UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

The Nature of Advice Shared in Formal Mentoring Experiences

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

GRADUATE DIVISION OF EDUCATION RESEARCH

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER 8, 2000

Canada

Abstract

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2000

This dissertation takes a serious look at the concerns of mentorees and the nature of advice passed on to them from their mentors. Four questions were of particular interest. They included: 1) What caused the advice to be shared? 2) What advice was passed on to mentorees? 3) How was advice shared with mentorees? 4) How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them? Teacher Concern Theory provided the theoretical framework for this study. Fuller, Parsons and Watkins (1974) proposed that teachers progress through a three-stage sequence of concerns. First, they are concerned about themselves (self-adequacy). Next, they are concerned with responsibilities (teaching tasks). Finally, they become concerned about pupils.

A case study approach was utilized. Six mentorees who participated in the Red Deer Public School District's Formal Mentoring Program were tracked for seven months (August 1999-March 2000). Mentorees recorded the advice they had received in journals. Seventy-three journal entries are critiqued. In addition, data were gathered by interviewing the mentorees near the end of their formal mentoring experience.

The findings of this study showed that advice may be mentor or mentoree initiated in response to a concern of self-survival, teaching tasks or students. In addition, this study supports that teachers have concerns; however, the mentorees did not progress through the three stages of concerns as theorized by researchers (e.g., Fuller, 1969, 1971; Fuller et al., 1974; Fuller & Bown 1975). In contrast, the mentorees moved randomly in and out of the three stages. This finding is consistent with the work of Sitter and Lanier (1982) and Olsen and Heyse (1990). They too found that the participants in their studies did not experience concerns in a particular sequence. This finding showed that there may be concerns with teacher concern theory.

Furthermore, it was discovered that the advice mentorees received related to self concerns, task concerns and impact or student concerns. Also, it was found that advice was shared during informal and formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. Moreover, it was proposed that mentorees utilized or intended to utilize the advice presented to them because they felt it was logical and made sense. These findings not only showed the intricacies of mentoring, but also showed mentoring to be a worthwhile professional development activity for teachers. These finding are unique to the sample studied and may not be representative of a larger group.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks goes out to several individuals who helped make this dissertation a reality. First, thank you to the wonderful people in the Red Deer Public School District, especially the teachers who participated in this study. Due to confidentially issues, I cannot list their names. Specifically, thank you to Mr. Don Falk, Associate Superintendent for the Red Deer Public School District, who supported this study from its inception and provided a welcoming environment each time I visited.

Secondly, thank you to the dedicated group of professionals at the University of Calgary, especially my supervisor Dr. Alice Boberg and my supervisory team consisting of Dr. Bruce Clark and Professor Samuel Mitchell. Much like mentors, these individuals offered advice that was vital in the creation and completion of this research project.

Third, thank you to my external examiners, Dr. Peter Robinson from the University of Calgary and Dr. Mike Andrews from the University of Alberta. I appreciate the time and effort you have put into examining my work.

Finally, thank you to my loving wife, Sandy Szumlas who supported me throughout the course of this degree and my research.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful wife, Sandy, my daughter, Katrina and my son, Justin.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

There are two common characteristics of formal mentorship programs. First,

formal mentorship programs are driven by organizations in which the programs exist.

The sponsoring organization plans activities for participants. For example, practical

inservicing related to employees' line of work. Second, mentors and mentorees are paired

and expected to work together for an agreed upon length of time. Formal mentoring

programs have been established in many fields, such as nursing (Brown, 1999), law

enforcement (Fagan, 1986), science (Chiogioji & Pritz, 1992), business (Murphy, 1995;

Roche, 1979) and education (Breeding & Whitworth, 1999; Debolt, 1991; Garvey, 1999;

Gold & Pepin, 1987; Stevens, 1995) as a way of nurturing and assisting a new generation

of employees. In the field of teaching, the Red Deer Public School District took the

initiative with the Alberta Teachers' Association to create and implement the first formal

mentorship program in Alberta, Canada.

No matter the context, mentors take on several roles as they strive to help

mentorees. Previous researchers have identified that mentors may function as advisors,

teachers, coaches, guides, trainers, positive role models, developers of talent, listeners,

motivators, opener of doors, protectors, role models, sponsors, and leaders (Galvez-

Hjornevik, 1986; Gold and Pepin,1987). The advisor role was the central focus to this

research. For the purpose of this study, "advice" has been defined as information and/or

suggestions that have been passed on from one person to another.

Shulman (1986) and Tellez (1992) noted that beginning teachers called on mentor

teachers for individual advice; however, there was no indication of what triggered or

sparked the advice. Nor was there any indication of the specific advice shared. These

absences in the literature were the impetus for this study, to capture the occasions

advice was received by mentorees working in the Red Deer Public School District.

Moreover, situations that resulted in advice being shared were analyzed from the point of

view of Teacher Concern Theory (Fuller 1969, 1971; Fuller et al., 1974; Fuller & Bown,

1975; Veenman, 1984). The data was also explored to determine how the advice was

shared and if the advice passed on to mentorees was utilized. Exploring these

uninvestigated areas will result in an increased understanding of the process of

mentoring, which may lead to recommendations for improving formal mentoring

experiences. The overall purpose of this study was not to generate theory, but rather to

describe cases and to create hypotheses for future study.

The Significance of the Issue

Fuller et al. (1974) described three stages of concerns as teachers develop

professionally: self-survival, teaching tasks, and students. However, the advice passed on

to mentorees that assisted them with their concerns has not been studied. Analyzing the

concerns of teachers and the advice passed on to them may help school officials affirm

that mentoring is a productive professional development activity. Second, understanding

how advice can be effectively passed from mentor to mentoree may improve formal

mentoring experiences. Third, this study is significant because a descriptive method of

data collection, journals, was utilized. A critique of the research method may benefit

future researchers.

Overview of the Research Method

A case study approach was utilized to know six mentorees participating in the

Red Deer Public School Distict's Formal Mentorship Program. Each mentoree or case

kept a journal of the advice they received from their mentor. In addition, each of the six

participants were interviewed. The explanation building process outlined by Yin (1992,

1994) was utilized to analyze the data. This document is rich in description, so that

readers can make generalizations amongst similar contexts they have experienced or are

currently experiencing.

There is no universally accepted definition of mentoring. Most people understand

mentoring as a relationship between two people, a mentor and the person being assisted.

The Canadian Dictionary (1998) defined the word "mentor" as a "wise and trusted

counselor or teacher" (p. 855). Within this paper mentor refers to a veteran teacher. On

the other hand, several words, such as "protégé", "mentee" and "mentoree" have been

used to describe the person with less experience who is assisted by a mentor. Conway

(1998) believed "protégé" and "mentee" have a patronizing connotation attached to them.

In some of the most recent work regarding mentoring the word, "mentoree" has been

used to describe the inexperienced person being assisted by a mentor (e.g., Conway,

1998). The word "mentoree" is close in its pronunciation to the word mentor and also

represents the closeness that should be present between people engaged in a mentoring

relationship. For these reasons, in this paper "mentoree" is defined as the person who

receives advice from a mentor.

<u>Assumptions</u>

The following assumptions apply to this dissertation:

1) Advice will be passed on from mentors to mentorees.

2) Mentorees are able to recall well-remembered events in which advice was received

    Well-remembered events are defined as happenings that are interpreted as particularly

salient, and thus stored in one's memory (Carter, 1993, 1994; Gonzalez & Carter, 1996).

3) Through the analysis of mentorees' recollections of well-remembered events, as recorded in journals, it should be possible to gain an understanding of beginning teachers' concerns and the nature of advice shared with them.

4) The results of this study will have useful applications for people in the future, such as professional developers, individuals involved in formal mentorship programs and those interested in mentoring.

<p style="text-align:center;">Limitations</p>

The primary limitation of this study is the lack of mentor participation. The original design of the study included mentors; however, only three out of twelve mentors agreed to participate. Of the three mentors, one did not follow through with the journal commitment. Another mentor dropped out of the study because their mentoree resigned from the school board. The third mentor carried through with the journal commitment and submitted regular journal entries; however, in discussion with my supervisor it was felt that confidentiality would be threatened if the findings from one individual were reported. Further, one individual could not offer enough information to be reviewed. Therefore, this dissertation is limited to the mentorees' point of view.

Second, this study was limited to the advice received by middle school and high school mentorees. No elementary teachers were part of the study, since no elementary teachers participated in the Red Deer Mentorship Program.

Finally, there are limitations to using a human research instrument. Human errors can be made in the interpretation of the data (Merriam, 1998). In an effort to decrease the

threat of human error the research subjects verified the interpretations made by the researcher.

Context of the Study

Since the context is an integral part of mentoring it cannot be ignored (Hunt & Michael, 1983). All six of the mentorees studied worked for the Red Deer Public School District in Alberta, Canada. The Red Deer Public School District serves more than 9000 students from kindergarten to grade twelve. There are twenty-six public schools in Red Deer. Of the twenty-six schools, twenty are elementary schools, four are middle schools and two are high schools. Approximately 520 teachers work for Red Deer Public School District (Red Deer Public School District Website, 2000).

The mentorship program was led by a steering committee consisting of teachers and administrators (the associate superintendent, a vice-principal, a teacher representing the local teachers' union, a mentor teacher and a second year teacher). The steering committee made decisions related to program goals, selection of mentorees, training and budget.

The goals of the Red Deer Mentorship Program included the following:

- to support development of the knowledge, skills and attributes needed by beginning teachers to be successful in their teaching positions;

- to transmit the culture of the school, school system and teaching profession to beginning teachers;

- to provide an opportunity for beginning teachers to analyze and reflect on their teaching with coaching from veteran teachers;

- to initiate and build a foundation with beginning teachers for the continued study of teaching;

- to promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers;

- to develop the knowledge and skills of effective mentoring for participating veteran teachers; and

- to improve teaching performance of participating beginning and veteran teachers. (Mentorship Program: A Model Project, 1999)

To accomplish the above goals the steering committee first agreed upon the criteria for participation in the mentorship program. Potential mentorees had to be either new to teaching or new to the school district. Consequently, twelve mentorees met the criteria to participate in the mentoring program.

In August 1999 each mentoree and their respective principal were sent a letter from the Associate Superintendent of the Red Deer District explaining the mentorship program. Each principal was advised that they should appoint a "buddy" or experienced teacher to assist a new teacher on staff. The buddy's role was to offer advice and to help the beginning teacher in their first few weeks of employment. In a subsequent memo the superintendent advised the beginning teachers that they should bring a mentor teacher to the first formal meeting of the mentoring program. All of the "buddies" became mentors. This method of pairing was unique since new teachers were able to ask someone else to be their mentor, if they felt uncomfortable with their buddy support.

Four after school call back sessions were planned over the course of the school year. Both mentors and mentorees attended all four of these sessions. Mentorees provided input for session topics by completing need assessment surveys. The topic for session

one, in September 1999, was an introduction to mentoring. A professional development

facilitator from the Alberta Teachers' Association led the session. During the session

mentoring was defined, roles and responsibilities were outlined and the participants had

an opportunity to further get to know their partners. Session two, in November, focussed

on team building. The associate superintendent led session two. The participants viewed a

video and engaged in small group activities. The third session, in February, which was

again led by the associate superintendent, focussed on the topic of classroom

management. The group viewed a video and shared ideas related to classroom

management. A final meeting was planned to celebrate the program and peoples'

accomplishments over the year.

The mentorship program operated with a four thousand dollar budget. The money

was primarily used for substitute teacher time. Each new teacher and their mentor were

allocated four half days of teaching relief. Participants were encouraged to work together

on these days. Some mentors and mentorees attended conferences while others used the

time to meet and share ideas.

<u>Organization of this Study</u>

This study is organized into six chapters. Chapter One introduced the study,

which is centered on exploring the advice that mentorees received from their mentors.

Chapter Two, the literature review, highlights research in the areas of teacher concern

theory and mentoring. The research methods are detailed in Chapter Three. The findings

are shared in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five the findings are discussed. Chapter Six

concludes the study with a summary of the major research conclusions,

recommendations, reflections of the research method, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter One Summary

This study has been created to understand the nature of advice mentorees received from their mentors. Specifically, the study was designed to capture the mentoree's concerns and the advice they received. Furthermore, the study was designed to analyze how advice was shared with mentorees and to determine if the advice received by mentorees was utilized. Teacher concern theory (Fuller, 1969, 1971; Fuller et al., 1974; Fuller and Bown 1975; Veenman, 1984) provided the theoretical framework for the study. Overall, this study will result in an increased understanding of mentoring.

Also discussed in this chapter were the definitions, assumptions, limitations underlying the study, the context of the study, and an overview of the research method. In this paper "mentoree" is defined as the person who receives advice from a mentor. The major assumptions were that mentors shared advice with mentorees and that mentorees were able to recall the advice they had received. The primary limitation of this study was the lack of mentor participation. The study took place in the Red Deer Public School District. A case study research approach was utilized.

In the next chapter literature relevant to this study will be reviewed. The literature pertaining to teacher concern theory and mentoring will be of particular interest.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to synthesize research related to teacher concern theory (e.g., Fuller, 1969, 1971; Fuller et al., 1974; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Veenman, 1984), which has been selected as the theoretical base of this study. In addition, literature regarding mentoring is synthesized, so that the readers of this report have a common understanding of the topic of study.

Information for this literature was collected through a search of the Educational Resources Information Center Database and the University of Calgary library collection. Information was also gathered from the full-text proceedings of the International Mentoring Association Conferences that have been held over the past decade. Search terms such as: mentoring, mentorship, mentor, protégé, mentoree and beginning teachers were used to identify articles related to the topic of study. Several research articles and articles of opinion were analyzed.

Teachers' Needs and Concerns

French (1996) stated, "agreement is nearly universal among educational theoreticians, teacher trainers, and researchers that the first year of teaching is the most difficult and least appreciated phase in a teacher's career" (p.17). The responsibilities of a first year teacher are enormous and stressful. On the first day of classes a beginning teacher is expected to do the same job as a seasoned veteran (French, 1996; Gray & Gray, 1985; Krasnow, 1993; Veenman, 1984). Several researchers like Veenman (1984) and Myton (1984) have described the problems that new teachers face. After an extensive meta-analysis of 83 international studies, Veenman (1984) discovered twenty-four common problems that new teachers experience. They included (in order from most

prevalent to least): classroom discipline, student motivation, dealing with individual differences, assessment, relationships with parents, organization of class work, lack of resources, dealing with individual student problems, lack of prep time, relations with colleagues, lesson planning, effective use of teaching methods, awareness of school policies, finding the learning level of students, knowledge of subject matter, burden of clerical work, relations with administrators, inadequate school equipment, dealing with slow learners, dealing with cultural differences, use of resources, lack of spare time, inadequate guidance, and large class sizes.

With these problems, new teachers experience an array of feelings. Krasnow (1993) studied two groups of first year teachers that participated in a series of inservices designed to provide support during the first year on the job. Unfortunately, the second group of teachers did not complete phase two of the inservice program. A few teachers were instructed by their principals to attend other workshops, a few returned to complete courses at university and the rest cited that they wanted more time for themselves. Therefore, the results are based solely upon six teachers that completed one phase of inservicing, over a three-month period. However, through the use of questionnaires, interviews and tape-recorded proceedings it was determined those new teachers had feelings of self-doubt, insecurity and aloneness (p. 9).

Fuller (1969) conducted two studies to conceptualize the concerns of teachers. Six student teachers met once week with a counseling psychologist to discuss their concerns. All sessions were tape-recorded. This process was then repeated for a second semester with a different group of eight student teachers. The concerns discussed were categorized into the following areas: people (principal, supervisor, parents), school situation (plant,

facilities, rules, policies), subject matter and evaluation, discipline, seminar, attitudes toward self, pupils and methods (p. 212). It was discovered that concerns relative to the student teachers' performance or self-adequacy were the focus for the first part of the semester, while pupils were discussed less frequently and much later in the term. The primary source of error was that the student teachers could have changed discussion topics simply because they were bored with the previous topics, or felt pressure to discuss something, resulting in their performance being more discussed than pupils.

In a second study, Fuller (1969) asked twenty-nine student teachers to write about their concerns. Some of the students wrote at the beginning of the semester while others wrote near the end on the semester. Twenty-two people expressed concerns related to self-adequacy. Six people expressed concerns in the areas of self and students. One person expressed concerns solely involving students (p. 214). The result of this study was a two-sided explanation of teacher concerns (self or pupils). This study did not track individuals throughout the course of the semester, but rather looked at concerns isolated in a specific time frame.

Jackson (1968) investigated the concerns of experienced teachers. Fifty experienced teachers were interviewed. It was found that experienced teachers primarily had concerns related to pupil progress. They were less concerned with self-adequacy and performance evaluations.

Fuller et al. (1974) studied the differences between the concerns of preservice and inservice teachers by administering a teacher concern scale to thirteen hundred research subjects. They found that both groups of teachers expressed self and pupil concerns; however, veteran teachers were more focussed on pupils while preservice teachers were

more focussed on self-adequacy. It was also found that preservice teachers were

focussed on task concerns. Task concerns were those concerns related to the job of

teaching. This research resulted in a revision to the teacher concern theory (self and

pupils) originally proposed by Fuller (1969) (See Figure 1).

Figure 1

Fuller et al. (1974) Teacher Concern Theory

Stage 3:
Impact
Concern for Students

Examples:
- What have students learned in my class?
- Concern for a particular student

Stage 2:
Teaching Tasks
Concern for Teaching Responsibilities

Examples:
- Lesson planning
- Organizing materials
- Discipline

Stage 1:
Self-Adequacy
"I" concerns

Examples:
- Am I doing well when observed
- Am I being accepted by peers
- Am I getting a good evaluation

First, teachers are concerned about themselves and their self-adequacy. Next, they are concerned with their teaching responsibilities. Finally, they become concerned about their pupils (Fuller et al, 1974; Veenman, 1984). Feiman-Nesmer and Floden (1985) summarized the stages by stating, "a survival stage when teachers are preoccupied with their own adequacy, a mastery stage when teachers concentrate on performance and concerns focus on the teaching task, and an impact stage when teachers become concerned about pupils" (p. 522).

Fuller and Bown (1975) believed preservice teachers had more self-survival concerns than inservice teachers and that inservice teachers are more focussed on teacher tasks. Furthermore, they believed that inservice teachers show more concerns for pupils than preservice teachers. Their findings were based upon a review of the literature related to teacher concern theory, especially the work of Fuller (1969).

