignette below.

It is difficult alone for mentoring to keep novice teachers at school as poor salaries, confusing directives from the department and the inability to place teachers on the permanent staff are driving novice teachers away from our schools. Those who remain, should be made aware of the basics of school, in terms of marking the register and how to control and discipline their class. I also think sincere mentoring with strong collaborative characteristics and collegial behaviour can contribute greatly preventing teachers from leaving the profession.

Apart from introducing the novice teachers to the master teacher mentors, Terina complained about the lack of an effective induction programme at her school. Although Terina felt that novice teachers should also made aware of routine matters, she did suggest that novice teachers also be introduced to the vision and mission statements which contributes to their personal and professional growth. Terina also maintains that poor salaries and an ineffective induction programme as major reasons for teachers leaving the profession. Terina's sentiments about the reasons for a high turnover of novice teachers, her claims about the role of mentors in the induction of novice teachers and her views about curbing the turnover of novice teachers are captured in the vignette below.

I feel the main reason for teachers seeking employment in other sectors of society is the lack of induction programmes at schools, which resulted in novice teachers losing their confidence and having a low self-esteem. Poor salary scales for entry-level teachers is also another

demotivating factor for the novice teacher. Although no induction programmes took place at my school, I feel that as a master teacher mentor, my role would be taking the person around the school – show them the geography of the school – the various blocks of the school, socialise them into the school routines, such as the basics of compiling and marking a register, ground duty etc. After this is completed I would educate them about the mission and vision statement of the school. They need to understand about improving their qualifications, engaging with departmental workshops, being part of unions and sports bodies as all these experiences will have an impact on their personal and professional growth. If you are genuine about your job as a teacher and your role as mentor and if you take a novice teacher under your wing and develop him with respect and guide him professionally, I am very confident very few teachers will leave school to go into other careers.

Although induction programmes for novice teachers were not characteristic of Krishna's school, he did acknowledge that such programmes should be the responsibility of the management of the school as well as the master teachers. Routine matters and the vision and mission statements were also matters of importance to Krishna in the induction of novice teachers. His views about a high turnover of teachers are similar to the other two master teacher mentors. The following vignette reveals Krishna's approach to the induction of novice teachers and his views about teachers leaving the profession.

One of the main reasons for high turnover of teachers is that the government has erred big time by not expediting the permanent status of teachers. The lack of confidence in the education system, poor salaries, teachers not getting paid, too many curriculum changes, large class sizes are some of the other reasons for the high teacher turnover. Although no induction takes place at my school, I think the principal, HOD's and experienced teachers like master teachers should formulate an induction programme at my school. Teachers must be introduced to marking of the register, how to control their classrooms and also be given the mission and vision statements of the school as part of the induction programme.

Apart from the lack of induction programmes for novice teachers as experienced by the three master teacher mentors in their respective schools, all three mentor teachers also expressed poor salaries and lack of confidence in the education system as major factors in driving novice teachers away from the teaching profession.

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4.8 EXPERIENCES OF THE MASTER TEACHER MENTORS IN PROMOTING CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cara engaged her mentee in activities that were designed to enhance his work. She was able to execute collaborative planning, emphasised the sharing of expertise, focussed on diversity of perspectives and viewpoints and insisted on knowledge generation. Apart from developing her mentee's professional capacity she also believed in educating and enhancing the personal domain of her mentee. Her professional and emotional intelligence skills are revealed in the vignette below.

We set papers and compiled worksheets together. The work-schedule was also a joint responsibility between me and my mentee. Although I had a work-schedule from the textbook we decided to compile one based on the context of the school. The team work approach that I used enhanced the professional behaviour of my mentee in and out of class. My mentee also used a team work approach in his teaching method and his lessons flowed with great ease. From being a shy, tentative person, my mentee grew to be confident who could assume a mentoring role himself. I also encouraged my mentee to join a union as such an organisation will help him in the event of him having a labour dispute. In my attempt to capacitate my mentee professionally, I also benefited from the relationship as my mentee was very good at computers and compumaths. Shunmugam had his laptop and on many occasions our professional deliberations would be about compumaths. This elevated my confidence in computers and enhanced my professional growth. Being a good role model not in terms of my subject but also a role model in other aspects of being a teacher, having good values, being honest and displaying extreme humility helped me understand my mentee and helped me resolve his emotional hiccups. I was able to connect with him and our relationship flourished with happiness, joy and humour. Even when he was on soccer duty I would accompany him. This made him feel very comfortable with me.

Terina, being a very experienced teacher and highly qualified teacher, understood the role of mentoring and its relationship to enhancing the professional and personal development of her mentee. Apart from her emotional intelligence skills (ability to use emotions to

manage behaviour and relations with others) (South African Management Development Institute, 2005), Terina was also very passionate about her job and was able to connect with her mentee emotionally and professionally, which brought joy and pleasure to her mentee and enhanced her (mentee) professional and personal growth. The following vignette reveals Terina's commitment to uplifting her mentee's professional and personal growth.

We worked together compiling worksheets. Although I gave her my worksheets she brought some of her own. With regard to assessment and compiling of a work-schedule we had a collective responsibility. I had some books from overseas and this helped her tremendously in our lesson preparation and assessment tasks. When certain things are not covered by the textbooks I would encourage her to consult other sources of information so that when you are teaching in the class the kids are fully informed. I also told her that this approach would also spur her pupils not to rely on textbooks but other sources of information which would enhance the critical faculty of her pupils. I would also allow her to critically reflect on my work as a mentor and in this way I also grew professionally. I also enhanced my professional development by working with my mentee – I felt that through her work, I learnt that I could use many of those ideas in my lesson. I also initiated her to sports and guided her how to administer netball. I introduced her to compiling knockout and round-robin matches for the inter-class fixtures. This exercise helped her deal with sport in a more organised way. I also encouraged her to join sporting bodies outside school as this would improve her leadership personally and professionally. I told her that there is much to learn by joining people from outside the school. The mutual trust and love that we developed in the mentoring relationship, gave my mentee the space to discuss personal and other matters of extreme confidentiality. My mentee was very comfortable and happy with this approach.