Reeves and Kazelskis (1985) investigated the Teacher Concern Questionnaire developed by George in 1978. They administered the questionnaire to 128 preservice teachers and 90 experienced teachers. They found that preservice teachers had more concerns for self-adequacy than the veteran teachers. Also, they found that inservice teachers had similar levels of concern for self and tasks with little difference between the two areas. Finally, both groups (preservice and inservice teachers) had expressed more concerns for students than self and tasks (p. 267). This was an interesting finding, since according to Fuller and Bown (1975) preservice teachers should have had few pupil concerns. One possible explanation of the finding is that teachers may have responded highly to the impact questions on the questionnaire (questions regarding students) because a teacher's primary role is to concern herself with the well-being of students.

Reeves and Kazelskis (1985) concluded that teachers cannot be expected to pass through the concern stages at the same rate. It is important to note that their findings are unique to the sample studied.

McCulloch and Thompson (1981) investigated whether or not teacher concern theory applied to the training of health professionals. Forty-eight practicing physical therapists and thirty-four physical therapy students were the focus of the research. All of the subjects completed a modified version of the Teacher Concern Scale created by Fuller et al. (1974). The results indicated that physical therapy students and seasoned veterans progressed through the three stages in the same sequence theorized (McCulloch & Thompson, 1981).

Olsen and Heyse (1990) used teacher concern theory to explain the development of first year and reentry teachers with and without mentors. They conducted semi-structured interviews with all four groups of teachers at three points during the school year. Their results showed that all groups of teachers had concerns that changed over the year. The data collected from the first year teachers with mentors showed a shift from stage one or two concerns to that of impact concerns by the end of the year. Meanwhile, first year teachers without mentors also demonstrated a shift from self to impact concerns, but remained at the same degree of task concerns throughout the year. The reentry teachers without mentors made the greatest gains of all four groups. These teachers decreased in self and task concerns and had a considerable increase in impact concerns. The reentry teachers with mentors decreased their self concerns slightly, stayed at the same level of task concerns and reported few impact concerns (p. 14). There was an expectation that there would have been more impact concerns expressed by veteran

teachers with mentors. Olsen and Heyse (1990) raised the question whether or not

mentors inhibited the growth of reentry teachers. Unfortunately, more research is

required to answer such a question. This finding may be unique to the sample studied.

Olsen and Heyse (1990) concluded that "many of the teachers progressed and retreated

through the self, task, and impact concerns" (p. 13). The study was limited in that the

teachers without mentors could have been involved in informal mentoring relationships

and the ones with mentors may have received little help, even with a mentor.

Sitter and Lanier (1982), similar to Olsen and Heyse (1990), found that five

student teachers experienced concerns similar to those detailed by Fuller et al. (1974).

However, they did not experience the concerns in a particular sequence. Participants in

the study resolved concerns as they arose and did not deal with one group of concerns

before moving on to the next stage. Sitter and Lanier (1982) and Olsen and Heyse (1990)

have shown that there may be concerns with teacher concern theory.

Historical Roots of Mentoring

The historical roots of mentoring can be traced back to Homer's mythological

tale, The Odyssey. In this story Odysseus (the king of Ithica) left his son, Telemachus, on

the day of his birth to fight the Trojan War. During the time of Odysseus' absence,

Athena the Goddess of wisdom disguised herself as an old man named Mentor and

watched over Telemachus. Years passed and Odysseus did not return. Concerned for his

father's fate, Telemachus who was now a young man went out in search for him. Athena,

disguised as Mentor, guided Telemachus on his adventure. Many suspect that the act of

caring for and assisting a less experienced person, as was the case between Athena and

Telemachus, has given meaning to the term, mentoring (Murphy, 1995; Stevens, 1995). If

this story accurately portrays the roots of mentoring then the very first mentoring relationship was between a woman (Athena) and a young boy (Telemachus).

Informal versus formal Mentoring

Mentoring relationships may be informal or formal (Hunt, 1986). Informal mentoring relationships are naturally created. This means that a mentor and mentoree came together without any external pressures from the organization, such as a manager directing one individual to help another employee (Morzinski & Fisher, 1996).

The opposite of informal mentoring is formal mentoring. Formal mentoring relationships are a product of a formal mentoring program (Hunt, 1986; Kerr, Schulze, & Woodward, 1995; Zey, 1993). Zey (1993) stated that

a formal mentor program is simply one in which a mentor and protégé, usually pre-selected, are linked either by the organization or a department within the organization, and are expected to continue the relationship for an agreed upon length of time. (p. xi)

Morzinski and Fisher (1996) believe formal mentoring programs have three common features: "1) less experienced protégés are matched with more experienced mentors; 2) orientation for participants and a system of monitoring program activities exist; and 3) workplace recognition and rewards are given for successful participants" (p. 44). Conway (1998) described formal mentoring as "a relationship between two individuals based on a mutual desire for the development towards an organizational objective" (p. 15). Vonk (1996) viewed formal mentoring as "a dynamic, reciprocal relationship in a work environment between an advanced career incumbent and a beginner aimed at promoting the professional development of both" (p. 3). In most cases

the goal of formal mentoring programs is to improve the individual people taking part in mentoring while simultaneously improving the organization.

Stages of Mentoring

Phillips (1977) studied mentoring in the world of business by surveying and interviewing women managers. In the end, she described six phases of mentoring: invitation, sparkle, development, disillusionment, parting and transformation. Similar to Phillip's work, Kram (1980) developed a stage theory that became more popular and referenced by researchers.

Kram (1980) interviewed junior and senior managers and asked them to identify others who significantly influenced their development. She identified four phases of mentoring relationships. Her phases included initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. The initiation phase was characterized as the initial meeting of mentoree and mentor (p. 614). The cultivation phase was described as a period of intense mentoring activity (p. 616). A decrease of interactions symbolized the separation phase, in which the mentor and mentoree grow apart (p. 618). Finally, when a mentor views the mentoree as an equal the relationship was said to be moving into the redefinition phase. Moreover, contact between the mentor and mentoree becomes less intense and more like a friendship (p. 620).

Prevalence of Mentoring

Mentoring is prevalent in the field of teaching. In their nation wide survey of teachers working full-time in the United States, Lewis, Parsad, Carey, Bartfai, Farris, Westat, Smerdon, and Greene (1999) found that 19 per cent of all full-time teachers surveyed had been mentored by another teacher in a formal mentoring relationship.

Further, 58 per cent of beginning teachers had been mentored by another teacher sometime during their first three years of teaching (p. 31). Similar to Lewis et al. (1999), Gehrke and Kay (1984) found that more than 50 per cent of teachers had been mentored. In their study, 111 of 188 (or 59%) randomly selected teachers indicated having a mentor (p. 21).

Lewis et al. (1999) also discovered that as teachers progress through their careers and gain wisdom, the incidence of them becoming a mentor increases; however, teachers with twenty or more years of experience are less likely to be a mentor (p. 31). This may be attributed to two possible reasons. First, teachers in this group are approaching retirement and may not want the extra workload associated with mentoring. Secondly, management may have viewed these more experienced teachers as set in traditional ways and ill fit to prepare a new generation of teachers with progressive teaching strategies.

The incidence of mentoring teachers is on the rise. French (2000) conducted national surveys in the United States during the 1993 and 1999 school years to compare the number of state wide mentoring programs. She discovered that in 1993 there were nineteen states that had legislated mentoring programs. In the 1999-2000 school year the number of state wide mentoring programs had increased to twenty one. She also found that several states planned on starting a mentoring program in the future. Ganser (1997) wrote that "formal mentoring programs and other types of systemic assistance for beginning teachers emerged in the early 1970s and have tripled since then" (p. 98). The continued prevalence of mentoring programs in education is likely, due to high teacher turnover as a result of retirements.

To summarize, research indicates that mentoring is prevalent in the fields of education (Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Lewis et al., 1999). Furthermore it was found that the incidence of mentoring teachers in the United States has been increasing. With the increased popularity of mentoring in the United States it is likely that mentoring will take off in other countries such as Canada. Already the province of Alberta acknowledges mentoring as a professional growth activity. In the future, Canadian provinces may consider the legislation of teacher-mentoring programs as a means of strengthening the teaching force.

Benefits of Mentoring for School Organizations

School organizations have benefited through mentoring programs. First, mentoring decreases the attrition rate of teachers, which results in increased continuity of employees (Debolt, 1991; Gold & Pepin, 1987; Odell & Ferraro, 1992; Shulman, 1985, 1986). Gold and Pepin (1987) showed that mentorees in New York were more likely to continue teaching, compared to new teachers who were not mentored. More specifically, 10 of 36 mentorees in their study indicated that they would have quit teaching without their mentors' help (p. 38). In addition, Debolt (1991) found that three of the five school divisions investigated, reported a high retention rate of mentored teachers. Odell and Ferraro (1992) revisited 160 teachers, four years after they had been mentored and found that 96% of the teachers were still teaching. Shulman (1985, 1986) discovered that 83% of the mentorees stayed in the profession of teaching compared to 73% of those teachers not mentored. Not only does mentoring decrease the attrition rate of teachers, but Wunsch (1994b) proposed that mentoring also decreases the attrition rate of undergraduate students in higher education.

Secondly, Krupp (1985) suggested that the positive self-esteem resulting from the mentoring experience improved the climate of a school and the teaching within it. She believed staffs are rejuvenated or sparked through the mentoring process. Stevens (1995) also believed mentors are renewed through mentoring, which in turn led to a positive school climate. Lewis et al. (1999) found a positive correlation between the frequency of mentoring and teachers' beliefs about the extent to which their teaching improved. Seventy per cent of those mentored indicated that the experience improved their teaching "a lot" (p. 34).

Thirdly, it has been proposed that student achievement may also be higher in school organizations that promote mentoring. Gold and Pepin (1987) stated that "improved classroom control led to increased time in learning, more learning achieved. Greater self-confidence of teachers elicited greater involvement of learning by students. Improved techniques in teaching should lead to greater learning" (p. 37).

Principals agreed that mentorees developed beyond their expectations of a first year teacher (Spuhler & Zetler, 1995). Varah, Theune and Parker (1986) reported that administrators believed mentored teachers had fewer difficulties teaching and fewer complaints from parents compared to those not mentored. It is logical to expect that better prepared first year teachers are able to promote increased student achievement as compared to teachers who are not mentored.

Benefits of Mentoring for Mentors

A primary misconception of mentoring is that mentorees are the sole beneficiaries of mentoring relationships (Galbraith & Cohen, 1995). Many people do not realize that there are several benefits for mentors. Similar to mentorees, mentors may benefit

personally and/or professionally (Freiberg, Zbikowski & Ganser, 1997; Ganser, 1997; Gold & Pepin, 1987; Krupp, 1985; Murphy, 1995; Schulz, 1995; Stevens, 1995; Willbur, 1986; Wollman-Bonilla, 1997).

Consistent in the research is the sense of goodness experienced by mentors for having mentored another individual (Gold & Pepin, 1987; Krupp, 1985; Murphy, 1995; Stevens, 1995; Wollman-Bonilla, 1997). Gold and Pepin (1987) revealed that 90 per cent of the mentors in New York's Mentor Teacher Program said they enjoyed mentoring very much. A mentor stated, "...[it's] rewarding to be part of an inductee's success.... See them grow and gain confidence...." (Stevens, 1995, p. 135). Tauer (1996) found that mentors expressed satisfaction in assisting their mentorees get through their first year on the job. A further benefit is that mentors experience a sense of renewal and reaffirmation, that they are doing a good job (Stevens, 1995). In addition, Willbur-Bonilla (1997) reported that mentors felt a boost in self-esteem.

Mentors may also benefit through financial gain. There was a huge variance in the financial gains for mentors. Some mentors working in the United States received an honorarium for their services (Stevens, 1995). For example, mentor teachers in California were paid $4 000 (Futrell, 1988). Mentor teachers in Indiana were paid a $600 stipend for assisting a beginning teacher (French, 2000). However, in many places such as Red Deer, Alberta mentors were not paid for their services (French, 2000).

Professionally, some mentors have benefited through career advancement (Freiberg et al., 1997). Freiberg et al. (1997) revealed that several mentors in their study took on jobs at universities to escape the routines of school. Along with the university positions came freedom from the school bell.

Many mentors experienced benefits related to their professional growth. In the profession of teaching, mentors improved their own teaching by trying new teaching techniques (Ganser, 1997; Stevens, 1995; Willbur-Bonilla, 1997). Freiberg et al. (1997) conducted in-depth interviews with five mentors and found that the mentors reported increased professionalism in that they expanded their own views of teaching by observing other teachers at work. Similarly, Ganser (1997) reported, "veteran teachers frequently characterize working with beginning teachers as a source of fresh, new, cutting-edge ideas about curriculum and teaching" (p. 99). One mentor in Stevens' (1995) study reported, "She [the mentoree] would show me some of the things she was doing and I would use them" (pp. 133-134).

In addition, mentors benefit professionally in that they have opportunities to network and form professional relationships with their peers (Gold & Pepin, 1987; Murphy, 1995; Stevens, 1995; Willbur-Bonilla, 1997). Gold and Pepin (1987) showed that mentors who were retired teachers in New York enjoyed visiting and maintaining relationships with their peers. Stevens (1995) documented that mentors felt less isolated in their jobs, since they spent a considerable amount of time with their mentorees. Similarly, Murphy's (1995) interview approach enabled his subjects to share their thoughts, reflections and beliefs, which revealed they too felt less isolated and more able to form networks with other professionals in business.

<u>Benefits of Mentoring for Mentorees</u>

There is a considerable amount of research that shows the benefits of mentoring for mentorees (e.g., Bova & Phillips, 1984; Brown, 1999; Chiogioji & Pritz, 1992; Debolt, 1991; Fagan, 1986; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Gold & Pepin, 1987; Haberman, 1996;

Kram, 1980, 1983; Levinson D., Darrow, Klein, Levinson M., & McKee, 1978; Martin

& Trueau, 1997; Roche, 1979; Shulman, 1985, 1986; Spulter & Zetler, 1995). Consistent

in the research is that mentorees receive more help than those who are not mentored

(Fagan, 1986; Gold & Pepin, 1987).

The benefits for mentorees can be divided into two areas, personal benefits and

professional benefits. Personal benefits are those rewards that impact the mentoree's

affective domain. Mentorees benefit personally through the development of positive

attitudes towards their careers (Debolt, 1991; Fagan, 1986; Haberman, 1996; Kram,

1980; Roche, 1979). Kram (1980) described that mentorees felt a sense of

accomplishment through mentoring (p. 291). Mentorees also benefit through an increased

self-concept. Haberman's (1996) reflections of his mentor indicated their close

relationship boosted his self-reflection and esteem. Moreover, Roche (1979) found that

mentorees were much happier than non-mentored individuals because they had someone

in whom they could confide.

Professional benefits are rewards associated with the mentoree's career and the

tasks that she performs at work. Through mentoring, mentorees can obtain career

advancement and financial gains (Brown, 1999; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Kram, 1980, 1983;

Roche, 1979). Roche (1979) found that executives who had a mentor, were more likely to

earn more money at a younger age and to follow a career plan, than executives who did

not have a mentor. Also, mentorees were more likely to obtain career advancement

because their mentors sponsored or promoted them in the presence of managers.

Levinson et al. (1978) made the notion that through mentoring, mentorees could see a

fulfillment of their dreams. A dream of many mentorees is upward movement within an organization.

Specific professional benefits experienced by mentorees depend upon the context of the mentoring relationship. In the profession of teaching, Gold and Pepin (1987) found that mentorees received several professional benefits. Mentorees received assistance with establishing routines, classroom management, child development, school context, instruction, lesson content, teaching techniques and maintenance and order (pp. 30-33). Shulman (1985) documented that teachers received professional rewards in the following eight areas: access to resources; increased status with others; companionship and assurance; knowledge and ideas for teaching; access to models of teaching, adjustments to their tasks; feedback on performance; and, support for thinking about teaching.

In addition to the benefits reported, Johnson and Sullivan (1995) suggested that there might be benefits for mentorees that are not realized until years after the mentoring experience. They stated, "many mentors, like parents, believe, or hope, that some of what they say to those they are mentoring will be heard, if not at present then sometime in the future when an important decision has to be made" (p. 46). The long term benefits of mentoring, if they exist, are largely unknown.

<u>Downside of Mentoring</u>

Murphy (1995) identified several drawbacks of mentoring for mentors. The first drawback was that mentors felt disappointed when they discovered that they were used for career advancement, and not for their talents and wisdom (p. 119). The second drawback he revealed was the uneasiness of releasing a mentoree and seeing her as an equal (p. 120). Finally, mentors were upset when unequal expectations between them and

mentorees lead to disappointing, failing relationships (p. 121). Tauer (1996) believed

the success of a mentoring relationship, in the context of teaching, depends upon factors

such as age of the participants, gender, proximity, prep time, subject matter and the

personality of individuals. Other factors that were not mentioned may include mentor

training and the level of support from school administration.

Difficulties of mentoring may also be associated with mentorees. Otto (1994)

describes how mentorees feel anger and resentment when their mentors have little time to

work with them due to midlife crises or shifts in workloads. Time for mentoring is a re-

occurring theme in the literature. Both mentors and mentorees reported that they need

more time for mentoring (Brown, 1999; Ganser, 1994; Shulman, 1985, 1986; Stevens,

1995).

Several researchers have identified drawbacks of mentoring associated with

gender (Kram, 1980; Cohen & Galbraith, 1995; Gray, 1986; Jeruchim & Shapiro, 1992;

Levinson & Levinson, 1996; Olson & Ashton-Jones, 1992; Palepu, Friedman, Barnett,

Carr, Ash, Szalacha & Moskowitz, 1998). In business, women have difficulties finding

women executives to be their mentors because there are not enough women executives

able or willing to mentor (Galbraith & Cohen, 1995; Gray, 1986; Jeruchim & Shapiro,

1992; Levinson & Levinson, 1996; Olson & Ashton-Jones, 1992). As Gray (1986) stated,

"women typically do not have access to the informal types of mentoring provided by the

old boys network" (p. 16). As the number of women in executive jobs increases so too

does the likelihood that more women mentors will be available. Similarly, it is logical to

assume that it would be difficult for a male primary teacher to find a male mentor since

few males teach at the elementary level.

Some women who have difficulties finding women mentors turn to males.

Roche (1979) reported that seven of ten women's mentors were males. Levinson and

Levinson (1996) found that one third of the women in his study had mentor relationships

with men. Kram (1980) reported that such cross-gender pairing was problematic. She

revealed female mentorees often experience discomfort in a male-mentored relationship

(p. 623). Kram stated that "a lack of an adequate role model in a male mentor caused

young female managers (protégés) to seek support and guidance from other female peers"

(p. 623). Moreover, there were concerns of public image in that people would gossip

about males and females paired together for the purpose of mentoring (p. 623). Her study

is approximately twenty years old. With the changing workforce, it would be interesting

to see if similar findings were discovered in the present. Levinson and Levinson (1996)

agree that cross gender pairs can be problematic. They stated, "the male mentor usually

found it difficult to regard a woman as becoming like him and perhaps surpassing him in

the future" (p. 270).

Cross gender pairs are not always problematic. Shea (1997) stated that "each sex

has a lot to offer each other. Cross-gender mentoring can leaven the workplace, enrich the

lives of mentees [mentorees] and provide valuable insights and experiences to each sex"

(p. 83).

Chapter Two Summary

This literature review accomplished two purposes. First, research related to

teachers' needs and concerns were synthesized. Fuller's (1969) teacher concern theory

was detailed. The three stages of teachers' concerns are self, task, and impact (Fuller,

1969, 1971; Fuller et al., 1974; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Veenman, 1984). This theory will

be utilized to interpret the concerns of mentorees and the advice they receive from their mentors. Secondly, the literature review highlighted research in the area of mentoring, so that the readers of this report would have a common understanding of the topic of study. More specifically, the historical roots of mentoring were shared. Furthermore, the differences between formal and informal mentoring were discussed. The stages of mentoring were outlined. Also, the prevalence of mentoring was highlighted. Further, the benefits of mentoring for school organizations, mentors and mentorees were discussed. Finally, the drawbacks of mentoring were synthesized.

In Chapter Three the research methods will be shared and discussed. Yin (1994) stated that "a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions" (p. 19). Therefore, in the next chapter the research questions will be outlined. In addition, it will be explained how they will be investigated.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter the research methods are described and discussed. In short, a case study approach described by Yin (1992, 1994) was utilized. Six mentorees were instructed to keep journals of the advice they received from their mentor. Each mentoree was interviewed to gain further insights of their understanding related to the sharing of advice. Teacher concern theory (Fuller et al., 1974) was used to analyze and interpret the data.

Case Study

There are two conflicting views of case studies, the "process" view and the "object" view. Yin (1992, 1994) viewed case studies as a process. He believed a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (1992, p. 13). On the other hand, Stake (1994) and Merriam (1998) viewed case studies as an object or unit of study. According to Stake (1994) a "case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of object to be studied" (p. 236). Moreover, according to the object view a case is a bounded system such as an institution, person, or program (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994). In this study, both views of case studies were valued and utilized. The case study process as described by Yin (1992, 1994) was utilized to understand six mentorees or cases. The case study process is described further in the next sub-section.

Research Design

There is no concrete way to proceed when developing a research design (Merriam, 1998). However, according to Yin (1994), there are logical topics that need to

be considered, such as: research questions, propositions, units of analysis, data

collection, data analysis, ethical concerns, trustworthiness and source(s) of error. Each of

these areas will be discussed further.

Research Questions

Four primary research questions were formulated to guide this study. They were:

1. What triggered the advice to be shared?

2. What advice was passed on to mentorees?

3. How was advice shared with mentorees?

4. How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them?

Propositions for each of the research questions are shared in the next section.

Propositions

The goal of this study was to create propositions for the research questions that

were supported by journal and/or interview evidence. Initial propositions were stated, so

that attention was directed towards something that would be looked at during the study

(Yin, 1994). How are propositions developed? Stake (1983) said:

[propositions] develop within a person as a product of experience. They derive

from tacit knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about

them, and how these things are likely to be later on in other places with which this

person is familiar. (p. 282)

With this understanding an expected outcome or proposition for each of the four

research questions is shared.

Research Question #1

What triggered the advice to be shared?

Expected Proposition for Research Question #1:

Advice will be shared when mentorees share a concern.

Research Question #2:

What advice was passed on to mentorees?

Expected Proposition for Research Question #2:

Advice passed on to mentorees will relate to concerns of self-survival and

teaching tasks.

Research Question #3:

How was advice shared with mentorees?

Expected Proposition for Research Question #3:

Advice will be shared informally at convenient times and places.

Research Question #4

How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them?

Expected Proposition for Research Question #4:

Mentorees act upon the advice shared with them because they want to please their

mentors.

Evidence to support, reject or revise these propositions lies within the analysis of

well-remembered events in which advice was shared. Evidence will also lie within the

attitudes and opinions of the mentorees participating in this study.

Units of Analysis

Stake (1994) said "perhaps the most unique aspect of case study in the social sciences and human services is the selection of cases to study" (p. 243). Since the Red Deer Public School District had a noteworthy reputation for their formal mentoring program, by the Alberta Teachers' Association, the researcher approached the Associate Superintendent in a quest for research subjects. Twelve new teachers were hired in the 1999-2000 school year. Each new teacher participated in the Red Deer School District's Formal Mentoring Program. The information letter concerning this study (APPENDIX B) was circulated to all participants (mentors and mentorees) in the formal mentoring program. The information letter outlined the research topic and invited mentors and their mentorees to participate in the study. The individuals who expressed an interest in the study and volunteered to participate received the Letter of Informed Consent (APPENDIX C) to confirm their participation. Three mentors signed on to participate in the study. However, the first did not follow through with the journal commitment. Yet another dropped out when their mentoree left the teaching profession. Lastly, a decision was made that the final mentor did not offer enough information to be analyzed. On the positive side, a total of eight mentorees agreed to participate; however, two individuals did not follow through with the commitment to write in a journal. Both individuals said that they were too busy and overwhelmed with their work. Therefore, they withdrew from the study. Thus, six mentorees working for the Red Deer Public School District and participating in their Formal Mentoring Program, during the 1999-2000 school year, took part in this research project.

Data Collection

Data from six mentorees were collected over a seven month period August 1999-

March 2000. In the initial planning of the study it was thought that the cases would be

tracked for an entire school year. This did not occur because several of the mentorees

communicated that they felt the need for less advice as months passed. This is consistent

with the findings of Runyan, White, Hazel, Hedges, & Farabi (1997). They discovered

that early career teachers believed they moved from the survival stage of teaching to

mastery after four months of experience in the classroom (p. 228).

Three methods of data collection were utilized in this study in an effort to

triangulate data and support the propositions that resulted from this study (Yin, 1992,

1994; Stake, 1994). The three sources of evidence included document analysis of

participant journals, interviews with mentorees, and mentoree verification of the

researcher's interpretations.

The first source of evidence was journals. Each mentoree kept a journal outlining

their well-remembered events in which advice was shared. Hall (1992) believed journals

are an excellent way to collect data and used journals to study teachers in Indiana. She

stated that "journals are an on-going collection instrument which captures the moment

and conveys the feelings and perceptions of the participants as the events are happening"

(p. 184). However, a drawback of journal documents is that they may not contain

information pertinent to the questions of concern (Merriam, 1998). Each person has his or

her own view of what a journal should contain. Some people use a journal to extensively

reflect upon issues, while others log ideas and provide little insights. It was hoped that the

participants in this study would utilize the journal for reflection. Merriam (1998) stated,

"most documentary data has not been developed for research purposes. The materials may therefore be incomplete from a research perspective" (p. 124). To circumvent this possible problem a journal template was given to the participants (See APPENDIX D).

The second source of evidence was interviews. Each of the six mentorees was interviewed in March 2000 to gain further knowledge of their experiences and thoughts related to the topic of study. Yin (1994) believed that interviews are one of the most important means of case study evidence since the researcher gets the chance to understand their participants' perspective. Stake (1994) declared that "what the researchers are unable to see for themselves is obtained by interviewing people who did see" (p. 242).

The key to gathering useful data during an interview is having good questions. Merriam (1998) discussed four types of questions: hypothetical questions, Devil's advocate questions, ideal position questions and interpretive questions. Hypothetical questions require the interviewee to describe particular situations. They begin with phrases such as "what if" or "suppose" (p. 77). The Devil's advocate type of question also draws out the participant's description of their reality. Devil's advocate questions can begin with the phrase "some would say" (p. 78). The following is an example of a Devil's advocate question: "some would say that mentors should not give advice because it creates dependency, how would you respond to this claim?" In contrast, ideal position questions "elicit both information and opinion" (p. 78). An example of an ideal question is, "in your opinion what is the ideal way of giving advice?" Finally, interpretive questions confirm the researcher's thoughts that have been created by interactions with the subject. For example, "would you agree that the advice given to you was good?"

Merriam (1998) also suggested that researchers avoid questions with multiple parts, leading questions and closed (yes or no) questions.

The pre-determined, open-ended, interview questions helped guide the researcher through the discussion with each participant (See APPENDIX E). There was flexibility during the interview to pursue additional information concerning the topic of study. The mentorees were encouraged to tell their own stories; thus, the researcher talked little, but listened carefully. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. It was the researcher's goal to make the participants feel comfortable, so that they would openly share their experiences; therefore, all of the interviews were conducted at the Starbucks Café in the city of Red Deer. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed into a computer program (Microsoft Word) for analysis.

Data Analysis

Yin (1992) stated, "according to the type of evidence collected a case study analysis can include the broad array of analytic techniques" (p. 136). Two forms of data analysis were utilized to understand the evidence that emerged from within this research project. The analytic techniques used in this study were explanation-building and participant review, both of which will be explained in the following paragraphs.

The explanation-building process essentially involves the continuous comparing of data to propositions. There are several steps in the explanation building process. These steps include:

- Make research questions and initial propositions

- Compare initial findings to the proposition

- Accept or revise the proposition

- Compare further data to the accepted or revised proposition, or revise the proposition again and then compare with more data

- Continue revising the proposition and comparing data until several pieces of evidence support the proposition (Yin, 1994)

Yin (1994) believed that linking data to the proposition and the criteria for interpreting findings are two of the least developed components of case study research. He supported the idea that the data can be linked to the propositions through a repeating pattern of evidence (p. 25).

The second means of data analysis used in this study was participant review. During the interview, research findings or propositions were shared with the participants so that they could verify them as true.

<u>Ethical Compliance</u>

This study met the ethical standards set forth by the University of Calgary (See APPENDIX A). To summarize, all of the research subjects volunteered to participate. There were no greater risks associated with this study than those ordinarily incurred in daily life. Even though there were no risks for participation, the university guidelines called for anonymity. Originally, a coding system of MT-1, MT-2, etc. was used to refer to mentoree #1, mentoree #2 and so forth; however, upon reading a draft of the study it was felt that the document was impersonal. Therefore, pseudonyms that reflected the gender of the participants were used to help make the document more personal, while at the same time protecting the privacy of the participants.

In addition, most mentorees referred to their mentors by their first names in the journal entries. To guarantee the anonymity of mentors their real names were also

removed from the text. Since mentors were not the focus of the study pseudonyms

were not generated, rather mentors were referred to as "my mentor', or "he" or "she"

depending upon the mentor's gender. Brackets [] were used to show modifications to

journal entries. For example, consider the following fictional, unedited statement,

"Suzanne told me to sign out a video projection machine to help teach the lesson." If the

fictional mentor's name "Suzanne" remained in the text it is probable that the people

working the Red Deer School District would recognize and identify "Suzanne".

Therefore, the text was edited. The edited version of the same statement would be as

follows "[My mentor] told me to sign out a video projection machine to help teach the

lesson." The measures mentioned in this section were necessary to protect the privacy of

the subjects that participated in this study.

<u>Trustworthiness</u>

The trustworthiness of this study was increased two ways. First, the data

collection and analysis sections were detailed to assist those that want to replicate this

study. Second, trustworthiness was increased since participants had the opportunity to

verify that the interpretations made by the researcher were true.

<u>Sources of Error</u>

Wrightsman (1981) wrote, "no instrument is free of error" (p. 5). The first source

of error that may impact this study was the ability of participants to accurately recall

well-remembered events or advice. Allen and Casbergue (1995) found that novice

teachers often had inaccuracies when recalling information about their lessons. Strategies

such as asking probing questions and allowing ample wait time to respond to interview

questions were utilized, in an effort to assist individuals in recalling information accurately; thus, reducing error.

The second source of error that may impact this study is using the researcher as a research instrument. The researcher ultimately creates categories and interprets results. In an effort to reduce error, the categories that emerged from this study are rooted in theoretical constructs.

Chapter Three Summary

Aspects of a case study were presented and discussed in this chapter. Four research questions were of interest to the researcher. Initial propositions were generated for each research question. Data was collected through journals and interviews. The data were analyzed using the explanation-building process. The study met the ethical considerations of the University of Calgary. Trustworthiness was increased through participant review. The sources of error included the subjects' ability to recall instances in which advice was shared and utilizing the researcher as a research instrument.

In the next chapter, Chapter Four, the findings are shared. The main purpose of the next chapter is to share data, so that the readers of this document come to know the reality of the participants and occasions in which advice was shared.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter is rich with description. The purpose of this chapter is to share the

journal entries and to begin a preliminary discussion that will be elaborated on in the next

chapter, so that the readers of this dissertation come to know the realities of the

mentorees and occasions in which advice was shared. Seventy-three journal entries are

shared and critiqued. The journal entries provided by the six cases are a means of

understanding the situations in which advice was triggered and shared. In a draft version

of this section, components of the journal entries were taken out of context in an effort to

make sense of the four research questions. The result was a decontextualized account of

the mentorees' lives. Therefore, it was felt that the better approach would be to report

entire journal entries and to discuss the contents of each. The discussion may seem to be

a reiteration of the journal entry, when in fact it relates to the four research questions and

accomplishes the primary goal of knowing the occasions in which advice was shared. All

of the mentorees selected to use the Journal Template (APPENDIX D) as a guide for

writing responses.

To make sense of the data the chapter was organized into six major sub-sections,

one for each of the six cases. Within each sub-section, general background information

concerning the mentoree (education, connecting with mentor, etc.) was included, so that

readers could generalize the findings to their own contexts. The background information

was general so that the anonymity of the individuals was protected. After the background

information was outlined the journal entries were shared and discussed. Finally, sub-

sections conclude with other interesting findings, primarily from the interviews.

Mark: Background Information

Mark graduated from the University of Alberta. He obtained a Bachelor of

Physical Education Degree and a Bachelor of Education Degree with a minor in science.

Mark was a middle school teacher responsible for teaching the grade six, seven and eight

science programs. This was his first year of teaching.

After receiving the letter from the associate superintendent, Mark approached a

teacher who taught similar subjects and was close in proximity to be his mentor. The

mentor had seventeen years of teaching experience. Mark stated that there were no power

issues linked to the relationship.

Mark's Journal Entries

In the following pages Mark's journal entries will be shared and discussed.

Mark Entry #1

- My mentor presented advice to me regarding portfolios. We had discussed the

  importance of parent-teacher interviews and how the use of portfolios would

  help this process. This was very excellent advice given to me at the time! At

  the beginning of this school year, my mentor and I were just sitting in the staff

  room during one of our preps and [he] had said [he] was doing this activity.

  [My mentor] stated how important that this activity was and how it would

  make parent-teacher interviews easier! When the advice was first presented to

  myself at the start of the year, I thought this was an excellent idea. Not only

  could I start out the school year with a fun activity for the students, but this

  activity would help me in the long run when I meet face to face with my first

  parent conference. Since this meeting with [my mentor], I have begun putting

in an assortment of assignments and quizzes and at a later date can enter

unit exams. The students can have access to these folders in the filing cabinet

and they can see how they are doing. (September, 1999)

In this particular entry there seems to be no explicit trigger on behalf of the

mentor and mentoree. Entry #1 showed how a casual discussion in the staffroom led to

the mentor sharing a task that he does in their classroom. The specific advice was to use

portfolios to assist with parent teacher interviews. The idea of using portfolios was

utilized by Mark because he felt it would help during the interviews.

Mark Entry #2

- The next piece of advice that was given to me was regarding the coaching

  activities that I volunteered for at the beginning of the year. I mentioned to my

  mentor regarding parents thinking that the volleyball should be more

  competitive and the best players should play, and [he] said that middle school

  is for fun where everyone should get to play and get the experience. This

  advice was also presented to myself in a less formal way, passing through the

  hallway when we were talking for a few minutes. Another very informal piece

  of advice that helped me out a great deal regarding the very often parent-

  interview interaction. I responded to the advice by saying that even though all

  of us are competitive in nature and enjoy winning, the idea of the middle

  school athletics is for experience and building for high school (team play and

  extra curricular exposure). A parent that felt only the good players should play

  should be explained the idea of middle school athletics. I contacted the parent

  at a later date and told her that as much as we all like to be competitive, this is

not the time or place. My mentor said [he] had been involved in numerous

situations like that in the past in coaching and this is all part of it, and to not

sweat this stuff! (September, 1999)

In this entry, Mark mentioned a task related concern of coaching, which resulted

in advice being shared. By mentioning his problem experienced while coaching he

indirectly triggered two pieces of advice. First he was told that junior high athletics is for

fun and that all students should get a chance to play. Second, he was advised "not to

sweat the small stuff". The first piece of advice relates to the task of coaching while the

second relates self-adequacy. If Mark was told "not to sweat the small stuff" does that

leave a subtle message to "sweat the big stuff". The advice was presented informally in a

hallway. Mark valued the advice and contacted the parent who was concerned, as he was

instructed to do so by his mentor.

Mark Entry #3

- The first piece of advice that was given to myself by my mentor was that of

  [his] past year plans for the grade eight science text and curriculum that our

  school currently uses. The material was presented during a prep period that

  my mentor and myself had at the same time in the staff room. The material

  was presented very informally to me at a time when we were just chatting. I

  was in the process of constructing my year plans for grade eight science and

  had discussed this with my mentor and not only did [he] give me direction

  with a copy of [his] past year plans, but [he] also provided me with certain

  assignments to focus on. Of course this was very helpful to me in a time that

  was extremely busy for myself for all demands that a first year teacher with

coaching duties has. I did not use [my mentor's] exact year plans as my

own but it served as very excellent guidance. (September, 1999)

In this situation, an informal discussion in the staffroom led to the sharing of

information related to a task concern. The advice came in the form of print. The mentor

shared an example of long range plans and assignments. Mark modified the plans for his

use. Mark believed the advice was useful at a busy time of year.