Krishna also developed the professional capacity of his mentee and his 'quid pro quo' was developing his own professional development. The vignette below summarises Krishna's experiences in fostering professional development with his mentee.

When it came to teaching a section, we agreed to unpack the section together, because we taught the same things to both of our classes. This facilitated harmony amongst us and the pupils. My mentee, for example would set a worksheet and I would examine it and collectively

we would agree on issues regarding the worksheet. We would even liase with other members of the team so that we all operated within a common goal. At the same the mentee is given an opportunity to develop her expertise in compiling worksheets, taking into the learning outcomes and assessment standards that have to be covered. Although my mentee did not have a teaching diploma, she displayed extreme professionalism in her class, in terms of conduct, attitude to pupils and the different methods of teaching she used when she taught in class. I also encouraged my mentee to join any teacher union as they also play a role in professional development by arranging a plethora of workshops, form HIV/AIDS to conflict resolution. My engagement with my mentee also afforded me the opportunity to do some introspection and question my shortcomings. I questioned myself: What is it I can do differently? What is it I can change?

From the vignettes it becomes clear that reciprocal learning takes place. Further, the idea of being and expert and novice mentor (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005) simultaneously is closely demonstrated in these experiences.

4.9 CONSTRAINTS IMPACTING ON THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Cara severely criticised the department for not having policy in place for an effective induction programme. Cara also expressed disappointment with the heavy workloads at school which meant little time for effective mentoring. The onerous task of doing administrative work and execute effective teaching was also a constraint identified by Cara. The NCS curriculum with its confusing directives and numerous changes was also identified as an obstacle to the mentoring process. The contextual realities which inhibited Cara from effective mentoring are identified in the vignette below.

The heavy workloads in school are the biggest drawback. You want to help, but time constraints inhibit our roles as effective mentors as well as the immense paperwork which makes mentoring difficult to do. The numerous assessment changes in the NCS curriculum also led to my mentee becoming disillusioned. The one-week workshops led to more confusion and my mentees also felt frustrated. The vague learning outcomes and assessment standards complicated the teaching process and hence the mentoring relationship and prevented it from reaching its true potential.

Terina, whilst identifying the huge workloads and lack of time, as constraints to the mentoring relationship, felt that the NCS curriculum had a very positive effect on the mentoring relationship. Terina's attitude about the constraints in her mentoring relationship and the NCS curriculum is revealed in the vignette below.

Some of the contextual challenges were the heavy workloads at school which inhibited my interaction with my mentee. There was not enough time to engage with the mentee. However, I found that the NCS curriculum fostered mentoring greatly. We have different learning outcomes which I believe is intended to give a child a holistic perspective of life Science. The holistic and integrative aspect of the NCS curriculum makes mentoring easier. Issues of democracy, human dignity, critical thought, which are fundamental to the NCS curriculum are also integral in the mentoring relationship. However, one should bear in mind that there are many challenges with this curriculum – paperwork, increased workloads, lack of libraries, lack of access to internet etc.

Krisha's also acknowledges that huge workloads, lack of time to execute effective mentoring and the restrictive NCS curriculum as contextual factors inhibiting the mentoring relationship. Krishna's experience of factors constraining the mentoring relationship is revealed in the vignette below.

Heavy workloads are the biggest drawback. There is no time to mentor because we are inundated with paperwork. This sometimes renders the mentoring conversation to a casual or social discussion. The NCS curriculum which has damaged the child's ability to read and write effectively has also impacted negatively on the mentoring relationship. The NCS curriculum has seen so many changes in the recent past, that teachers have become extremely confused, especially with regard to assessment practices. How can one mentor a novice in a confused state?

It is quite clear that all three master teacher mentors expressed dismay that their mentoring experiences were being hampered by constraints like lack of time to mentor teachers, the administrative burden placed on teachers and the confusing curriculum directives from the Department of Education.

4.10 CONCLUSION

It is evident from the discussion that all three respondents attempted to mentor their teachers from a radical humanistic perspective (Waghid & Louw, 2008). The paradigm shift in mentoring from a traditional functionalist approach to a radical humanistic perspective (Waghid & Louw, 2008) is manifested in the mentoring relationship where the three mentors encouraged a critical dialogue, a collaborative and collegial environment, problematised the status quo, contested textbook knowledge and engendered a philosophy of team spirit and shared vision – all which advanced the concept of professional development. The critical transfer of knowledge as highlighted by Freire (1970) was also an integral aspect of the mentoring conversations that took place between the respondents and their mentees.

The data also revealed that the common discourses that shaped the mentoring relationship of the three master teacher mentors and their mentees were collaboration and collegiality, critical dialogue. Inspite of the constraints of heavy workloads, limited time available to mentor teachers, and inadequate induction programmes, the three mentors did advance the professional capacity and personal development of their mentees through collaborative engagement and critical dialogue and in turn enhanced their own professional and personal growth.

The data analysis also revealed that the three master teachers, all having an advanced qualification level as well as vast experiences in teaching could explain the openness and the ability to create a critical and collaborative pedagogical space for mentoring colleagues and novice teachers. The recognition that being an expert and a novice mentor (Orland-Barak and Yinon, 2005) simultaneously as well as that knowledge production is a dynamic and continual process, which requires someone who has the wisdom and agility to deal with mentoring responsibilities. Master teachers with such expertise and confidence are therefore well poised to provide school-based mentoring responsibilities.

The next chapter attempts to locate these key findings within their respective body of literature with a view to theorising about these as it relates to master teachers.

CHAPTER FIVE: THEORISING THE EXPERIENCES OF THE MASTER TEACHER MENTORS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter presented data with vignettes within emerging themes. In this chapter the analysis of the data is extended within the context of the literature on mentoring. Through this extension, the chapter attempts to theorize about mentoring experience and mentorship by master teachers. The theorizing and critical discussion will be organized within the following themes: collaboration and collegiality; transgressing the culture of silence and fostering critical dialogue; master teacher experiences in the induction of novice teachers; master teacher mentors in promoting professional and personal development and constraints impacting on the mentoring relationship.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS AND THEORETICAL INSIGHT

The key findings have been identified from the data and analysis presented in chapter four. An attempt will be made in this section to locate the key findings within a body of literature on mentoring with a view to theorizing about the key findings of the study.

5.2.1 COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COLLEGIAL SUPPORT

Mutual understanding, love, trust and a shared vision were found to be key constructs to the collegial support and collaborative engagement that prevailed between the three master teacher mentors and their mentees. Hargreaves (1994) argues that collaboration and collegiality have been presented as having many virtues and particularly fruitful as a strategy for teacher development. Collegiality and collaboration takes teacher development beyond personal, idiosyncratic reflection, or dependence on outside experts, to a point where teachers can learn from each other, sharing and developing expertise together (Hargreaves, 1994). Singh and Manser (2002) also add that collegiality that

supports a notion of participation in the decision-making process is far more suited to creating a sense of community and holonomy than an autocratic style.

Fostering a collegial and collaborative environment with love, trust, shared vision and mutual understanding is possible as all three mentors have numerous years of experience as teachers and have studied at post-graduate level which would have positively impacted on their intellectual and professional capabilities. Their enhanced intellectual and professional capacity would allow them to embrace the discourses of love, trust, shared vision and mutual understanding that contribute immensely to the discourse of collaboration and collegiality. The trust, love, mutual understanding and shared responsibilities that existed between the mentor and mentee were possible because there were no clash of egos between the mentors and mentees and this is justified by sentiments expressed by the mentors such as *"felt like my equals"*, *" worked as team and always consulted as a team"* and *"never had a one-way relationship"*. The two-way dialogue and shared vision that characterised the mentoring relationship between the three mentors and their mentees suggests that setting the agenda for the conversations between the mentor and the mentee about a professional matter is a joint commitment and responsibility. It appears that when these mentors are engaging professionally with their mentees, the mutual trust and respect that they share suggest that neither of them assume that their knowledge is superior. The value of a shared agenda is also elaborated by Timperley (2001) who argues that mentoring conversations should involve both the mentor and mentee in determining the agenda (on what issues to raise) and in the stage of disclosing and evaluating observations, mentors summarise their evaluations and ask the novice teacher for their critical reactions, and once agreement on certain issues are reached then the next stage of diagnosing difficulties, working out strategies and doing something different is executed. Wang, Odelle and Schwille (2008) also contend that beginning teachers in a collaborative school environment reported that their mentors had a greater impact on their professional development as compared to those reported in an individualistic school culture – where the influence of mentors on novice teachers was limited because the relationships were not supported in the school culture.

The love, trust, mutual understanding and shared vision that contributes to the collegial and collaborative atmosphere between the mentor and mentee is also an interactional, mature and interdependent relationship that operates within a radical humanistic framework and may transcend individual roles or may create new roles (Waghid & Louw, 2008). The collegial and collaborative approach to mentoring, which is a shift from the rigid, "one-way" functionalist approach (Waghid & Louw, 2008) is paramount in fostering good mentoring relationships between the mentor and mentee. In most dysfunctional mentoring relationships collegiality and collaboration are lacking, while distrust, suspicion and differences in judgement between mentor and mentees seem to predominate (Scandura, 1998). The collegial and collaborative environment that was fostered by the three mentors in the study strengthened the mentoring relationship with their mentees and although differences and disagreements did occur on professional matters, they occurred as part of the open environment (that encouraged challenging the status quo) and questioning culture created by the three mentors. Therefore the mentoring relationship did not appear to degenerate into a dysfunctional partnership.

The collegial and collaborative environment that is fostered by all three master teacher mentors creates the pedagogical space for the mentees to be inquisitive, to challenge hegemonic control and also problematise the status quo. Hargreaves (1994) also adds that the confidence that comes with collegial sharing and support leads to greater readiness to experiment and take risks, and with a commitment to continuous improvement among teachers as a recognised part of their professional obligation.

The collegial and collaborative atmosphere could have also been encouraged by the mentees as an attempt to consolidate their relationship with the mentors and enhance their professional capacity as an educator and hence improve their competence. The collegial and collaborative relationship between the mentors and their mentees was not contrived and neither party had carte blanche in the relationship, as the genuine respect and love for each other neutralised any form of dominant power relationship. Collegial and collaborative environments also motivate teachers, who have specific talents, to manage a portfolio, be it intramural or extramural, regardless of their position in the hierarchy. This

enhances the professional domain, especially with issues relating to the subject matter, assessment etc. and offers learners and teachers the opportunity to enhance levels of productivity.

In any relationship, be it teacher-pupil, teacher-teacher, teacher-principal or mentor-mentee, collaborative and collegial support is not always present. Tensions and conflict do arise because one individual may want to impose a form of hegemonic control over the other person in the relationship because of age, patriarchy, experience, superior knowledge etc. Mutual trust, respect and love are lost and conflict may be the consequence of the relationship and eventually the objective of both parties developing professionally is stifled. The collegiality, collaboration, love and humour that prevailed between the three mentors and their mentees in this study contributed to the professional growth of both the mentors and mentees. This is because the mentors were probably subjected to an infusion of new ideas, and would have had to reflect on their own practices as they engaged with their mentees. Thus the relationship may be regarded as mutually beneficial, as both parties benefit from the interaction. It links to the notion of lifelong learning, and goes against the notion that experience and expertise is the simple transfer from the knowing to the unknowing, which is the classic functionalist model (Waghid & Louw, 2008). When educators consider themselves as builders in the context of the mentoring relationship, both parties are enriched, and more so in that the novice brings to the environment the latest research and insights, and vision of contemporary issues, which the mentor may not have had exposure to, due to his/her occupation with repeating instructions using the same methods.