<u>Mark Entry #4</u>

- [My mentor] had told me in the past of discipline techniques for kids who are

  constantly misbehaving. It was a few strategies actually, that included having

  students all put their heads down as well as reviewing the class rules that were

  given at the beginning of the year! The advice was just given in one of our

  common prep times as we were just sitting around the staff room. I told [him]

  I had this one class with the same two constant disrupters in it and [he] gave

  me [his] advice! I gave the students another chance to prove that they could

  behave and they did for a short time. This lasted only about 2-3 classes and

  then I thought I would try the discipline strategy of having the students put

  their head down on the desk. I sort of combined both strategies I was given by

  my mentor. As the students had their heads down, I reviewed the class rules. I

  emphasized the ones that students continually disobeyed and this seemed to

  go over well. I would definitely use this strategy again as it seemed to

  decrease the problem a great deal. (October, 1999)

In this entry, Mark shared a story of difficult students, which resulted in advice

concerning the task of discipline. Mark was advised to review rules and to have the

students settle by putting their heads down. The advice was presented during a

common prep time in the staffroom. Mark acted upon the advice by reviewing the rules

and expectations.

<u>Mark Entry #5</u>

- My last piece of advice that occurred to myself was dealing with our recent

  report cards that went out in our school. It was my first report card ever and I

  needed assistance in correct procedures and creating comments for each

  student, etc. My mentor and I had actually planned to meet on a more formal

  basis, this time in the computer lab and [he] started from the beginning and

  reviewed everything. I was beginning to get stressed out because of all the

  work to do in the short time remaining before report cards. As I said, I was

  very nervous because I had waited until almost the last moment and [my

  mentor] was very accommodating. Although [he] had not quite finished [his]

  report cards, [he] was more than willing to help and send me in the right

  direction. I listened to all of [his] advice and hints and finished my report

  cards just in time, but if it was not for my mentor in this occasion, I would

  have been in trouble. To this point, I think this was the best advice and help

  my mentor had given to me. I also learned more about computers and will

  definitely start report cards earlier than a week before due date. (October,

  1999)

Here, Mark admits that it was his first experience doing report cards and he

needed task-related advice on how to enter comments in the computer. This particular

finding was interesting since Veenman (1984) did not discover technology to be a

concern for beginning teachers. This was probably due to the fact that sixteen years ago, when the study was conducted computers were not as popular as they are today. Knowing how to use a computer in the year 2000 is a necessity. The Government of Alberta is in the process of implementing the new Information and Communication Technology Program of Studies. Consequently, all teachers in Alberta will be required to integrate technology into their lesson plans.

On this occasion, Mark mentioned that this was a more formal meeting that was planned in advance. The advice was utilized and the task of report cards was completed on time.

Mark Entry #6

- The advice my mentor gave me dealt with my new position, which begins after Christmas. [My mentor] gave me numerous materials which would give me a jump start when planning my first unit in Grade 6 and 7 science. This meeting between my mentor and myself was fairly formal as we had a planned arrangement to meet in the teacher's staff room. I asked for advice from [my mentor] as all the material was new and [my mentor] was happy to assist me! The information that was presented to me was very beneficial and it helped me start out in my planing for my new teaching assignment. Other advice that assisted me was kids that I should be aware of when diving into my assignments. [My mentor's] expertise from all [his] years of teaching and strategies in classroom assignment were excellent. (November, 1999)

This situation is similar to the one described in Entry #3. Mark was faced with teaching a new curriculum (task concern), so he sought out advice from the mentor. The

advice included example plans. In addition, Mark was warned which students to watch carefully. The meeting was formal, as the time and place for the meeting was predetermined. There was no mention if the advice was utilized.

Mark Entry #7

- The most recent advice that was presented to me was that dealing with parent-teacher interviews and how we should discuss with the parents, "problem children", and how we can make the parent meeting a positive experience. This advice was presented in passing just before my first parent-teacher experience. The visit was very informal but was one of the best pieces of advice that I have received to this point! This information that was given to me by mentor [my mentor], was very beneficial. I used all the comment ideas from [my mentor] for my parent meetings and tried to get some positives for all the students and their parents that came out. [My mentor's] other information was to make a print out of the students' marks and scores on past assignments to back up all that you say about the children. I found this advice to be very beneficial also! (November, 1999)

Within Entry #7, Mark noted that the task of parent-teacher interviews was at hand. The specific advice was to share positive information with the parents before sharing the not so good news. Also, Mark was instructed to back up grades communicated to parents with concrete evidence (e.g., exam marks). The advice was shared informally in passing through the hallway. Mark believed the advice was beneficial.

Mark Entry #8

- My mentor and I were recently filling out our sessions for the upcoming teacher's convention and my mentor thought I should attend certain sessions that help out first year teachers. My mentor and I were casually meeting in the staff room one day and just happened to be filling out our forms at the same time. [His/her] recommendations were made to me and I agreed to [his] ideas! At first when the information was presented, I was unsure about the advice, but who would know better than my mentor. We thought about different options, but my first choices dealt with sessions that were of interest, but not too beneficial. We thought sessions that dealt with first year teachers and discipline strategies would help more. I was a little upset at first when [my mentor] told me my first selections would not be as beneficial, but realized [his] reasoning was for my benefit not [his]. (January, 2000)

This is an interesting situation since Mark was unsure of the advice at first, but after reflection realized that the professional development session would be beneficial. It is unknown as to who initiated the advice. The advice was given spontaneously during a casual meeting in the staffroom.

Mark Entry #9

- Recently my mentor and I were discussing Easter and Spring approaching and [he] told me to really focus on my discipline and management teaching at this time of year because of "spring fever". One Friday after school when [my mentor] and I went out for a drink we were discussing what conferences we should attend together and [he] brought up how the students were abnormally

hyper. The students have recently become a little more hyper because of

the fact of spring fever and the weather getting a little warmer. I have taken in

this information and have acted proactively to prevent problems. These are the

benefits of having a mentor who has taught for 17 years. (February, 2000)

This is an interesting situation because the mentoree did not trigger the advice.

Rather, the mentor brought forth a discipline concern, which led to task related advice

being shared. Mark was advised to concentrate on discipline. This was the first piece of

advice that Mark recorded that was given off school property in a bar. The discussion in

the bar was informal. Mark acted upon the advice by being proactive in the classroom to

prevent concerns.

Mark Entry #10

- I recently made a mistake on planning for a grade seven class and the VCR

    did not work. [My mentor] happened to be passing by and [he] brought me

    some science games to pass the time at a moment of chaos. I was in dire need

    of some help and whether [my mentor] knew or not [he] came by at the right

    time. I did not ask [him] to come by I just got lucky. [My mentor] came at a

    good time although [his] advice was, always have a back-up. It seems simple

    but I was riding on the VCR working and it all would have went smooth, but

    it failed. Students were promised a free period with a movie and when the

    VCR never worked the class could have been more chaotic than it already

    was. (February, 2000)

This situation was not surprising as most teachers encounter problems with audio

visual machines at some point in their career. Mark was advised to have a back up lesson

plan just in case things go wrong. The advice was informal, spontaneous and mentoree

initiated. There was no indication if Mark planned a back up lesson for future use.

Mark Entry #11

- [My mentor's] recent advice had to do with using videos to accompany the

  science curriculum. [His] advice was to show the video after studying the

  material instead of first – sort of to wrap up the unit and give real life

  application. [My mentor] had just seen me and [he] asked me when I show

  videos and [he] recommended using videos as a summary instead of as a lead

  in activity. We just were talking informally one day in the staffroom and [he]

  gave this recommendation. I have yet to start a new unit with the new classes I

  am teaching so I have not yet had the chance to wrap-up a unit with a video.

  My next unit will definitely do this. [My mentor's] reasoning behind it was

  that there is not much use in showing material on a video that students have

  had no information prior. (March, 2000)

This example represents advice related to the task of unit planning. The advice

was to show a video at the end of a unit to reinforce concepts taught and wrap things up.

This was presented informally. Mark planned to act upon the advice in the future.

Mark Entry #12

- [My mentor] recently noticed I had a lot of students outside of the class and it

  seemed to be the same students everyday. [His] advice was to phone the

  students' parents and let the administration deal with the constant problem.

  My mentor called me into [his] classroom and brought this concern to my

  attention. It was one of our more formal meetings and ended up being very

helpful. [My mentor] knew I was having difficulty with these students and [his] advice was good. I called the parents at first and told them my problem with their child and they were very concerned and supportive. They dealt with the problem, as did the administration. I had mentioned these students to the counsellor [sic.] at our school but nothing was done. Next time the phone call will come much earlier. (March, 2000)

This journal entry represents a task concern (discipline) that was brought to light by the mentor. The mentor was concerned about students sitting in the hallway. The advice was to call the students' parents and have the school administration deal with the problem. The advice was presented at a formal meeting in mentor's classroom. Mark did as the mentor advised.

Mark Other Findings

The following findings resulted from an interview with Mark:

1. Mark reported having a positive mentoring experience, with no pitfalls.

2. Mark believed the mentoring program in Red Deer should continue into the second year of teaching.

3. Mark believed that the act of writing ideas down in the journal helped them to be remembered.

4. Mark would like to see a common prep period for mentors and mentorees to talk and share advice.

Bob: Background Information

Bob was a junior high, humanities teacher responsible for teaching social studies and drama. He possessed a Bachelor of Arts Degree and a Bachelor of Education

Degree from the University of Alberta. This was Bob's first year of teaching. Bob

submitted twelve journal entries for analysis.

Bob's principal paired Bob with a mentor. The mentor had twenty years of

experience and taught across the hall. The mentor was in charge of teaching science and

math. According to Bob there was the potential threat of two power issues in their

relationship. First, the mentor's child was in Bob's class. Second, the mentor was the

vice-principal of the school. Bob believed that neither issue impacted the quality of their

relationship.

<div align="center">Bob's Journal Entries</div>

Bob submitted the following journal entries.

Bob Entry #1

- Forget about decorating/setting up the room; get ready now for your first

    day(s) of classes. Just take it a day at a time. Informally, conversing in the

    staff room. I was sharing my rising panic about my massive "To Do" list. I

    relaxed about having everything in place and long term plans ready, and

    started planning the first 3 days. I've since made small forays into organizing

    my filing cabinets, decorating the room and looking a month ahead, but

    mostly I've taken it one day at a time. (August, 1999)

In this journal entry, Bob focussed on the concern of teaching tasks. Bob

pondered all the tasks that needed to be accomplished prior to the first day of classes. The

specific advice was to take it one day at a time, forget about decorating the classroom and

start planning. The "take it one day at a time" advice was questionable. Teachers

constantly need to think about the future. For example, what are students going to learn

tomorrow, the rest of the week and month. The advice was presented informally in the staffroom. Bob acted upon the advice.

Bob Entry #2

- How quickly you can bring a class back under control is the key to good classroom management. Communicate that you will do whatever it takes to modify unacceptable behaviours. Over lunch, I shared my questions about classroom management and he shared [his] strategy and what [he] looks for when [he] visits a classroom. Relaxed about some of the noise in my class and focused on being able to gather attention quickly. Felt good when I saw that happen (in spite of the previous noise). Began to have some consequences and discussions for/with a few students. (September, 1999)

In this situation, Bob raised the concern of classroom management, which is task related. The specific advice was to bring the class under control quickly and to communicate expectations. The advice was presented over lunch. Bob acted upon the advice by discussing consequences with students, which resulted in less classroom noise.

Bob Entry #3

- I went to my mentor for advice related to coaching volleyball. I started a journal just for coaching. Entered my thoughts/plans for next year. Wrote a letter to players and parents clearly communicating my expectations! (September, 1999)

This entry is similar to one presented by Mark, Entry #2. As in the case of Mark, Bob was concerned about his extracurricular duties of coaching. Bob initiated the advice;

however, from this short entry it is difficult to determine if it was in response to a self, task or impact related concern.

<u>Bob Entry #4</u>

- In October, I asked [my mentor] for some tips on handling parent teacher interviews and [he] gave me an outline which I used for my 27 interviews all the next day (make parent comfortable/small talk, ask how they think their child is doing, give my perspective on their social development, tell if their child is above or below average academically, say how the parent can help). (October, 1999)

Bob was concerned about the task of parent-teacher interviews. The advice detailed how to prepare and run a smooth parent-teacher interview. There was no indication as to where or when the advice was shared, or if it was utilized.

<u>Bob Entry #5</u>

- I spent some time with [my mentor] and recorded some notes from our discussion. This was a more formal 'wit-down' [sic.] time, as we had the morning off teaching, so we decided to spend some time doing the mentoring thing. We assume way too much (i.e.) students can work together. We need to lay out rules and procedures clearly, in order, including consequences for not following instructions. Don't repeat yourself – students need to learn to pay attention or pay the consequences later. It's bad for the class, the student and you. We talked out how to deal with a certain student who 'hides in the weeds' doing nothing, but not causing problems (lots of squeaky wheels in the class to take attention). We talked about reasonable expectations for students

who miss class – that they need to take the initiative to catch up, find notes,

etc. We talked about other more specific stuff – our school stuff – our school's

homework books (agendas), parent calls/parent responsibility, a specific

Social Studies project...but the basic result of our conversation was a sense of

burden lifting, as I realized I was expecting too much of myself in some cases,

and too little of parents and students. I also had some clarity about a few

things I could do to improve the situations and where and how I needed to be

firmer. (December, 1999)

This was an interesting journal entry as it related to the activities that occurred

during one of the four half, professional development days that were allocated to the

teachers participating in the mentorship program. The morning was spent discussing

concerns in all three areas: self-adequacy, tasks and impact. In the area of self-adequacy,

Bob realized he was expecting too much of himself. As for tasks, rules and procedures

were the focus. The impact concern was how to deal with a student hiding in the weeds

and not causing problems. Unfortunately, the specific advice related to the impact

concern was not mentioned; however, one would suspect a conference with the student

would be appropriate. If things did not improve the parents should be notified. Also, it

was unknown as to who triggered the impact concern.

Bob Entry #6

- [My mentor] gave me a strategy for handling "Library" class, a nebulous time

  each week with no structure and no accountability or incentive to behave and

  work. Keep students together in the same room to supervise. I had been letting

  some students work in the library while I worked with the rest in the

classroom (our school does not have a librarian). I've incorporated it and it is going much better. (January, 2000)

This journal entry is related to the task of handling library class. The advice was to keep the students together. It was unknown as to who presented this concern. Nevertheless, the advice was extremely valuable since it is the teachers' responsibility to supervise all students in his/her class. Bob's past practice allowed for some students to be unsupervised. This could have been disastrous for Bob, especially if a student was injured while in his care. Luckily, Bob followed through with the advice to prevent an incident from happening.

Bob Entry #7

- I had popped into [my mentor's] office at lunch and noted how my day was going so far, and it led to this advice from [him]."If something is important enough for you to teach, it is important enough for students to learn/write/do. Communicate that to them (believe it) and enforce it. For example, do a "walk-about", check on what students are writing/have written, give a simple mark out of 3 or 5, and make that part of their grade. Also, if you'd taught something and a student didn't bother to do the work, don't re-teach it for them in the middle of another class. Let them pay the price for their ignorance." I plan to incorporate more "walk-about" marking in class (actually I've been gradually doing more of this, as [my mentor] has mentioned this idea before). (January, 2000)

In this situation, Bob initiated the advice by approaching his mentor and sharing information. The specific advice was to walk around the classroom and assign a grade for

what the student has completed during the period. The advice was presented

informally in the mentor's office. Bob started to do more "walk about" marking in class.

Bob Entry #8

- [My mentor] informed me to help students be organized, say things like, "put

    this in your binder, put your name on this paper". They were just stuffing

    things in their desk and then complaining, "I can't find it". (February, 2000)

This entry represents an impact level concern; however, it is unknown who

initiated the advice that was shared. The mentor advised Bob that he could help students

become more organized by giving them specific directions.

Bob Entry #9

- [My mentor] informed me that punishment has to hurt - I was giving 10

    minute lunch detentions, and behavior wasn't changing. (February 2000)

This brief journal entry was interesting since the advice, "punishment has to hurt"

has a negative connotation. Educators cannot hurt students; however, they can

inconvenience them with detentions. The advice was given in response to a task related

concern of discipline, but it is unclear who raised the concern.

Bob Entry #10

- Self-management - I was finding that I was losing things because I had 3

    possible places for things - I was over-managing. [My mentor] gave me some

    ideas on how to organize my binders (student records binder, day planner

    binder, specific subject binder). (February, 2000)

The theme of this entry was self and task related concerns. The clear "I" focus on

behalf of Bob linked the journal response to the self-adequacy category. Furthermore, the

entry can be linked to the teaching task of organization. The specific advice was to use a series of binders for important materials.

Bob Entry #11

- I mentioned my frustration about some students on detention who misbehaved while I was out of the classroom. "Kids will be kids. You have to be there to supervise, unfortunately." Basically, the gist of the conversation [with my mentor] was that if the D.T. is a pain for us, it will (and needs to be) a pain for the students. If I take it easy, the kids will relax, and won't change their behavior. (March, 2000)

This was a good example of advice that was initiated by Bob. Bob's concern was associated with the task of supervision. Bob was advised to be present during detentions. This situation was similar to the one described previously, where Bob left students unsupervised during library periods.

Bob Entry #12

- Talking in the hall [with my mentor] after school on Friday, discussing all the stuff I needed to do over the weekend: "Sometimes you have to give yourself a break. Go home and forget about this place for a day or so, and then whatever you get done, you get done. You will have a mountain of work here Monday anyways, whether you work 5 hours or 15, so go see your family". "Don't be too hard on yourself. We're all learning, and you can't do everything in your first year." (March, 2000)

This was a clear example of advice that was linked to a self concern. Bob was concerned about his weekend workload. The advice was to forget about school and spend

time with family. It was presented informally in the hallway. There was no indication

if Bob acted upon the advice.

Bob Entry #13

- Teach from the back of the class (from your desk). Students have to listen, the

  ones at the back can't hide, and they don't know where you are looking. It also

  enables you to have all your resources at your finger tips. (March, 2000)

In this entry, there was no indication of why this advice was triggered; however,

the advice was to teach from the back of the class.

Bob Entry #14

- I get this [advice] regularly when I mention a significant disciplinary

  intervention: "Fill out a discipline record sheet, and have you phoned the

  parents yet?" I don't use/inform/involve parents nearly enough! (March, 2000)

In this situation, a task related concern led to advice, which summarized the

progressive discipline process. Bob indirectly questioned his self-adequacy when he

confessed that he does not use the discipline process.

Bob Other Findings

The following findings were found to be interesting:

1. Bob believed sharing advice informally on the fly sometimes resulted in

   information getting overlooked.

2. Bob appreciated the times when his mentor initiated a conversation such as

   handling a discipline concern.

3. Bob liked the structure of the mentorship program.

4. Bob enjoyed participating in the study because the journal activity made

him focus on what was being taught and learned.

Frank: Background Information

Frank was an experienced teacher with a teaching degree from a European university. This was his first year of teaching in Canada. Frank was hired to teach high school mathematics. English was Frank's second language. Consequently, this is reflected in the raw data that is shared within this section.

The head of mathematics department paired Frank with a mentor teacher. Frank's mentor was a younger teacher who taught across the hallway. The mentor had approximately ten years of teaching experience. Frank indicated he did not hesitate to ask the mentor questions.

Frank's Journal Entries

Frank Entry #1

- The advice was [my mentor's] view on managing with the students repeatedly breaking the school rules. The advice was presented on my request. The reason for the topic was preparing in advance for the situation that can appear. As a new member of the school sometimes you can not read everything from the manuals. School policy is something wider than can be written and edited in order to be followed. There are always some non-significant happenings that can ruin your class if you don't recognize them on time. Therefore, it is very important to hear some experience of a teacher who dealt with similar problems for several years. My mentor was very open answering on direct question and advising me in some particular situation that can be happen. It

was golden advice for me to prevent some situations at the beginning of the school year. (September, 1999)

In this situation, Frank initiated a conversation with his mentor. The concern was related to tasks. Frank confessed that he could not read and remember everything in the manuals related to the tasks of classroom management and discipline. The specific advice Frank received was not detailed in the journal entry.

Frank Entry #2

- On my request, the question of pretests appeared during the conversation about different approach of the same course program. The discussion that we have, regarding the changes in course outline, was very important to me. I teach the course first time. Following the program in exact order I would face some problems with prerequisite mater for the some chapters. Therefore, it is necessary to reorganize some unit that is in different order than should be (in my mentor and my opinion). [His] advice and experience was very important so classes went smoothly and students learn. (September, 1999)

Similar to the first situation, Frank initiated the advice. Frank expressed a concern that his approach was different than the mentor's. The advice focussed on the use of pre-testing students. Frank said the advice was very important.

Frank Entry #3

- How to deal with the student who doesn't want to do any job in the class. The advice was presented analyzing similar example that [he] had long time ago. The topic was discussed because the problem was appeared in my Math 24 class. My mentor stated that you can not generalized all students in that class

because the range of their knowledge is so wide. You have to know more about each students life as well as their mental ability. In particular case I was advised to talk and offer something else related to math trying to involve him working as a group. [He] did not recommend any immediate solution. [He] let me to try many different ways without any harder methods. To give up was not my option. After couple days I decided to lend him my graphing calculator and slowly by slowly he started to punch the buttons. I expect his involvement in our class. (September, 1999)

This situation represents an example in which Frank shared an impact concern. Frank was concerned for students who were not completing their share of work. The mentor did not give a remedy for the situation, but rather shed some light on the possible causes for lack of involvement. Frank used a calculator to spark the student's participation.

Frank Entry #4

- Start with equations in a simplest way because the students have always hard time to understand the material. The advice was presented during the recess and exchanging our opinions about the unit that we are going to start. 'Don't start with anything harder than 5x3=15. You probably assume that they already learned about equations in grade 8. Yes, they did but they will hardly remember anything so be careful and start from beginning." It was very important so I checked what they know about equations. My mentor was right. The students really needed step by step explanation. Some students that had some knowledge about that did not want to change the long way to solve the

equations. Anyway, I was prepared for that and we avoid frustrations.

(October, 1999)

This situation represents another impact level concern. Frank was concerned for his students learning math equations. The mentor advised him to start with the basics. The advice was presented informally during a recess break. Frank acted upon the advice and found that the mentor was correct; the students had forgotten previous math that was taught to them.

Frank Entry #5

- How to fill in a sub request. At the morning in my classroom. Because I had to fill out the form for the sub teacher. I follow the procedure, which the mentor told me. The procedure how to fill the form using e-mail is posted on the E-mail attachment as a template. I did not know about that way using the new technology, so [his] advice helped me to solve one simple problem. (October, 1999)

In this situation, Frank had a task related concern that of acquiring a substitute teacher using e-mail. The mentor advised Frank of the process. The advice was shared at Frank's request in his classroom. The advice was used to acquire a substitute teacher.

Frank Entry #6

- The advice was presented regarding the problems that appeared with the students who are not able to finish their assignment on time. The problem was presented in [his] classroom during the lunch period. I would like to share some problems because in my opinion two people know more than one person. [He] expressed [his] personal way how to deal with the students who

are not able to finish the test, quiz and other assignment on time. [He] usually offers additional time depending on the period that students have. They are able to stay straight after school if the test is done during period four or during the lunch if the test is done during period two. Students who are done their tests during period one or three can also come during the lunch or just after school but not tomorrow. My approach to the problem was very similar to [my mentor's], so the sharing the problem helped me to know that I did not use different criteria about the same issue. (October, 1999)

In this case Frank questioned how he could help students complete tests or quizzes in the time allocated. This question represents an impact level concern since Frank was concerned for his students. The mentor advised Frank to give the student(s) extra time immediately after school.

Frank Entry #7

- Advantages of doing midterm exams. Talking during the lunch. The theme simply appeared. Because of different opinion about midterm exams we discussed advantages and disadvantages of them. My mentor and I agree that there is more benefit of midterm exams than of any other exams because it can hint the students and their parent about their standing. Also, the teachers are able to evaluate their job, criteria, and success in general. One very important benefit of the midterm is that you are able to survey and compare the classes and their success during certain time. I did not plan to do midterms for all classes this semester but I will plan to do that next semester. (October, 1999)

Frank and the mentor had an informal discussion in the lunchroom. The discussion led Frank to rethink the use of midterm exams and the impact exams have on students. It was unclear as to who initiated the discussion and the specific advice that was presented. Frank agreed with the use of mid term exams, but had not planned on utilizing them in his program. Frank planned to use a mid-term next semester.

Frank Entry #8

- How to supervise the students who are writing their exam outside of the classroom during the class. The advice was presented after the class when couple of my students wrote their tests on the hallway. [His] advice was very important to me. [He] noticed that some students walking down the hallway disturbed the students who wrote their exam, so probably they diminish their success. The mentor told me that the best idea is to send them in some other classes [he] offered [his classroom] or to send them to work room or the room where some teacher has a spare. I agree with [him] but it is not always possible. Anyway, I learned that I should more often pay attention to the students who work in their own either test or the other assignment. (October, 1999)

In this situation the mentor initiated or triggered the advice because he had a concern regarding supervision, some students were left unsupervised. The advice was to have the students write exams in a quiet, supervised place so that they could obtain better results. The advice was presented immediately after the situation in Frank's classroom. Frank believed it was not always possible to locate a quite place for students to write their exam, which questions whether or not Frank will act upon the advice when a similar

situation presents itself in the future. The mentor extended an invitation for Frank to send students to his classroom.

<u>Frank Entry #9</u>

- How to deal with parents during the parent-teacher nights. The advice was presented during the lunch in the cafeteria. The topic occurred because of the parent-teacher night. I needed information about the place, procedure and material required to answer all possible questions that some parent may ask. My mentor described the real situation like (parents are coming and take their turn for the most important information about their children success'......). [He] also stressed that it could be unwanted situation because of some frustrated parents who are not able to accept failure of their children. In that situation you should remain calm...etc. Collect some important information from the conversation that can help you dealing with some students. Offer refreshment to the parents and encourage them to come again. (November, 1999)

The advice detailed in this entry was triggered by Frank sharing a task related concern. Frank was concerned about the procedures for parent teacher interviews. The specific advice was to remain calm if a parent was upset, offer refreshments and encourage them to come again. Part of this advice is questionable since there is little time to get parents refreshments during the busy time of parent-teacher interviews. The advice was presented during lunch in the cafeteria.

Frank Entry #10

- How to conduct "Christmas Hamper" action. The advice was presented on my

  request in [his] classroom because of the undertaken action for the Christmas.

  Being without experience in a certain situation is sometimes very hard

  because you should learn some customs that you did not know. I did not know

  anything about that because my previous school did not do something like

  that. My mentor explain to me everything that I should do with the classes and

  helped me to collect information what is most attractive to buy for less money.

  The class responded well on that action and most of them signed up.

  (November, 1999)

Here, Frank has a task related concern. Frank admits that he has never

experienced or organized a Christmas Hamper. The mentor gave Frank advice on items to

purchase and how to accomplish the activity. The advice was mentoree initiated in the

mentor's classroom. There was a level of comfort or trust for Frank to walk into his

mentor's space and ask for help.

Frank Entry #11

- How to organize exams for some courses. The advice was presented during

  the lunch hour in the staff-room. The issue came up during the talking and

  planning activities for the rest of the semester. When the timetable for all final

  exams was set up I noticed that Math 24 is not on the schedule so I had to seek

  for the information about it. My mentor provided detailed information about

  the exam and I set up the schedule. I also learn about the procedure taken

  before, during and after the exam as well as dealing with the situation when

students are unable to write their exams. It was very important to know all

details so avoid unnecessary problems. All information about the procedure

will be passed to the students before the exam. (January, 2000)

In this situation, Frank sought advice in relation to a task concern, the procedures

for conducting final exams. The advice was presented during lunch in the staffroom.

Frank shared his new knowledge of exam procedures with the students.

Frank Entry #12

- Who is allowed to rewrite some exams? The issue appeared when some

  students who did poor job on some exams requested to rewrite them. Because

  I promised to the students to came up with universal solution for that problem

  I sought the advice from my mentor. It was in [his] room during the lunch

  hour. My mentor told [his] way dealing with the same issue. How to deal with

  the students who failed some quiz and test? This is very sensitive material

  because the criteria that you apply to all class could be undermined. Therefore

  I needed clear advice about the procedure that is allowed to rewrite the exams.

  My mentor suggested that students who wrote the exam after being sick for

  several consecutive days should be allowed to do that. In addition, students

  who achieved lower marks perhaps because of extracurricular activities like

  participation in the band or school team should get the opportunity to improve

  their marks. In some special cases the teacher's judgement is applied to this

  matter. (January, 2000)

Similar to the previous journal entry, Frank sought out advice regarding exams.

One positive consequence of Frank's mentoring experience is consistency. It has been a

trend in the journal responses for Frank to check procedures with his mentor. Frank was concerned about who should rewrite the exams. Again, the advice was shared in the mentor's classroom during the lunch break.

Frank Entry #13

- How to do review exams in the purpose of achieving better results on students' final examination. The advice was presented like almost always on my request during the lunch in the staff-room. For almost all courses our department made review exams. These exams cover all material has been taught during the semester. It could be named as some kind of cumulative review. Because of very tight schedule for all units as well as lack of time it is no extra 4-5 days you should spend working on these reviews. Therefore it is good idea to analyze the way that has the best success for the students. According to my mentor some teachers give them the reviews as homework, some as the assignments and some work every day on them for some certain time 10-15 minutes. My mentor let me to decide about the best way for my students. (January, 2000)

In this scenario, Frank was focussed on assessment. He initiated a discussion with the mentor on the best ways to review for an exam. This was the second journal entry in which Frank's mentor shared information and then left Frank to decide what would work best for him. This also happened in the situation described in journal Entry #3.

Frank Entry #14

- Motivation for the students who are losing their energy at the end of the semester. My mentor expressed his experience throughout several years.

Some students who calculated their possible marks realized that they are not going to pass their courses. They are usually late showing lack of interest and not trying to do their best. It is a good idea to encourage them and change their attitude and approach to the problem. To motivate them you can offer to rewrite some exams and to calculate percentage of the final exam out of the whole course. In some cases they can realize that they still have a great opportunity to pass the course. At least they will learn for new course and get benefit of that. The advice was presented during the lunch hour talking about appearance that we noticed. (February, 2000)

In this situation Frank had an impact concern which triggered advice from the mentor. Frank was concerned for students that were on the verge of failing. The advice was to let them rewrite exams to increase their grades. The advice was presented at lunchtime. Lunchtime appeared to be a good time for Frank to receive advice since most of his journal entries concern information that was passed on during this period of the day.

Frank Entry #15

- Efficient planning of Math Pure. It was sharing ideas how to get maximum success teaching math pure. We analyzed the ability of the kids hardness of the course, habit of studying as well as weakness of the book. My mentor taught the same course last semester so [he] provided some very good ideas about already mentioned questions. [He] freely expressed all things that [he] missed and [he] offered alternatives. The advice was presented after school at the beginning of the semester because I needed some information about

differences between pure math 10 and math 10 old curriculum. I hope it will be beneficial for my further work. (February, 2000)

Frank had a task concern, planning the math program. Frank sought the advice from his mentor who had previous experience. The advice was presented after school. There is no clear indication of the specific advice or if it was utilized.

Frank Other Findings

Frank purchased a computer for work and used it for this study. Frank submitted journal entries by e-mail. Frank believed e-mail was a time saver and much easier to complete than pencil and paper work as originally proposed. On one occasion, Frank sent a journal entry file that contained a virus. A message was sent back to Frank informing him of the virus, which resulted in a technician rectifying the problem.

Natalie: Background Information

Natalie was an English second language teacher at the high school level. Natalie possessed a Bachelor of Education Degree from the University of Alberta with a major in a second language. She is working on a Master's Degree in Adult Education. This was Natalie's first year of teaching.

The vice-principal approached Natalie and designated a mentor teacher. The head of the language arts department was the mentor. Natalie believed there was a power issue between her and her mentor. Natalie stated, "I'm not sure where I stand or if I can trust my mentor". Natalie indicated that the mentor was close in proximity to her classroom.

Natalie's Journal Entries

Natalie Entry #1

- To explain course outline to the students. Giving me an example of a course outline in which the important points to remember to do were also written down. (August, 1999)

This journal entry appears to be more like a log. There is little reflection on behalf of the mentoree. Nevertheless, the advice has to do with planning a course. Previous journal responses by the other mentorees detailed incidences in which mentors shared plans for the courses being taught.

Natalie Entry #2

- To be clear on every area (expectations, behavior). In a very confusing way. Indirect warning about comments made by a particular student who wanted to drop [the language class]. Very disruptive communication without any support for my statements. Very confident but I was cut off. Comments: having taught adults before, it is very important for me to remind myself that I am dealing with children. I feel a bit puzzled about the support I need to have as a teacher and the lack of it. (September, 1999)

There appears to be a problem in this mentor-mentoree relationship. Natalie felt like her side of the conflict was not heard. Natalie believes there is a lack of support. The advice was shared because the mentor had an impact concern. The mentor was concerned about a student that wanted to drop the course. The advice included being clear on expectations. Natalie felt the advice was like a warning.

Natalie Entry #3

- To ask administration for a prep time. Explaining that a first year teacher

  should be able to have a prep time. Administration has ignored a petition not

  to do this to first year teachers. If I can count with some support from

  administration then I know I can handle no pre-time, nevertheless, this is an

  issue that I should have handled before I began my assignment here.

  (September, 1999)

In this situation, Natalie had a concern for self-survival. Natalie felt that she

needed support from administration and/or more prep time to survive. The advice from

the mentor was to approach administration for more relief time. Natalie felt it was a

tradition in the school for first year teachers to prove themselves and do more work than

the experienced veterans.

Natalie Entry #4

- As a result of a class visit, the advice was to have consequences for students

  who are out of task and that talk too much during class. In a very positive

  way. Positive criticism, reinforced with good comments on my teaching

  strategies. Very positive. I am grateful for the comments. I made changes

  immediately. I set up rules for class behavior. Reinforcing positive behavior

  by giving students some privileges when they behave appropriately.

  (September, 1999)

In this scenario, the mentor initiated advice after observing Natalie's lesson. The

mentor had task concerns about the way Natalie was dealing with discipline. Natalie

believed the advice was shared in a positive way. Natalie was grateful for the advice and made changes to her practice.

Natalie Entry #5

- Establish consequences for behavior that are followed through. As a result of a class observation, I took the advice and had a talk to my students, re-established expectations and consequences. This was positive. Students are more ready to take me serious when I begin teaching. (October, 1999)

This was interesting since a month earlier Natalie received similar advice to establish consequences for students. Again the advice was mentor initiated. The advice was shared after a class observation. Natalie revisited the area of concern with her students.

Natalie Entry #6

- Take advantage of my soft voice and establish a routine to never begin teaching or give an exam until there is complete silence. After an observation, verbal and written. Positive. I feel I have done this, nevertheless, this is an area I feel depends on how much I allow to go on in class before I decide to begin the class. Sometimes kids are very talkative after lunch time. Nevertheless, I will continue to maintain management as one of my goals to improve during my career. (October, 1999)

This entry represents the third instance in which the mentor has approached Natalie about concerns related to classroom management and discipline. Also, this was the first case in which advice was given in a written form. Interestingly, Natalie viewed that she has done what her mentor has instructed. Natalie has a different view of what is

transpiring in the class. Natalie believes she lets the noise happen and can stop it when she begins teaching.

<u>Natalie Entry #7</u>

- To make an effort to get to know some other teachers sometimes. Verbally. I will make some time to do so, though with my schedule and having so much to learn, I am left with so little time to do much of visiting around, but being a social person, it is my goal to get more familiar with the school and how things work, as well as getting to know some of the other teachers.

    (December, 1999)

Once again the mentor initiated the advice. This time the concern was that Natalie was isolating herself. The specific advice was to get to know the other staff members. This advice was presented four months into the school year. Natalie made excuses and complained of the exhaustive workload and lack of time. Natalie's statements were contradictory. Natalie believes she is a social person, yet does not know the staff very well.

<u>Natalie Entry #8</u>

- Consider complete silence before begin to teach and consider a seating plan. After an observation. I have made a seating plan, one which I think may work in certain classes where the level of disruption is high at times. I however feel, that in other classes, it is important that certain students remain with the actual partner, therefore, these students will remain in their present seating arrangement. (December, 1999)

The theme of classroom management was raised once again. The mentor suggested that Natalie use a seating plan and that the class should be quiet before the lesson was started. Natalie made seating plans for the disruptive classes.