Engaging teachers in collaborative and collegial support are important as they also provide opportunities for contributing, listening, supporting, discussing, giving feedback, reflecting on teaching, collective theorising by teachers, interrogation of the content of teaching, dialogic learning and also helps teachers renegotiate and reconstruct their shared knowledge.

5.2.2 FOSTERING CRITICAL DIALOGUE AND TRANSGRESSING THE CULTURE OF SILENCE

Developing critical reflective thoughts were strongly encouraged by all three mentors as revealed in the data. Mentor 2 in particular engaged her mentee to reflect on her teaching style as well as that of the mentor. This suggests that the mentor is not infallible as the mentor's inadequacies surfaced. This approach would have probably instilled a strong sense of confidence in the mentee and neutralised uneven power relationships that may have existed between the mentor and the mentee. Teaching, using a critically reflective approach, is also supported by McNally and Martin (1988) who argue that collaborative mentors combine support and challenge in ways whereby novice teachers are empowered to engage in learning to teach as a critically reflective process – and in this collaborative atmosphere mentors see their main task as one of being able to tune in to the individual needs of the novice teachers in a way that recognises them as future colleagues, yet also to extend their thinking about teaching and learning. A constant 'zigzag' of action and discussion with someone more expert in an atmosphere of collaboration and collegiality enhances the workplace learning of novice teachers (Timperley, 2001).

The idea of critical dialogue and critical reflection is also supported by Freire (1970) who contradicts the functionalist approach to education (which views education as a transmission of knowledge by trained technicians) and advocates a problem-solving approach to education as an interactive process through which problems are posed and answers collaboratively sought. The centrepiece of Freire's (1970) method is critical dialogue which is conversation with a purpose and focus. Critical dialogue shows that the object of study is not the exclusive property of the teacher and that knowledge is not produced somewhere in textbook offices and transferred to the student (Peterson, 2003). By discussion and extensive use of open-ended questioning by the teacher, students begin to think about the object or topic under study (Freire, 1970).

Mclaren's (2003) thoughts on the issue of hegemony are integral in understanding power relationships that exists between a mentor and mentee using either a functional lens or a radical humanistic lens (Waghid & Louw, 2008). Hegemony is a struggle in which the

powerful win the consent of those oppressed, with the oppressed unknowingly participating in their own oppression e.g. students not questioning the values, attitudes and social practices of the dominant society in a sustained and critical manner actually preserves the hegemony of the dominant class and the unequal relations of power and privilege remain hidden (Mclaren, 2003). This can be extrapolated to the mentor-mentee relationship, whereby the mentee refuses to question the authority of the mentor and rigidly accepts the status quo of the school, which is characteristic of a functional approach (Waghid & Louw, 2008) to mentoring relationships. Waghid and Louw (1998) add that mentoring using a radical humanistic approach is involved in the business of transforming oppressive and undemocratic hegemonic control.

The data in the study also clearly demonstrates the energy of the three master teacher mentors in emancipating their mentees by emphasising the transgression of the culture of silence through challenging the status quo. Opposing the status quo creates a fertile ground for the mentees, within the context of education, to construct and view reality in a critical and reflective way. In this way new knowledge and principles are created. Creating a questioning culture which is part of the strategy to challenge the status quo allows the mentor and mentee to explore the mentoring relationships with trust and confidence and neutralises the power relationship that exists in the mentoring relationship. The questioning culture also contributes to the insight and wisdom of mentor and mentee in the mentoring relationship and eliminates the tentative behaviour that may prevail on the part of the mentee as questioning the status quo encourages risk-taking and being inquisitive about issues relating to education (Hargreaves, 1994). The opportunity to question the status quo also recognises the status of the mentee in the mentoring relationship. This is in terms of his tertiary education or other knowledge and insights that the mentee brings to the relationship, and which may be personally useful but also can be transmitted to others. This places the mentee in a more equal footing, one where there is no hierarchy that impedes learning. Within the questioning culture, the role of the mentee can be transformed to that of a mentor, while the mentor assumes the subordinate role of the mentee. This role change done in a collaborative manner is useful to the mentoring relationship as it neutralises the hegemonic control the mentor may have

over the mentee. The benefit of the swapping roles is that it fosters trust and respect in the mentoring relationship and has a positive impact on the professional and personal domains of both the mentor and mentee.

Orland-Barak and Yinon (2005) also reflect on the role of mentors that encourage critical thinking, critical dialogue and challenging the status quo when they claim that mentors' reasoning and behaviour fluctuates between a novice and an expert. They argue that the 'expert mentor' are opportunistic and flexible, sensitive to task demands and to the social situations surrounding them while solving problems, representing problems in qualitatively rich and deep ways (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005). Experts are also flexible and autonomous in changing representations fast when it is appropriate to do so; they are not rigid in their conceptions and are not confused and misled by ambiguity and are challenged to reinterpret and reorganise their thinking when they experience dissonance (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005). By contrast, 'novice mentors' reasoning is characterised by rigidity, by their need to adopt a single, homogenous perspective on a problem, by a need to be accountable to authorities, a lack of sensitivity to how different contexts call for different kinds of solution and can easily be misled and blocked by the experience of dissonance brought about by new and unfamiliar situations (Orland-Barak & Yinon, 2005).