Natalie Entry #9

- Consider having individual assignments where students work individually and not sharing. Orally. Well in language class I like to encourage cooperative learning. I feel with my experience both with ESL students and adult learners that cooperative language is very positive to encourage those students who usually struggle using some skills. Also, I feel that in a language class, the most important thing is to provide every opportunity to develop confidence. By allowing students to work in pairs, gives them just that opportunity to learn from each other. (December, 1999)

Once again the mentor gave Natalie ideas to help with classroom management. The advice was to have the students work on individual assignments. Natalie justified the partner work that was happening in the classroom.

Natalie Entry #10

- A meeting with regard with the T.A. was requested by the vice-principal and I wanted the principal to be present. The vice-principal did not want this. The advice was that I have the right to have the principal present. Verbally, on a private meeting before the meeting began. I was very pleased to have a support from my mentor and to realized that it is important to settle issues that pertain any area of teaching taking into consideration that the principal should be aware of anything that is going on in the school. (February, 2000)

In this situation, Natalie had a concern for self and her rights. The mentor

advised Natalie that she had the right to have the principal present during a meeting

concerning the teacher assistant. Contrary to her feelings in September, Natalie now feels

that her mentor has supported her. The advice was acted upon, as the principal was

present for the meeting.

Natalie Entry #11

- Do not allow kids to leave the classroom to get their books after the class

  already began. Verbally after an observation. Students were to do a listening

  activity and required their workbook. 4 students did not have their book and

  asked me if they can quickly go to their lockers, other one said that she lost it

  in the classroom and sounded like she was putting the blame on me. (March,

  2000)

The advice was mentor initiated in response to a task concern, supervision. The

mentor has conducted numerous classroom observations. All of the participants of the

mentorship program were trained in relation to their roles, responsibilities and

expectations. Classroom observation are a single aspect of a variety of activities that can

be done between the mentor and mentoree (See APPENDIX F). It is possible that this

particular mentor was tuned out during the training session or the information was

presented in such a fashion that it was not salient to the individual. With all of the

classroom observations it sounds like the mentor has taken on an evaluative role. This

can be especially disastrous, since Natalie's mentor is in a leadership position. An

evaluative role may threaten the level of trust that exists in their relationship.

Natalie Entry #12

- Before doing a listening activity, I should stop the tape and put an example on the board of how to respond to the listening written activity. I should also stop and repeat again making sure that student are familiar with the vocabulary and if they are not explain to them before going on with the lesson. After the class was over, during our break because students seemed confused. (March, 2000)

Again, the advice was mentor initiated after a classroom observation. The mentor had a task concern related to teaching a new language using audio tapes.

Natalie Entry #13

- Have students mark their own exam. Verbally, on a non formal conversation, because he saw me carry home my work. I thanked [her] and have been asking students to exchange papers and we marked most of the exam in class. The written part I still do it myself. (March, 2000)

This entry represents advice that was shared informally in the parking lot. The specific advice was to have students mark work in class, which results in less work to be done at home by the teacher. This advice was related to the task of assessment. Natalie acted upon the advice.

Natalie Entry #14

- To get students involved in organizing the program for a [language] production. Verbally after an observation. I was not sure this was going to work but I was ready to give a try and it did. Students feel that they are in charge of their own learning. Students have taking roles of assistant director, program manager, stage manager, camera man, Master of ceremony etc. Also

students wrote the program themselves and have been practicing and

getting ready for this production. (March, 2000)

In this situation the mentor shared the idea to get the students more involved in

the program by organizing a language production (play). Natalie acted upon the advice

and all of the students were involved. There was no indication as to why the advice was

triggered.

Natalie Other Findings

Natalie's thoughts on dependency were interesting. When asked, "some people

say that mentors should not give advice because it creates dependency, how would you

respond to this claim?" Natalie replied, "no, I think that mentors should play a role and

give advice. If a person is dependent, they will be dependent no matter what." According

to Natalie advice giving should be a primary responsibility of mentors.

Natalie also believed it was an excellent idea to record advice in a journal. Natalie

said, "you tend to forget a lot of stuff. We should all be reflecting because reflecting

brings about change and helps you to feel good about your job."

Jay: Background Information

Jay was a first year, high school, science teacher. He graduated from the

University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Education Degree with a focus in science. He

was responsible for teaching chemistry and physics. Jay was pursuing a Bachelor of

Science Degree in the evenings.

Jay's principal asked the staff who would like to be a mentor. One individual

expressed an interest and was chosen. The mentor's classroom was located on the other

side of the school building, far away from Jay. Since the mentor was not readily

available, Jay found that he occasionally turned to other individuals for help. On the

positive side, the mentor possessed a wealth of experience gained through several years

of teaching.

<div align="center">Jay's Journal Entries</div>

Jay Entry #1

- I asked for some ways to demo the chemical reactions. I was walking down

  the hall to book a lab with the lab tech and ran into [my mentor]. We sat down

  and discussed my question for about 5 minutes. I took the advice and used

  parts of it but not all. The advice was good but I did not have time to demo all

  of them. (October, 1999)

Here, Jay initiated advice by requesting the opinion of his mentor. Jay had a task

concern – how to demo chemical reactions. The specific advice shared was not detailed

in the journal entry. The advice was passed on during an informal encounter in the

hallway. According to Jay, he used parts of the advice, but did not have time to do

everything that was mentioned.

Jay Entry #2

- I asked [my mentor] about a lab. I asked [him] about one [he] had not tried.

  [He] told me that the lab was beneficial but time consuming. I was walking

  down the hall to book a lab with the lab tech and ran into my mentor. I took

  the advice and am going to try it myself on Friday and possibly on Monday if

  it works. (October, 1999)

Similar to the first incident, Jay initiated advice regarding a science lab. Again the

information was passed on in the hallway. Jay planned to do the lab.

Jay Entry #3

- [My mentor] said "Yes" to giving the student the formulas on a test and he

  showed me the ones that are used. I asked [my mentor's] perspective on

  teaching by dimensional analysis. [He] suggested that I should teach both

  ways because science is moving in that direction. I am going to introduce it

  next week. I walked into [my mentor's] classroom. I do not talk to my mentor

  very often. It is not because I don't like [my mentor]. The only problem is that

  our school is too large and he is at the opposite end. If I have a question, I just

  go to another classroom beside me where there is another teacher teaching

  Chem 20. The only time I talk to [my mentor] is if I run into [him] in the

  hallway. [My mentor] has suggested a variety of ideas in getting together

  some time to work on lesson plans or construct an exam but for me it is so

  much more work to prepare for a sub than it is to teach, thus I have been

  declining [my mentor's] ideas. (October, 1999)

In this entry, Jay shared a concern that his mentor was located at the opposite side

of the school, which made it difficult for regular, daily meetings. Jay also mentioned the

downside of professional development release time. According to Jay, the mentors and

mentorees really do not get mornings off as they still need to plan and prepare lessons for

substitute teachers to teach. Jay does not want to take advantage of the release time,

which means there will be less time for mentoring. As for the advice discussed in this

entry, it was mentoree initiated and related to the task concern of teaching science.

Jay Entry #4

- I asked [my mentor] about the procedure for parent-teacher interviews. [He] told me where to sit and approximately how many parents would show up. I went and asked. I took the information to help me prepare for the parent-teacher interview. (November, 1999)

In this situation, the advice was mentoree initiated and related to a task concern, parent-teacher interviews. There is an element of trust as Jay went to his mentor for assistance. Jay used the advice to prepare for the parent meetings.

Jay Entry #5

- I asked [my mentor] how to grade the T.A. class. [He] gave me great advice on how to make assignments and give the kids grades. I asked during lunch. I had no idea on how I should mark the kids work. I used the advice and now mark the kids in the same manner. (November, 1999)

This advice was mentoree initiated in response to a task related concern. Jay sought out how to grade student work. The advice was shared at lunch. Jay utilized the advice; however, the specific advice was not detailed.

Jay Entry #6

- I asked the entire science department if they knew of any good lab activities or demonstrations that involved "active transport' in living cells. I e-mailed the science department. I needed something to reinforce the idea of active transport. I took their advice and tried the lab. The lab did work for about 6 of the students. It was a good learning opportunity for those that got it to work. (December, 1999)

This entry shows that mentorees may turn to people other than the mentor for advice. In this particular case, Jay used technology to e-mail other science teachers in the department. This was an ingenious way to solicit advice. Jay used the advice. Unfortunately, only six students could get the lab to work as it was intended.

Jay Entry #7

- I asked [my mentor] if [he] has tried any organic chemistry demonstrations. [He] did not have any demos on hand but [he] suggested that I e-mailed another teacher and that teacher responded with 2 good demos. I asked [my mentor] after school. Trying to make the class a little more interesting and fun. I have the demos now but we are past the topic area. I might show them or use them next year. (December, 1999)

This journal entry is interesting because it shows that mentors don't have all the solutions to mentorees' concerns. The mentor pointed the mentoree in the right direction to get assistance. The advice resulted from an impact concern. Jay was trying to make his class more fun for students.

Jay Entry #8

- I asked [my mentor] if [he] has tried any soaponification labs (making soap). The topic fits in for organic chemistry. [He] said that [he] has not tried any such labs. But that it is a good topic to try to fit in if you can find a lab. The advice that I received just reinforced that the lab would fit in the curriculum. I asked [my mentor] during our staff lunch. I found a lab and have a little time to kill in chemistry. (December, 1999)

Within this entry, Jay shared that he went to his mentor for help on a lab or task

concern. The information was shared during a staff luncheon. The interesting point is that

Jay feels that he has a little extra time. Knowing the substantial science curriculum this is

surprising.

Jay Entry #9

- [A staff member] said "I should not worry so much about it (my contract).

  You are doing a good job ; and you are the only one that can teach physics." I

  went to [a staff member] and asked about getting hired back. I was very

  frustrated not knowing if I would have a job next year. It is tough to know or

  to plan a future with uncertainty. [The staff member] made me feel a lot

  better. [The staff member's] advice made me realize that I am giving 110%

  and if that is not enough to get me a job next year than maybe I should not be

  teaching. It is a little frustrating being a teacher because you do not get any

  immediate compliments from students, parents, teachers or administrators.

  (January, 2000)

Jay's final journal entry demonstrates another example in which he reached out to

another person this time for emotional assistance. Jay was concerned about self-adequacy

and whether or not his contract would be renewed. Mentorees put themselves under a

considerable amount of stress as they wonder their fate and future employment with a

school board.

Jay Other Findings

Jay believed the journal took time to complete, but liked using e-mail to make quick submissions. Jay also shared that his mentor wanted him to be successful so he would help out as best as they could.

Karen: Background Information

Karen was a high school math teacher and a graduate from the University of Alberta with two degrees, a Bachelor of Science and a Bachelor of Education. The principal asked people in the math department if anyone would like to be a mentor. One teacher volunteered and the decision was made. The mentor was located close to Karen's classroom. Karen indicated that she had a positive relationship with the mentor. Karen stated, "I was nervous going to a new school. It was great to have someone designated to go to for help. We are really good friends."

Karen's Journal Entries

Karen Entry #1

- Most of the advice was about supplies (paper, pencils, staplers, filing cabinet, overhead projector). [My mentor] told me who I needed to talk to in order to get those supplies. I contacted the people that [she] instructed me to. (October, 1999)

In this entry Karen detailed that the mentor gave advice related to finding human and physical resources within the school. It is unclear as to who sparked the advice. Karen acted upon the advice by contacting the people she was advised to contact.

Karen Entry #2

- I had two problem students in my remedial math class that were making the

  class and myself miserable. [She] told me to phone home to the parents first.

  Their behaviour did not improve so [she] told me to contact the

  administration. Students were assessed Saturday suspensions. Verbally in

  closed conditions. [She] was extremely helpful and supportive. [She] let me

  know that it was not my fault and that these things happen to all teachers. I

  was relieved but I am still concerned that the behaviour problems reflect

  poorly on me. (October, 1999)

In this situation Karen was concerned with the task of discipline. The problem

students in the class were making Karen's life miserable. The mentor gave concrete

advice regarding the progressive discipline approach (task related). In addition, the

mentor helped Karen realize that she was adequate and that many teachers encounter

discipline concerns. The advice was shared in "closed conditions".

Karen Entry #3

- I have two students who are pregnant (in different classes). I was not sure

  what my obligations were as a teacher regarding who should know and

  whether or not it was my responsibility to inform those people. [My mentor]

  advised me to notify the school counselors to ensure that these young ladies

  had been taken care of. Verbally and in private. I contacted the counselors, set

  up a meeting with them and discussed the situation in person. I was glad to

  have someone with experience to talk to about these ladies because I wanted

to provide as much support as I could without compromising the best interest of student and the class. (November, 1999)

In this case Karen had an impact concern. Karen was concerned for two students who were pregnant. Karen was also concerned about how the situation would impact other students in the class. The mentor advised Karen how to deal with such students by involving the school counselors. Similar to the previous journal entry, the advice was shared in a private setting. With the private nature of the incident this was a positive approach.

Karen Entry #4

- Two students in my Math 14 class got in a physical fight. There was a lot of swearing and swinging of arms. [My mentor] advised me to pursue an out of school suspension with the administration. Through an e-mail message. The administration was very supportive and had already issued out of school suspensions. I did not have to ask for the consequence, which was a relief. (November, 1999)

In this incident, Karen was concerned about the task of discipline. The mentor reviewed how to handle the situation. Karen acted upon the advice and referred the matter to the school administrators. Similar to other mentorees, like Jay, the advice received was communicated via e-mail.

Karen Entry #5

- Our report card marks were due this morning at 9:00. [My mentor] was in on the weekend with me and [she] helped me with the grade book program. [She] was totally helpful and we were able to enter our marks and comments within

2 hours of starting. We sat at the computer together and went over the instructions. We then dictated our grades to one another as a verification that everything was correct. I was so grateful that [she] was willing to help me on my marks. I cannot imagine how long it would have taken me if I did not have [her] help. [She] has made my life a lot easier. (November, 1999)

Here, Karen was concerned with the task of completing report cards. The mentor showed Karen how to use the grade book computer program. Karen expressed how valuable the mentor's help was. Without the mentor the task would not have been completed on time. Once again there is a concern that involves the use of technology.

Karen Entry #6

- About half way through October, I was feeling really run down and exhausted. Another teacher (not my mentor) sat me down and told me about their first year. When I heard their stories, I felt better. [She] said that making it to Christmas is the hardest part of your first year. Informal chat session in my classroom. I was really relieved that others have gone through the same problems that I have and that they still have a love for teaching and students. It was encouraging to know that other department members are concerned for my health and well being. (November, 1999)

In this situation, Karen presented a self-survival concern to another teacher, possibly an informal mentor. The individual listened to Karen's concerns and affirmed that her thoughts were similar to most first year teachers. In addition, this person stated, "making it to Christmas is the hardest part of your first year". The advice was presented in Karen's classroom. It is uncertain as to who initiated the conversation.

Karen Entry #7

- I have a student in one class who I suspect to be a substance abuser. One day

  he smelled like marijuana during class time. I went and told my mentor and

  we called an administrator. The administrator came to my room and took the

  student to the counselor. If it wasn't for my mentor, I don't know what I

  would have done. I was glad to know the procedure in place and was so

  thankful that [she] was there to help me. (December, 1999)

In this instance, Karen initiated the advice by sharing a task and impact concern

with the mentor. Karen was concerned with how to handle a drug situation. Further,

Karen was concerned for the individual student. The mentor advised Karen to contact an

administrator. The advice was acted upon and the situation was handled.

Karen Entry #8

- I was concerned that now that volleyball season was over (I was the volleyball

  coach), I wasn't contributing enough to the school. I spoke to my mentor and

  asked [her] what the expectations of me as a teacher were now. [She] told me

  that I was to focus on my teaching and that I had done more than enough for

  the school year. My final evaluation will be based on my effectiveness as a

  teacher, not as "What I can do for the school". I appreciated [her] caring

  attitude and willingness to listen to my concerns. [She] has been fabulous so

  far. (December, 1999)

Here, Karen expressed a self concern. The advice was initiated by Karen. The

mentor advised Karen to focus on teaching and not to worry about her evaluation. Karen,

like other mentorees, appreciated the advice.

<u>Karen Entry #9</u>

- I have a chronic talker in one of my classes (Grade 9 boy). I have tried

  everything from talking to him quietly in class, out of class, calling his mother

  and sending to work outside of the classroom but things have not improved.

  My mentor suggested to bring it to the administration and let them deal with

  him. He lacks much maturity and apparently (after talking with his previous

  teachers) has had this problem for quite some time. His middle school

  teachers would give him an assignment and then send him off to the library to

  do the work. Therefore, the student has never been forced to cope in the

  classroom environment. After speaking with an administrator, we have been

  working together to try to prolong the time that he can stay in the class. We

  are using small sections of time and then giving him a break. I also think that

  the 80 minute classes are difficult for some students to stay focussed.

  (February, 2000)

Again, Karen sought out advice related to the task of discipline. Similar to

previous situations, Karen was instructed to take the individual to the principal or

designate. In this case the advice is logical, since Karen has followed the progressive

discipline approach by giving warnings and contacting parents. The advice was acted

upon and a plan was put in place to help the troubled student succeed.

<u>Karen Other Findings</u>

Karen was asked the question, "can you recall receiving poor advice?" The

response was "yes"; however, the advice was not presented by the mentor, rather another

staff member. Apparently another teacher told Karen to keep the students' exams for one

year after the date they were written. Karen felt the exams could be better used to prepare for future tests; therefore, she checked with the school administrators, only to discover there was no such policy. This example showed that a new teacher was capable of clarifying questionable advice.

Karen also expressed satisfaction with e-mail to submit journal entries; however, questioned if the e-mailed entries were secured, so that the district's computer administrator could not read them. In cyber space nothing is totally secure.

Chapter Four Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to share journal entries and to highlight the parts of the entries that pertained to the research questions, so that the reader could come to know occasions in which advice was shared with mentorees. Seventy-three journal entries were shared. The journal entries were discussed in reference to the four research questions: 1) What triggered the advice to be shared? 2) What advice was passed on to mentorees? 3) How was advice shared with mentorees? 4) How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them? In the next chapter the findings will be conceptualized and interpreted with respect to teacher concern theory (Fuller et al., 1974).