All three master teacher mentors move beyond the rigid, functionalist, banking system of education that anesthetizes and inhibits creative power (Waghid & Louw, 2008) but foster an open teaching and learning environment emphasising dialogical learning, critical thinking and subverting the culture of silence hence challenging the neo-liberalist agenda of our schooling system. The neo-liberal ideology, whereby the economy 'instructs' the education system to produce what the economy desires at the expense of choice and individual freedom (Stromquist, 2002; Eitzen & Zinn, 2006), produces a powerful myth about itself that it does need to be interrogated – hence the absence of questioning and stifling the language of critique and it is for this reason that education and mentoring in particular, should engender constructive debate, democratic practice and collective work (Gounari, 2006). The desire of the three master teachers to allow

their mentees to challenge the status quo suggests that the mentors are motivated in their attempt to create pedagogical spaces for their mentees to challenge the neo-liberal ideology that instructs our education system

The issue of collaborative engagement, collegial support, fostering critical dialogue and transgressing the culture of silence as activities performed by master teacher mentors are also crucial to the induction of novice teachers at schools in terms of their professional and personal growth.

5.2.3 INDUCTION OF NOVICE TEACHERS

Whilst there is no clear policy from the Department of Education in respect of an induction programme for novice teachers, a responsible, professional decision by the senior management team of any school is to ensure that a plan to induct new teachers is in place when they arrive at school. The functionality of schools is the buzzword amongst parents, education officials and other stakeholders and one contributory factor to a dysfunctional school is having teachers, who are allocated to a school and who are charged with the responsibility to be able to adapt to the ethos of the school as early as possible. Having a teacher confused about his role function and having him or her marginalised from being socialised into the culture of teaching, are detrimental to the professional growth of the school. The data in the study clearly reveals that in all three schools where the master teachers (subjects) taught, very little or no induction programmes were put in place for the novice teacher on his/her arrival at school and the high turnover of teachers are attributed to the lack of induction programmes for novice teachers, poor salaries and confusing directives from the department. Carter and Francis (2001) strongly argue for an effective induction programme at school, when they claim that when a novice teacher begins work at school, he/she is expected to understand the way the school functions in terms of the rules, ways of behaving and established relationships that give a particular school its unique character. Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) also add that beginning teachers assume responsibilities similar to those of experienced teachers while learning their job with limited experience and preparation

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resulting in attending to classroom management and procedures instead of learning how to teach well and improve student learning.

Mentors must assume a more responsible and professional role in the induction of novice teachers at schools. Merely engaging with the novice teachers about procedural matters like marking the register, understanding school rules, code of conduct for teachers and pupils does not develop the intellectual and professional domain of the novice teachers but emphasises a more technicist approach to education. Mentoring must not be short term but move beyond the discourse of performativity and proceed to a higher level of intellectual development and become an integral part of continuing professional development. Jones (2001) claims that the idea of preparing professionals is central to the training process of novice teachers and is described as preparatory service for teaching – here the philosophy underpinning this model is centred on the concept of developing reflective professionals rather than training in a technical sense which provides a framework for a relationship based on mutual trust and respect that bind the mentor and mentee together (Jones, 2001). Therefore, mentors must be given the opportunity to develop the professional domain of the novice teacher in terms of reflections of practice inside and outside the classroom, lesson planning and implementation, critically unpacking learning and teaching support materials, participation in extra curricula and co-curricula activities at school and outside school and participation in community-based activities. The development of radical and transformative intellectuals who are in the job of questioning conformity (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985) and challenging rigid bureaucratic regulation applied in a routine way are other challenges that mentors should be confronted with when engaging with novice teachers. The literary work by Wang, Odelle and Schwille (2008) has relevance in this regard, when they claim that mentoring in the induction phase should have a growth-producing experience such as co-thinking with beginning teachers about teaching – focussing novice teachers on how children think, the connections between theory an practice, modelling teaching that demonstrates principles of good teaching, analyzing and assessing students by using rhetorical questions and follow-up probes. Jones and Straker (2006) also maintain that initial training and induction programmes should provide a wide range of teaching experiences,

during which trainees or novice teachers encounter diverse perspectives on teaching and learning and are encouraged to engage in critical dialogue and reflection, not only within the boundaries of the mentorship relationships, but within the community of practice.

Although poor salaries, lack of induction programmes and confusing directives from the education department were identified as major factors pushing teachers away from the profession, an effective induction programme that promotes collaboration, collegiality, and critical dialogue and hence developing the novice teacher professionally are strategies that will curtail the high turnover of teachers. Stanulis and Flodin (2009) argue that creating a quality induction programme can make a tremendous difference in teacher satisfaction, growth, retention and impact on students. Comprehensive induction programmes are a way to accelerate this process and minimize the amount of time it takes for a beginning teacher to be most effective in promoting student learning and strong induction programmes that provide opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision making and that have strong administrative support along with support to develop strong classroom management can help teachers in the profession (Stanulis & Flodin, 2009). Such programmes support organizational and instructional conditions and combat high attrition rates help novices develop as high quality teachers early in their career (Stanulis & Flodin, 2009).

The activities of the mentors in developing the professional and personal development of their mentees are an important part of the study and will be illuminated in the discussion to follow.

5.2.4 EXPERIENCES OF THE MASTER TEACHER MENTORS IN PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is evident that from the discussion thus far, all three mentors embrace the discourses of collaboration, collegiality, critical dialogue and transgress the culture of silence that contribute to the professional and personal development of their mentees. Attention will be focussed on the activities that master teacher mentors perform that promote professional and personal development.

The findings of the study reveal a strong sense of a shared vision and collaboration between the mentor and mentee. Not at all times were the three mentors experts in their fields and this necessitated canvassing the support of their mentees and this is justified by sentiments expressed by the mentors such as *"during these critical dialogues some of my inadequacies surface"*; *"I would also canvass her views about how to teach a section"* and *"their knowledge which is new, could add greatly to the debates during our professional discussions"*. This fostered reciprocal learning between the mentor and mentee. By a joint exploration of teaching ideas, cooperating teachers (mentors) and student teachers (mentees) would benefit from interaction that allows them to move in and out of their positions as expert and novice planners by being able to take turns sharing ideas and questions about teaching (Smith, 2007). As the responsibility for suggesting and approving ideas becomes shared between cooperating teacher and student teachers, the discourse around teaching needs to change from traditional teacher-student talk to a more collaborative building of knowledge – helping cooperating and student teachers embrace different conceptions of their roles, and the discourse that accompany these roles, requires us to better prepare them for joint work (Smith, 2007).

Apart from encouraging reciprocal learning, all three mentors encouraged their mentees to develop their professional expertise out of school. This is demonstrated in the sentiments expressed by the mentors such as *"joining other sports bodies"* and *"encouraged my mentee to join a union"*. Engaging with teacher labour unions empowers the mentees and offers them the opportunity to interrogate issues such as employment contracts, code of conduct of teachers or recourse for unfair dismissals etc. This also impacts positively on the leadership qualities of the mentee and enhances the connectedness between the mentor and the mentee. Joining sports bodies as an extracurricular activity would also empower the mentee in drawing up of sports fixtures (league and knockout matches) and organise sport at a school or community level. Improving the public relations skills of the mentee and hence the communication skills which are paramount in the mentoring relationship and the school at large is also a form of quid pro quo for the mentee when engaging in professional activities outside of school.

Learning administrative skills in sport can be transferred to sporting bodies on a provincial, national and international level as well as within the school context. Observing or teaching in other schools, businesses or industries or serving as a sub-examiner for national or provincial examinations and writing an article for a local, provincial or national newspaper are other examples of professional expertise outside the domain of the school. Sachs and Day (2004) identify professional development outside the confines of school as democratic professionalism. The latter emphasises collaborative cooperation between teachers and other stakeholders, suggesting that teachers have a wider responsibility than the single classroom and includes contributing to the school, the system, other students, the wider community and collective responsibilities of teachers themselves as a group and the teacher profession.

Personal development is also an aspect that all three mentors emphasised in their relationship with their mentees. As Sachs and Day (2004) note the person plays an instrumental part in the work of the professional and therefore any conception of continuing professional development (CPD) needs to include in it the education of the 'self', including the emotions. The knowledge of the self is generated by teachers engaging regularly in reflection in, on and about their values, purposes, emotions and relationships (Sachs & Day, 2004). The latter also claim that good teaching is charged with positive emotion and is just a matter of knowing one's subject, being efficient or having the correct competencies but that good teachers are passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their classes with pleasure, creativity and joy (Sachs & Day, 2004). Professional and personal development are not dichotomous but are closely linked to each other as both are shaped by common discourses of love, trust and mutual understanding. The high premium that the three master teacher mentors place on confidentiality, love, trust and humility suggest that personal development is a priority for all three mentors. The emotional intelligence skills (ability to use emotions to manage behaviour and relations with others) of the three mentors, which involve creating an atmosphere of love and happiness with their mentees, are actually involved in the business of improving job performance and life satisfaction (South African Management Development Institute, 2005).

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Although all three mentors displayed enthusiasm in the mentoring relationship they did, however, articulate several constraints that impacted on the mentoring relationship. A critical reflection of these constraints will now be discussed.

5.2.5 CONSTRAINTS IMPACTING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

The key findings of the study in respect of constraints impacting the mentoring relationship reveals that two of the three master teacher mentors are seriously challenged in performing activities in mentoring as certain disabling factors surface that impacts negatively on the mentoring process.

The NCS (National Curriculum Statement) curriculum with its confusing directives and numerous changes, the heavy workloads and limited time for mentoring were identified as a major factor negatively impacting the mentoring relationship. The democratised NCS curriculum was designed to foster learning which encompasses human rights, multilingualism and being sensitive to diversity of cultures locally and abroad and a curriculum that reflects the values of society and economy (Harley & Wedekind, 2004). However, the pre-fixed, uniform NCS curriculum was designed and implemented as policy with very little "grassroots" input (input from the lower echelons of education e.g. teachers, parents etc.). This scenario inhibits or pushes teachers from creatively participating in curriculum issues. The curricula, in particular are imposed on educators using the "top-down approach" inhibiting teachers, parents and learners to question its relevance and validity. Mentoring is also impacted negatively, especially within the domain of professional development, as the mentor struggles to engage with the mentee about the learning outcomes, assessment standards and assessment (which are integral in directing NCS curriculum) as these aspects of the curriculum have undergone radical changes in the recent past resulting in extreme confusion. Constructive engagement with the NCS curriculum is therefore lost resulting in great deficit on the part of the mentor and hence the mentees and learners in class. This view is also shared by Shacklock and Smyth (1998) who reflected on the rigid competency discourse in teacher education.

Competencies are pre-fixed and handed down to teachers without any interrogation, discussion or debate. With the NCS curriculum also came increased workloads. The work intensification involved teachers responding to greater demands and multiple innovations (e.g. Curriculum 2005, NCS curriculum) – resulting in: reduced time for relaxation during the work day, inadequate time for the teacher to retool their skills and creates and reinforces scarcities of preparation time (Hargreaves, 1994).