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to conceptualize the findings by interpreting data within the theoretical framework. Four research questions were of central focus of this study. They included: 1) What triggered the advice to be shared? 2) What advice was passed to mentorees? 3) How was advice shared with mentorees? 4) How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them? The chapter is organized into four subsections, one for each question.

Research Question #1

What triggered the advice to be shared? The initial proposition to this question was that advice will be shared when mentorees share a concern. This was found to be partly true; however, advice was also shared in response to mentor concerns. Table 1 summarizes the triggers of advice for Mark. The table is organized into four major sections. The first two columns summarize general information such as the journal entry # so that the specific text can be referred to back in Chapter Four and the date of the entry. The next three columns have to do with mentoree concerns. The mentoree concerns have been divided into three columns according to teacher concern theory (Fuller et al., 1974): self, task and impact or student. The next column represents advice that was triggered by a mentor's concern. In the case of Mark, his mentor had two instances in which he was concerned about Mark's discipline (Entry #9 and #12), which according to the theoretical framework is task related.

Table 1

The triggers of advice for Mark

		Mentoree Concerns			Mentor Concerns	unknown
Entry #	Date	Self	Task	Impact	Task	
1	Sept					X
2	Sept		coaching volley-ball			
3	Sept		long range planning			
4	Oct		discipline			
5	Oct		computer report cards			
6	Nov		planning for a new course			
7	Nov		parent interview			
8	Jan					X
9	Feb				discipline	
10	Feb		lesson planning			
11	March					X
12	March				discipline	

Mark did not trigger advice by sharing self-survival or pupil concerns. There were

three situations in which the triggers for advice were unknown from reading the

information within the journal entries. The majority of the advice shared with Mark was

in response to Mark's task concerns. This finding is contrary to the work of Reeves and

Kazelskis (1985). They found that both inservice and preservice teachers were primarily

concerned with students (p. 270). The difference may be rationalized in that they did not take into account the years of experience for the inservice teachers studied.

The analysis of the data submitted by Mark required a revised proposition. Since advice was also triggered by mentor concerns then this finding had to be reflected in the proposition. The revised proposition stated that advice is shared when a mentoree or mentor shares a concern. Consistent with the explanation-building process the revised proposition was compared to Bob's data (See Table 2).

Bob submitted more journal entries than Mark; however, none of the triggers for advice being shared were a result of mentor concerns. Thus, explaining the absence of the mentor concern column on Table 2. Consistent with Mark the majority of the advice was triggered from Bob's task related concerns, such as classroom management, discipline and parent-teacher interviews. Unlike Mark, Bob shared self-survival concerns with his mentor. Bob may have felt more comfortable and able to express these concerns with his mentor than Mark. Alternatively, Bob may have felt less adequate than Mark. Similar to Mark, Bob did not express impact or student concerns. According to teacher concern theory (Fuller et al., 1974) both Mark and Bob have not progressed to stage three, impact concerns. This is not surprising as Cruikshank and Callahan (1983) stated, "it seems to us that few [teachers] attain the last goal of impact" (p. 254). Bob did express three self-survival concerns. These concerns were relayed part way through the year. Bob skipped back and forth from task to self concerns which is inconsistent with teacher concern theory (Fuller et al., 1974).

Table 2

The triggers of advice for Bob

| Entry # | Date | Mentoree Concerns | | | unknown |
		Self	Task	Impact	
1	Aug		year start up tasks		
2	Sept		managing the classroom		
3	Sept		coaching volleyball		
4	Oct		parent teacher interviews		
5	Dec	expectations of self			
6	Jan				X
7	Jan				X
8	Feb				X
9	Feb				X
10	Feb	self management	organization		
11	March		supervision		
12	March	workload			
13	March				X
14	March		discipline		

Although no mentor initiated advice was shared by Bob the revised proposition remained unchanged. Advice is shared when a mentoree or mentor share a concern. The next table, Table 3 shows the triggers of advice for Frank.

Table 3

The triggers of advice for Frank

Entry #	Date	Mentoree Concerns			Mentor Concerns	Unknown
		Self	**Task**	**Impact**	**Task**	
1	Sept		discipline			
2	Sept		exams			
3	Sept			student motivation		
4	Oct			student progress		
5	Oct		substitute request			
6	Oct			student progress		
7	Oct					X
8	Oct				supervision	
9	Nov		parent teacher interviews			
10	Nov		Christmas hamper			
11	Jan		final exams			
12	Jan		rewriting exams			
13	Jan		curriculum review			
14	Feb			student progress		
15	Feb		planning			

Frank is a unique case because he possessed teaching experience from Europe.

Frank like Mark and Bob was primarily concerned with teaching tasks, especially the

policies and procedures for exams. In addition, Frank had more concerns for students

than Mark and Bob. Frank was concerned about student motivation and progress. This

may be due to the fact that Frank possessed more teaching experience and was less

concerned for self-adequacy. Like Mark, Frank's mentor initiated advice in relation to the

task of supervision that Frank was responsible for doing. The absence of concerns for self

may be attributed to the fact that Frank was an accomplished teacher in Europe. He had

the confidence not to question his self-adequacy. The final observation is that Frank

moved back and forth from task to impact concerns, which was different from Bob's

pattern of task and self.

Next, the triggers for advice being shared with Natalie will be analyzed (Table 4).

Table 4 shows the concerns brought to light by Natalie and her mentor. For the most part,

Natalie's journal responses lacked detail. Consequently, the triggers for approximately

half of the occasions advice was shared remain unknown. The most interesting aspect of

Natalie's reality was that the majority of the advice shared with Natalie was triggered by

mentor concerns, in the area of discipline. Natalie experienced the most advice initiated

by her mentor. This may be attributed to the nature of the relationship and the activities

that they took part, which consisted primarily of classroom observations and post

observation conferences. During a post observation conference the observer shares what

he or she has observed. Then concerns and recommendations for improvement are

usually made. This appeared to be what was transpiring in Natalie's relationship with her

mentor. The few concerns that Natalie expressed were at the self-adequacy stage. There

may have been a lack of trust in the relationship, which resulted in Natalie not confiding

in her mentor; consequently, explaining the lack of task or impact concerns. Another

explanation, is that Natalie's teacher training was so wonderful that she had a sound

grasp of teaching tasks, thus rationalizing the lack of concern. Natalie's experience

further supports the revised proposition that advice is shared when a mentoree or

mentor shares a concern.

Table 4

The triggers of advice for Natalie

		Mentoree Concerns			Mentor Concerns		Unknown
Entry #	Date	Self	Task	Impact	Tasks	Impact	
1	Aug						X
2	Sept					Student wants to drop course	
3	Sept	prep time					
4	Sept				discipline		
5	Oct				discipline		
6	Oct				discipline		
7	Dec						X
8	Dec						X
9	Dec						X
10	Feb	rights					
11	March				Supervision		
12	March				use of audio tapes		
13	March						X
14	March						X

With the continued use of the explanation-building process the proposition was

compared to the findings of Jay. The triggers for advice shared with Jay are summarized

on Table 5.

Table 5

The triggers of advice for Jay

Entry #	Date	Mentoree Concerns		
		Self	Task	Impact
1	Oct		science lab	
2	Oct		science lab	
3	Oct		teaching science	
4	Nov		parent teacher interviews	
5	Nov		assessment	
6	Dec		science lab	
7	Dec			student motivation
8	Dec		science lab	
9	Jan	contract renewal		

Jay was primarily concerned about tasks, in particular science labs. There were no

incidences of mentor concerns that resulted in advice being shared. Jay expressed all

three levels of concerns: self, task and impact. Contrary to theory Jay expressed a self

concern midway through the year. According to teacher concern theory self-survival

concerns are expressed first, followed by task concerns, and finally impact concerns

(Veenman, 1984). The type of teacher training a mentoree experienced may rationalize

why some areas of concern were stronger than others. Fuller et al. (1974) stated, "special

kinds of teacher training seem likely to arouse higher level concerns at least temporarily,

but plain vanilla preservice training per se does not change concerns" (p. 43).

As in previous cases, Jay made a random pattern through the stages. Reeves and

Kazelskis (1985) also found inconsistencies with the progressive nature of teacher

concern theory. Classifying the concerns of three interviews staged over the course of

the year, they too documented various patterns of teacher's concerns. The data gathered

in this study and that of Reeves and Kazelskis (1985) shows that teacher concern theory

may not be progressive, but rather teachers experience concerns at all three levels

throughout their career. More research is required on this inconsistency to the theory.

Table 6 below is a summation of the triggers of advice for Karen.

Table 6

The triggers of advice for Karen

Entry #	Date	Mentoree Concerns			Unknown
		Self	Task	Impact	
1	Oct				X
2	Oct		discipline		
3	Nov			pregnant students	
4	Nov		discipline		
5	Nov		report cards		
6	Nov	self-survival			
7	Dec		discipline	student with drugs	
8	Dec	evaluation			
9	Feb		discipline		

Karen was primarily concerned with the task of discipline. This is not surprising.

Olsen and Heyse (1990) reported that all four groups of teachers in their study reported a

concern with discipline. Likewise, Veenman (1984) found that discipline was the number

one concern of new teachers. Karen, like other mentorees, weaved her way throughout

the various levels of concern. Karen did not document advice triggered by her mentor's

concerns. Nevertheless, as noticed in previous cases, advice may have been triggered by a mentor's concern for his or her mentoree.

It is interesting to note that out of all six participants only Jay and Karen participated in school based orientations. Jay stated that "there was a quick orientation meeting. It mainly consisted of an introduction to the school and its policies. This meeting was 30 minutes long and consisted of all new teachers to the school and administration." Karen stated that "all of the first year teachers met in the library and were introduced to all of the administration. Our principal took us each individually around on a tour of the school at some point in the summer." Their participation in an orientation may account for why they had few concerns regarding school policies.

In general, mentorees shared concerns and initiated advice more so than mentors. Mentoree –initiated advice may be proactive or reactive. Proactive mentoree advice was when the mentoree took it upon himself/herself to get advice prior to a concern arising. For example, Frank sought out advice as to how to handle students that continually violated the rules well before he had to deal such a concern in the classroom. This finding is contrary to Clewett (1984). Clewett stated that "beginning teachers are not proactive in seeking assistance and tend to be highly and conventionally self-critical" (p. 3). Unfortunately, Clewett did not expand upon the basis for the statement quoted, so it is difficult to speculate the cause for the difference. Mentoree-initiated advice may also be triggered by a reaction to an immediate concern. For example, Frank had to complete a substitute teacher request so he went immediately to the mentor for help.

In contrast, mentor-initiated advice was when the mentor shared advice with a mentoree because he/she noticed a concern. Mentor-initiated advice may also be

proactive or reactive. An example of proactive mentor-initiated advice is when a

mentor takes the initiative to talk to a mentoree about a concern, such as discipline prior

to the mentoree experiencing a discipline situation. For example, Mark's mentor advised

him to be cautious of unruly student behavior that accompanies the Spring season. On the

other hand, reactive mentor-initiated advice is advice that a mentor gives to a mentoree in

response to an immediate concern. In such a situation the mentoree does not ask for

assistance, but rather the mentor comes upon a situation involving the mentoree and lends

a helping voice. For example, Mark's mentor passed by the classroom and saw several

students sitting in the hall. Consequently, the mentor stopped and offered advice. Mark

stated, " [His] advice was to phone the students' parents and let the administration deal

with the constant problem."

In Table 7 the various combinations of initiating advice and mentoring

approaches are summarized. Intuitively, the best approaches would be those that are

proactive. Such approaches assist mentorees in preparing for future concerns.

Table 7

Initiation of Advice

Person Initiating the Advice	Mentoring Approach
Mentoree	Proactive, advice is shared in response to a future situation or concern
Mentoree	Reactive, advice is shared in response to an immediate situation or concern
Mentor	Proactive, advice is shared in response to a future situation or concern
Mentor	Reactive, advice is shared response to an immediate situation or concern

In this study, it was discovered that mentors initiated advice less frequently than

mentorees. Vonk (1996) conducted interviews with mentors regarding their views on the

nature of mentoring. His findings may rationalize why there was little proactive or reactive mentor-initiated advice being offered. First, mentors believed that beginning teachers must be responsible for their own professional development. Second, mentors view themselves in more of a support role, not as an agent of change. Third, mentors prefer beginning teachers to take initiatives and ask for help (Vonk, 1996).

Another possible explanation for the lack of mentor-initiated advice is that the mentors in this study did not know how to mentor. This is unlikely as an Alberta Teachers' Association Professional Developer trained both mentors and mentorees in Red Deer. The training consisted of a session in which roles and responsibilities of participants and possible mentoring activities were discussed (APPENDIX F).

Finally, the nature of the mentor-mentoree relationship could explain why there was little mentor-initiated advice. Each mentor is unique and has his/her own level of comfort in giving advice. It is probable that the more comfortable a mentor feels the more advice sharing will take place.

Research Question #2

The second research question, what advice was passed to mentorees is linked ever so closely to research question #1. Question #1 represents triggers, while question #2 details the effects. From question #1, it was proposed that advice was triggered when a mentoree or mentor shared a concern. Therefore, it is logical that the advice passed on would relate to the concern shared. The concerns experienced by the mentorees were shown on Tables 1-6 in the previous section.

The initial proposition for research question #2 was that advice passed on to mentorees would relate to concerns of self-survival and teaching tasks. Impact concerns

were not included because it was predicted that the mentorees, being primarily new

teachers, would not have reached the third level (impact). Upon analyzing the

information from the six cases it was discovered that during the period studied five of the

six mentorees received advice in all three areas (self, task and impact). Table 8 shows

whether or not the mentoree received advice related to self, task or impact concerns. A

"X" means that the mentoree received advice related to the particular area.

Table 8

Advice Received

MT-#	Advice related to self concerns	Advice related to task concerns	Advice related to impact concerns
Mark	X	X	X
Bob	X	X	X
Frank		X	X
Natalie	X	X	X
Jay	X	X	X
Karen	X	X	X

Reflecting back upon the journal entries, examples of the specific advice shared at

each level of concern can be found. For example, in the case of Mark, he received the

following advice related to self concerns:

- my mentor thought I should attend certain sessions that help out first year

  teachers. (Jan., 2000)

Bob, Natalie, Jay and Karen also received advice related to self concerns.

Examples of specific advice related to self concerns from each of these mentorees include

the following:

Bob was advised,

- Sometimes you have to give yourself a break. Go home and forget about this

  place for a day or so, and then whatever you get done, you get done. You will

have a mountain of work here Monday anyways, whether you work 5

hours or 15, so go see your family. Don't be too hard on yourself. We're all

learning, and you can't do everything in your first year. (March, 2000)

Natalie was advised,

- To ask administration for a prep time. Explaining that a first year teacher

    should be able to have a prep time. Administration has ignored a petition not

    to do this to first year teachers. If I can count with some support from

    administration then I know I can handle no pre-time. (September, 1999)

Jay was advised,

- I should not worry so much about it (my contract). You are doing a good job;

    and you are the only one that can teach physics. (January, 2000)

Karen was advised

- [She] told me that I was to focus on my teaching and that I had done more

    than enough for the school year. My final evaluation will be based on my

    effectiveness as a teacher, not as "What I can do for the school" (December,

    1999)

The only teacher that did not report receiving advice related to self-adequacy was

Frank. As discussed previously, Frank was an experienced teacher whereas the others

were in their first year of teaching. This reason may account for the difference.

All of the teachers received advice related to tasks. For the most part teaching

tasks were of primary concern for all of the research subjects with the exception of

Natalie. The advice related to tasks accompanied topics such as classroom management,

discipline, extracurricular activities such as coaching, planning, technology,

communicating with parents, supervision, assessment, and teaching methods such as science labs. The specific advice related to each of these tasks was shared in the previous chapter.

Gold and Pepin (1987) found that mentorees received assistance with the following tasks: establishing routines, classroom management, instruction, lesson content, teaching techniques and maintenance and order (pp. 30-33). As with Gold and Pepin's in this study classroom management and discipline were identified as areas in which the mentorees received help. This finding is consistent with other researchers. Clewett (1984) found that beginning teachers had problems related to classroom management and student discipline. Olsen and Heyse (1990) stated, "discipline was an important concern for first year teachers with mentors throughout the school year" (p. 15). Even Frank, an experienced teacher, received advice related to discipline (See Frank, Entry #1). The extent to which discipline was a concern for Frank is unknown. However, Olsen and Heyse (1990) found that discipline was not a concern for reentry teachers who had mentors. Discipline may not be a concern for experienced teachers because they have had opportunities to try various discipline strategies, whereas beginning teachers discover through trial and error which strategies work best for them.

As for impact concerns, all of the mentorees received advice at some point during the course of the study that had to do with students. For example,

Mark:

- Other advice that assisted me was kids that I should be aware of when diving into my assignments. (November, 1999)

Bob:

- [My mentor] informed me to help students be organized. (February, 2000)

Frank:

- Motivation for the students who are losing their energy at the end of the semester. My mentor expressed his experience throughout several years. Some students who calculated their possible marks realized that they are not going to pass their courses. They are usually late showing lack of interest and not trying to do their best. It is a good idea to encourage them and change their attitude and approach to the problem. To motivate them you can offer to rewrite some exams and to calculate percentage of the final exam out of the whole course. (January, 2000)

Natalie:

- To get students involved in organizing the program for a [language] production. (March, 2000)

Jay:

- Trying to make the class a little more interesting and fun [for students]. (December, 1999)

Karen:

- [My mentor] advised me to notify the school counselors to ensure that these young ladies had been taken care of. (November, 1999)

In summary, it is proposed that advice passed on to mentorees may relate to concerns of self-survival, teaching tasks and impact concerns. The original proposition

was revised to include impact concerns, since all of the mentorees had at least one discussion regarding students with their mentors.