The education department has failed to recognise that heavy workloads and little time for the mentor to do his/her own work (which has impacted negatively on capacitating them professionally) means less time to engage in effective mentoring. Whilst the education department has put into policy that master teachers should assume the role of mentors, the mechanics and logistics of how the mentoring process is to be executed is lacking. Principals and other members of management offer inadequate leadership with respect to the management of the mentoring process at schools.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The experiences of the master teachers in mentoring teachers as identified in the study illuminates the purpose of the study and attempts to answer the critical question (*What are the experiences of master teachers in mentoring teachers?*). The qualitative methodology using semi-structured interviews was employed to explore mentoring and in particular the master teacher experiences as a mentor, which is a new phenomenon in South Africa. Using the interpretive paradigm the phenomenological study of the master teachers experiences of mentoring teachers was explored in an attempt to understand the relationships between people in a social context (Popkewitz, 1984) – in the context of the study it involves examining the relationship between the master teacher mentors and their mentees and the specific experiences of the master teacher in the mentoring relationship. One of the limitations of this study is not having the mentee's voice being heard as this domain would have enriched the data analysis and added great value to the study. However, the current methodology does not allow for this. As the study was confined to three mentors from three different schools, the study has limited generalisability and no

attempt is made to compare the mentoring to other schools in the same area or rest of the province.

Throughout the discussion in chapter five major emphasis was placed on the three master teacher mentors in the study and their great enthusiasm for creating an environment of collaboration and collegiality, fostering critical, creative thinking and encouraging an inquiry environment and making their mentees voices heard by emphasising a shift away from the culture of silence (Freire, 1970). This is in keeping with the Freire's thinking, who rejects the banking system of education as it inhibits the ability of an individual to develop critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world (Freire, 1970). The three master teacher mentors approached mentoring by contradicting the traditional, rigid, functionalist approach to mentoring, but championed the radical humanistic perspective to mentoring that provides the need for a critical co-learner and critical dialogue between mentor and mentee, problematising the status quo, provides a critical analysis of power relations and illuminates issues of social justice (Waghid & Louw, 2008).

Although the three master teacher mentors within the radical humanistic framework embraced the discourses that promoted mentoring for personal and professional development, all three mentors felt constrained by the anomalies in the NCS curriculum, the huge workoads, limited time, inadequate input as mentors in the induction of novice teachers and a lack of vision by the education department in providing a logistical framework to effectively execute mentoring – all of which impacted negatively on the mentoring process.

As a necessary recommendation it is of paramount importance that policy-makers understand the need for effective mentoring to promote personal and professional development of teachers and therefore put into place proper logistical mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of mentoring in schools as opposed to farcical approach to mentoring that may be occurring within our education system. Subject advisors must be empowered about the new trends in mentoring (e.g. the radical humanistic approach to

mentoring) and must cascade the necessary tools to teachers to implement effective mentoring at schools. The National Minister of Education who has cited ineffective, lazy teachers for the poor, 60,2% national matric pass rate is evidence enough for the education department to recognise the need for mentoring as a strategy to transform the dysfunctional schools and improve quality teaching which in turn will improve the matric results and quality of education as a whole. Graeme Bloch, the Development Bank of Southern Africa education policy analyst, who was interviewed by Warder Meyer (Daily News, 2010) adds that teachers should be be paid what they deserve and in order to improve the capacity of teachers there should be a massive and sustained programme of teacher professional development – hence the need for mentoring contributing towards the good quality of teachers.

It must be noted that the master teacher mentor, who is a professional and specialised in his field of teaching should not be a slave to the "cult of expertise" with their focus on relatively narrow areas of knowledge, technical formalism and willingness to be seduced by power but operate as an amateur intellectual, with the desire to be moved not by profit but by love for and unquenchable interest in the larger picture, in making connections across lines and barriers and refuse to be tied down to a speciality and one who is driven to raise moral issues and question issues of social justice (Said, 1993). The latter also adds that the intellectual spirit as an amateur can transform the professional routine that most of us go through into something more lively and radical and instead of doing what one is supposed to do one can ask why one does it, and who benefits from it (Said, 1993). This vision of a master teacher mentor will contribute to the foundation for a mentoring pedagogy to move mentors beyond the technical competence of learning to teach to seeing teachers as autonomous reflective practitioners who will go on learning to teach and develop professionally throughout their career (McNally and Martin, 1988).

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APPENDIX A – DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY PARTICIPANT

P.P. Pather
P.O. Box 32
Stanger
4450
3 September 2009

Dear Master Teacher

Re: Declaration of Consent - Participant

I am a masters student (student number: 8319510) registered at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in the faculty of education. I am currently conducting research as part of my study and hereby request your full and active participation in the study, **"Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers".**

The main purpose of the research is to explore the master teacher experiences in mentoring teachers. My data production will depend largely on your participation. *If you agree to participate, you will be required to do the following:*

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED TIME ALLOCATION	PROPOSED TIME FRAME	FORMAT OF DATA COLLECTION
Participate in an Individual semi-structured interview	**45 minutes**	**17-23 Sept 2009**	**Audio recording and written**

The data will be used for research purposes only. The findings of the research may have implications for: master and senior teachers (in a mentoring role) in your school in understanding the dynamics of the process of mentoring; school management team in understanding the role mentors play in enhancing the professional lives of educators; national policy makers who design policies in respect of the professional development of educators and the role of mentors. Permission is also requested from you for the publication of the findings in my dissertation.

Approval for the research project has been granted by both the Department of Education (KZN) as well as your principal.

Your anonymity in terms of the participant's response, evidence and documentation used in the research will be guaranteed. Should a need arise to disclose a name or a place in the reporting process, pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. Data produced during the research process will be kept in my study (20 Blaine Street, Stanger, 4450) under lock and key and will be disposed off, after five years of completion of the study.

Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage for any reason.

Please complete **DECLARATION OF CONSENT** form and return to researcher (P.P. Pather) (see attached form). Withdrawal from the study will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please contact my supervisor, Professor Labby Ramrathan on 031-2603489 or 0826749829.

Thanking you

_____

P.P. Pather (8319510)   **CELL:** 0845554038

Participation in research project: Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers

Declaration of consent:

I ....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

....
    SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   **DATE**

APPENDIX B – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOL

P.P. Pather
P.O. Box 32
Stanger
4450
1 September 2009

………………….. School

For attention: Principal
……………………….
……………………….
……..(Address)

Re: **Permission to conduct research in your school**

I am a masters student (student number: 8319510) registered at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, in the faculty of education. I am currently conducting research as part of my study and hereby request your consent to conduct research in your school on the study, **"Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers".**

The main purpose of the research is to explore the master teacher experiences in mentoring teachers. My data production will be based on participation of a "master teacher" (participant) from your school. The method of data collection will include the following:

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED TIME ALLOCATION	PROPOSED TIME FRAME	FORMAT OF DATA COLLECTION
Individual semi-structured interview	45 minutes	17-23 Sept 2009	Audio recording and written

The data will be used for research purposes only. The findings of the research may have implications for: master and senior teachers (in a mentoring role) in your school in understanding the dynamics of the process of mentoring; school management team in understanding the role mentors play in enhancing the professional lives of educators; national policy makers who design policies in respect of the professional development of educators and the role of mentors.

The anonymity in terms of the participant's response, evidence and documentation used in the research will be guaranteed. Should a need arise to disclose a name or a place in the reporting process, pseudonyms will be used to protect their identity. Data produced during the research process will be kept in my study (20 Blaine Street, Stanger, 4450) under lock and key and will be disposed off, after five years of completion of the study.

The participants will be made aware that their participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any stage for any reason. Withdrawal from the study will in no way result in any form of discrimination or disadvantage.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please contact my supervisor, Professor Labby Ramrathan on 031-2603489 or 0826749829.

Thanking you

_____
P.P. Pather (8319510)

APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS

This schedule (for the study "**Master teacher experiences of mentoring teachers**") is directed to level 1 educators at school who have recently achieved the "Master Teacher" status.

Dear Mentor

The purpose of this interview schedule is to gather in-depth information through critical dialogue to shed light on the experiences of master teachers in your relationship of mentoring teachers. The information you give here is strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose mentioned above. All names of participants and schools in which they teach will be substituted with pseudonyms to protect the rights of privacy of the participants in terms of anonymity and confidentiality. All recorded data will be housed in my study (20 Blaine Street, Stanger, 4450) under lock and key.

Thank you

P.P. Pather

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes. The following information needs to be asked before the dialogue commences.

Background information: Teacher mentor
1. Name of Mentor (optional):
2. Age.............
3. Race................
4. Gender................
5. Nationality....................
6. Geographical location of school............................
7. Qualification level..........................
8. Years of teaching experience..........
9. Name of school (optional):
10. Type of school.............

Background information: mentee
1. Name of mentee(optional).......................
2. Age................
3. Gender........................
4. Race..................................
5. Nationality.....................................
6. Qualifications...............................
7. Year of study (if student teacher).............

Being a mentor,

1. When did you achieve your master teacher status and were you aware that master teachers are supposed to fulfill their roles as mentors in their schools?

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2 What are the experience level of teachers are you engaged with that are your mentees?

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3. What is your understanding of it means to be a mentor teacher and how did you acquire this understanding?

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What are your thoughts about this statement? "mentors experiences, reasoning and behaviour fluctuates between being a novice mentor and an expert mentor?"

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As a master teacher did the department of education engage you in any form of formal training?

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4. Reflecting on past experiences as a beginning or student teacher, where you assumed the role of the mentee – what made your mentor special?

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Why was this person your mentor?

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Was there mutual trust between you and your mentor?

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5. What and why do you value being a mentor?

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6. Go back to the first time when you met with your mentee. Describe the feelings/emotions/concerns that you experienced?

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7. Was there mutual trust between you and your mentee?

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8. Give one word that describes your relationship you're your mentee.

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9. What do you think made your relationship with your mentee work/not work?

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10. What is your attitude when your mentee makes a mistake in class while teaching and based on your attitude/reaction how did your mentee feel about the way you treated him/her?

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11. Was an opportunity created for your mentee to engage in reflection on their development and if yes, what were some of your experiences when engaging with your mentee?

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12. Do you encourage your mentee to follow the status quo of the school or encourage him/her to challenge the status quo?

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13. What qualities did you admire in your mentee that were important for the mentoring relationship and how did these qualities enhance the development of you and the mentee?

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14. What did you see in your mentee that had a negative effect on the mentoring relationship?

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15. Did you ever as a mentor encourage a critical dialogue with your mentee about some professional matter and if yes, what opportunities did you provide for your mentee to engage in critical dialogue?

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16. By virtue of your position and status as "master teacher" mentor did your mentee feel threatened by this power relationship that existed between you and the mentee? If no, how did this power relationship get neutralized?

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17. On reflection of your involvement with your mentee, what were some of the activities (unplanned or planned) that you and your mentee were involved in:

that contributed to the development of the mentoring relationship?

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that contributed to the personal and professional development of the mentee into the community of teaching, within and outside the school?

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18. Whom did you engage with when confronted with problems/challenges related to your mentee ?

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19. **In your professional engagement with your mentee, did you as a mentor enhance your professional development? If so, in what ways did you advance professionally?**

20. **What contextual realities enhanced/inhibited what you or you mentee could or could not do as part of your relationship?**

21. **How is your role as master teacher mentor in your school valued as part of the professional development as specified by IQMS?**

22. With regard to novice teachers are there induction programmes at schools?

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23.   Explain the role of the mentor in induction programmes and what is your idea of an induction programme?

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24   Most schools are experiencing a high turnover of novice teachers. What are the possible reasons for teachers leaving the school?

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Can effective mentoring alleviate this problem?

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25. Describe some of the conversational experiences between you and the mentee.

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26. How has the NCS curriculum fostered or inhibited mentoring?

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