<div align="center">Research Question #3</div>

How was advice shared with mentorees? The original proposition was that advice would be shared informally at convenient times and places. Initially this seemed to be the case with Mark. Mark received advice informally in the following situations:

- At the beginning of this school year, my mentor and I were just sitting in the staff room during one of our preps and [he] had said [he] was doing this activity. [My mentor] stated how important that this activity was and how it would make parent-teacher interviews easier! (September 1999)

- Advice was also presented to myself in a less formal way, passing through the hallway when we were talking for a few minutes. (September 1999)

- One Friday after school when [my mentor] and I went out for a drink we were discussing what conferences we should attend together and [he] brought up how the students were abnormally hyper. (February, 2000)

During the interview Mark said, "the best place to share advice is informally, hanging out". However, Mark also mentioned that some informal conferences might be rushed, which makes retention of the advice difficult. In contrast to informal conferences Mark also received advice through formal conferencing. A formal conference is a conference that has been scheduled in advance by the participants. For example:

- This meeting between my mentor and I was fairly formal as we had a planned arrangement to meet in the teacher's staff room. I asked for advice from [my

mentor] as all the material was new and [my mentor] was happy to assist me! (November, 1999)

Since Mark brought forth the notion of formal conferences this had to be worked into a revised proposition. The revised proposition was that advice was passed on through informal and formal meetings between a mentor and mentoree. According to Bob's journal entries the revised proposition was true. Bob experienced informal and formal conferences with his mentor in which advice was shared. The following are examples of informal meetings that Bob had with his mentor:

- I had popped into [my mentor's] office at lunch and noted how my day was going so far and it led to this advice from [my mentor]. (January, 2000)

- Over lunch, I shared my questions about classroom management and [he] shared [his] strategy. (September, 1999)

As for formal conferences, Bob recorded the following:

- I spent some time with [my mentor] and recorded some notes from our discussion. This was a more formal 'wit-down' [sic.] time, as we had the morning with no classes to teach and we decided to spend some time doing the mentoring thing. (December, 1999)

The majority of the advice presented to Bob was done through informal meetings in places such as the hallway, staffroom, and classroom. Interestingly, Bob indicated he preferred advice to be shared in the classroom because reference could be made to the arrangement of the class and where students were positioned. The proposition, advice was shared at informal and formal meetings between a mentor and mentoree was compared to the findings of Frank's journal work.

Frank agreed advice was presented at informal and formal conferences; however, Frank felt most of the advice presented to him was during informal meetings. This was reflected in his journal entries, as there were several instances of informal meetings. Frank believed the best time to share advice was informally on Friday after work when the staff went out for refreshments. Unfortunately none of the journal entries detailed the advice that was shared after school on a Friday evening. When asked why this was so, Frank replied that he didn't think it was right to record things that were said at the bar. Frank was not the only person to admit to receiving advice in a bar. Mark also shared an experienced in which he and his mentor were sitting in a bar and the mentor passed on advice related to the behavior of students during Spring.

Frank appreciated the informal conferences held during lunch. For example, Frank wrote about an instance when she was sitting with the mentor eating lunch when the topic of mid-term exams came up for discussion. In addition to sharing advice informally at lunch, advice was also shared in between classes and during breaks. Frank believed the best place to share advice depended upon the situation.

Since Frank did not record evidence of formal conferences in which advice was shared the proposition was revised. The new proposition stated that advice was presented at informal and/or formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. This proposition was compared to the work of Natalie.

Natalie agreed that advice was presented at informal and/or formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. Interestingly, Natalie's experience was opposite of Frank. The majority of the advice passed on to Natalie was at formal meetings. The

meetings between Natalie and the mentor were pre-determined. According to Natalie

the meetings occurred in a private place and no kids were around.

There were occasions in which advice was shared in an informal way. For

example, the mentor observed Natalie carrying a load of books to her car. The mentor

approached Natalie, inquired about the big load, and suggested that the kids should be

doing some of the marking to lighten the load. The proposition fit the data contributed by

Natalie; thus, it was compared to Jay's and Karen's work to determine if further

modifications to it were necessary.

In the case of Jay informal meetings occurred in hallways, classrooms and the

staffroom. For example,

- I was walking down the hall to book a lab with the lab tech and ran into [my

  mentor]. (October, 1999)

These meetings took place at various times during the day such as between

classes, lunch time and after school.

- I saw [the staff member] in the staffroom. It was during lunch. (February,

  2000)

According to Jay, lunch was a popular time to share advice since the science

department sat together. Jay did not record instances of a formal conference in the

journal. Nevertheless, the proposition remained unchanged. Advice was presented at

informal and/or formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. This proposition
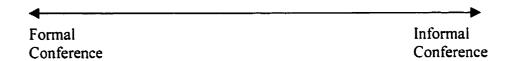
was compared to the final case, Karen.

Karen recalled that most of the advice was presented informally after school. She

felt it was important for advice to be shared when no students were around. Karen would

have liked more formal meetings with her mentor, but cited they were both so busy.

Interestingly, the Red Deer Public School District allocated four half days for the

mentorees and mentors to use for professional development. Like Jay, Karen explained

that she did not take advantage of the half days because it was too much work to plan for

a substitute teacher. The other mentorees confirmed that planning for a substitute teacher

was time consuming. With these thoughts in mind an argument can be made for using the

professional development money allocated for the half days of teaching relief in other

ways. For example, money could be allocated for mentors and mentorees to have lunch or

even a drink after school in the local tavern.

In conclusion, the data gathered from this study showed advice was presented at

informal and/or formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. The kind of

conferences experienced by a mentor-mentoree pair can be plotted at some point upon the

line in Figure 2. In this study, five of the six mentorees believed advice was shared

primarily through informal meetings. Only one mentoree (Natalie) documented and

believed that the majority of the advice presented to her was done through formal

conferences.

Figure 2

<u>Mentoring Conferences</u>

<-->
Formal   Informal
Conference   Conference

Informal conferences were spontaneous, non-planned meetings (Figure 2). Such

meetings occurred at convenient times and places. Informal conferences occurred

spontaneously in places such as hallways, staffrooms, classrooms, offices, parking lots

and bars. Informal conferences were found to occur before school, between classes, lunch, preparation periods, after school and on professional days. More informal conferences were documented in the subjects' journals than formal conferences.

There are mixed thoughts from the mentorees regarding informal conferences. Many mentorees appreciated the relaxed atmosphere of an informal conference; however, some were concerned about other people eavesdropping on conversations that occurred in public settings. There was a further concern on behalf of the mentorees that informal conferences, such as meeting in the hallway, did not provide enough time to engage in a quality conversation.

On the other hand, formal conferences were predetermined by mentors and mentorees. Formal conferences, such as those experienced by Natalie, were conducted in a private setting such as an office or closed classroom. Furthermore, formal conferences were pre-determined to occur at a certain time, such as after school or on a professional day. Each mentoree and mentor in the Red Deer School District were given four half days off to conference with each other. Only one mentoree (Bob) documented the activity that happened on a half day out of class. Karen shared that planning for a day off takes a considerable amount of work. Consequently many of the mentorees were hesitant in using the half days. This finding is ironic since Karen would have liked more formal meetings, but did not take advantage of the half days off so such meetings could have been arranged.

A formal mentorship program does not mean conferences have to be formal or pre-determined. Nor should all conferences between mentoree and the mentor be informal. Ideally, there should be a blend of formal and informal meetings. Regular

scheduled formal meetings provide an opportunity to discuss issues and ensure that

mentoring does in fact occur. Meanwhile, informal conferences such as those in the

staffroom allow mentorees and mentors to discuss spontaneous issues. As a relationship

between a mentor and mentoree grows it becomes easier for both to approach each other

for informal meetings. Bob said, "I felt a little uneasy at first approaching my mentor for

advice, but as I got to know [him] I felt comfortable to ask for help when needed."

The "how to" aspect of sharing advice depends in part upon the individual's

nature and context. An individual that considers himself/herself a private person may be

more likely to prefer private, formal conferences. This was the case with Natalie. In

contrast, other individuals may be open to both formal and informal meetings. For

example, Bob experienced both informal and formal meetings. At the onset of a

relationship mentors and mentorees should discuss appropriate times, places and

conditions for conferences, so that both are in alignment with the other person's views.

For example, some experienced teachers (mentors) guard their classroom time and don't

like interruptions. It would be embarrassing and possibly harmful to the relationship if a

mentoree interrupted a mentor's lesson to seek assistance when the mentor did not want

to be disturbed. Knowing each other's boundaries will safeguard the mentorship

relationship and help it grow in a positive light.

<div align="center">

Research Question #4

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How did the mentorees respond to the advice shared with them? The proposition

was that mentorees acted upon the advice shared with them because they wanted to

please their mentors. From the analysis of Mark's journal entries the proposition was not

supported. However, it was found that Mark acted upon most of the advice received, with

one exception. The mentor teacher had advised Mark to conclude a unit with a video. Mark indicated that he could not act upon the advice at that point in time, but planned to show a video at the conclusion of the next unit. When Mark was asked, "why did you act upon the advice passed on to you?" Mark responded, "I did not do it to please, I did it because it was good advice at the time". Mark also stated, "many times I would have been lost without the advice". These thoughts led to a revised proposition, mentorees acted upon advice because the advice was logical and made sense. Mark agreed with this statement.

There were only a few incidences within Bob's journal where there was clear evidence that the advice was used. The instances included the following:

- I relaxed about having everything in place and long term plans ready, and started planning the first 3 days. (September, 1999)

- I began to have some consequences and discussions with a few students. (September, 1999)

- I plan to incorporate more "walk-about" in class. Actually, I've been gradually doing more of this, as [my mentor] has mentioned this idea before. (January, 2000)

Even though Bob only documented a few times in which the advice was utilized he indicated during the interview that he could not recall not using the advice that was presented. Furthermore, in agreement with the proposition, Bob indicated that "I acted upon the advice because I thought it was good advice. I don't want to reinvent the wheel. It was logical."

The proposition being examined was that mentorees acted upon advice

because the advice was logical and made sense. Frank agreed with this statement. There

were several instances in which Frank recorded that the advice was used. For example,

- It was very important so I checked what they know about equations. My

  mentor was right. The students really needed step by step explanation.

  (October, 1999)

Frank also documented instances in which the advice would be utilized in the

future. For example,

- I did not plan to do midterms for all classes this semester but I will plan to do

  that next semester. (October, 1999)

Overall, Frank believed the advice given was excellent. Frank stated, "as an

experienced teacher in another country the advice confirmed that I was on the right

track." Frank could not recall receiving poor advice."

The proposition being examined was mentorees acted upon advice because the

advice was logical and made sense. Natalie confirmed this statement. Natalie stated, "I

did take a lot of the advice." Natalie added that she knew the students best and thought

the advice would work, so it was tried. Natalie said that she did not use the advice to

please. Natalie replied, "I am not a pleaser. I do my work and try my best." Overall

Natalie rated the advice passed on to her as good and helpful.

Natalie recalled one instance in which she thought poor advice was passed on.

Apparently, Natalie was told not to let the students out of the classroom for any reason.

Natalie believed this was poor advice because students need to go to the washroom and

sometimes get supplies from their lockers. In the end, Natalie continued to let the

students out of class.

The proposition being examined here was, mentorees acted upon advice because

the advice was logical and made sense. Within Jay's journal entries there was evidence

that the advice received was utilized. For example,

- I took the advice and used parts of it but not all. The advice was good but I did

  not have time to demo all of them. (October, 1999)

- I took the information to help me prepare for the parent-teacher interview.

  (November, 1999)

- I had no idea on how I should mark the kids' work. I used the advice and now

  mark the kids in the same manner. (November, 1999)

Jay agreed that the advice passed on to him was logical. Jay said, "much of the

advice clarified questions I had no idea about what to do."

The proposition, "mentorees acted upon advice because the advice was logical

and made sense" was true for Karen. Karen indicated that the advice was utilized. Karen

said, "because I needed the advice in the first place, it was logical to use it". Evidence in

the journal that showed the advice was utilized follows:

- I contacted the people that [she] instructed me to. (October, 1999)

- I contacted the counselors, set up a meeting with them and discussed the

  situation in person. (November, 1999)

Overall, Karen rated the advice given to her as "great". Karen could not recall not

utilizing the advice shared with her.

All of the mentorees indicated that they acted upon the advice or intended to act upon the advice in the future because it was logical and made sense. Furthermore, all of the participants believed the advice they were presented was helpful and good. There were only a few exceptions to these beliefs. For example, Natalie was told not to let the students out of the classroom. Natalie believed this was poor advice because students need to go to the washroom and get supplies from their lockers. Natalie chose to reject the advice and continued to let the students out of class. Overall, knowing that the advice was generally rated as good or better and that the advice was acted upon was a significant finding because it demonstrates the concrete benefits of mentoring for mentorees.

Other Findings

This study was designed to look specifically at four research questions; however, in the process of conducting the study several other interesting findings emerged.

First, all of the mentorees indicated that they had a positive mentoring experience. Bob liked the structure of the mentorship program. In addition, Mark suggested that the mentoring program in Red Deer was so good that it should continue into the mentorees' second year of teaching.

Another significant finding was that a few mentorees reported that they had received advice from people other than their mentors. For example, Jay asked the entire science department how to do a particular science lab. In another example, Karen was told by another staff person to keep the students' exams for one year after the date they were written. Karen felt the exams could be better used to prepare for future tests; therefore, she checked with the school administrators, only to discover there was no such

policy. This example showed that mentorees are capable of questioning advice and taking nothing for granted.

Third, a few of the mentorees commented on the benefits of journal writing. Mark believed that the act of writing ideas down in the journal helped them to be remembered. Similarly, Bob enjoyed participating in the study because the journal activity made him focus on what was being taught and learned. Natalie said, "you tend to forget a lot of stuff. We should all be reflecting because reflecting brings about change and helps you to feel good about your job." Linked to the journal entries, mentorees expressed satisfaction in submitting entries via e-mail. Frank believed e-mail was a time saver and much easier to complete than pencil and paper work as originally proposed.

Fourth, Bob believed sharing advice informally might be less effective than sitting down and formally talking. For example, Bob shared that she had a hard time listening to others prior to class, since she was focussing on the lesson to be taught. Mark suggested that a common prep period be scheduled for mentors and mentorees to sit down and share advice.

Fifth, Natalie believed that advice giving was the primary responsibility of mentors. Bob appreciated the times when his mentor initiated a conversation such as handling a discipline concern.

Finally, mentorees gave suggestions as to how advice should be shared. It is important to note that there is no right way to proceed, since every communication situation is unique. The subjects agreed that mentors should be sensitive when sharing advice by using phrases such as, "have you considered ...", "one method I have used which worked well was ...", and "I like ...". The examples above are non-threatening.

Consider the opposite, harsh statements such as: "you should have..." or "why didn't you do...". Statements such as these threaten mentorees, which could have a devastating impact on the trust component of a mentoring relationship.

Chapter Five Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to conceptualize the data gathered from the six mentorees. Four research questions were of primary importance. They were 1) What triggered the advice to be shared? 2) What advice was passed on to mentorees? 3) How was advice shared with mentorees? 4) How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them? The corresponding propositions that emerged were as follows:

1. advice is shared when a mentoree or mentor presents a concern;

2. advice passed on to mentorees may relate to concerns of self-survival, teaching tasks and impact concerns;

3. advice was presented at informal and/or formal conferences between mentors and mentorees; and,

4. mentorees indicated that they acted upon the advice or intended to act upon the advice in the future because it was logical and made sense.

The intent of this study was not to make generalizations for a large population of teachers. Rather, these findings were intended to relate specifically to the context in which they were generated. Nevertheless, those working in other school districts or contexts may find the results of this study interesting. In addition to the propositions stated above, several other interesting findings were also presented in this chapter.

In the next chapter the study will be summarized and recommendations will be made. Also, the research method will be critiqued and recommendations for establishing

a formal mentorship program will be included. Finally, suggestions for future

research will be detailed.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will provide a summary of the study and findings, recommendations related to the research findings, reflections of the research method, recommendations for establishing a formal mentorship program, and suggestions for future research.

Summary of the Study and Findings

This study was designed to analyze the nature of advice passed from experienced teachers (mentors) to beginning teachers (mentorees). Four questions were of particular interest. They were: 1) What triggered the advice to be shared? 2) What advice was passed to mentorees? 3) How was advice shared with mentorees? 4) How did mentorees respond to the advice shared with them?

A case study approach was utilized in this study. Six mentorees who participated in the Red Deer Public School District's Formal Mentoring Program were tracked for seven months (August 1999-March 2000). Mentorees recorded the advice they had received in journals. A total of seventy-three journal entries were submitted and analyzed. Furthermore, data were gathered by interviewing the mentorees near the end of their formal mentoring experience.

The findings of this study showed that advice may be mentor or mentoree initiated in response to a concern of self-survival, teaching tasks or students. In addition, this study partly supports Fuller's et al. (1974) theory, in that teachers have concerns; however, the mentorees did not progress through the three stages of concerns in a sequential manner. Rather, the mentorees moved randomly in and out of the three stages. This finding is consistent with the work of Sitter and Lanier (1982) and Olsen and Heyse (1990). They found that the participants in their studies did not experience concerns in a

particular sequence. This finding shows that there may be concerns with teacher

concern theory; however, more research is required before a definite answer can be made.

Furthermore, the advice mentorees received related to self concerns, task concerns

and impact or student concerns. Also, it was found that advice was shared during

informal and formal conferences between mentors and mentorees. Moreover, it was

proposed that mentorees utilized or intended to utilize the advice presented to them

because they felt it was logical and made sense. These findings not only showed the

intricacies of mentoring, but also showed mentoring to be a worthwhile professional

development activity for teachers. These finding are unique to the sample studied and not

representative of a larger group.

Recommendations Related to the Research Findings

Several recommendations resulted from this study. The primary recommendation

of this research is to share the results with others such as future mentors, mentorees,

administrators and researchers. It is important for all groups to know that new teachers

have concerns, which leads to advice being shared. In addition, knowing that mentorees

acted upon the advice given to them or intended to act upon the advice in the future

shows that formal mentoring programs are worthwhile professional development

endeavors.

The second recommendation is for mentors to continue sharing advice reactively

and proactively. Reactive advice could also be referred to as "just in time advice", a term

used in the field of business. "Just in time advice" is information that is given to a person

at a critical point in time to help them in a particular situation. For example, consider the

story shared by Karen. One day Karen sensed the odor of marijuana coming from a

student. She asked her mentor for advice at a critical point in time that helped her resolve the incident. In addition to "reactive" or "just in time advice" mentors should also make an effort to be proactive in their advice giving. Several of the mentorees, such as Frank, appreciated advice that was given prior to a situation occurring in his classroom. Being proactive in advice giving will better equip mentorees to deal with the challenges of teaching before they are confronted with difficult situations. It is impossible for mentors to predict and discuss every issue that mentorees may encountered while teaching. Even if it were possible, cramming mentorees with advice could be overwhelming and turn them away from mentoring. Moreover an information overload may fracture the trust that exists between a mentor and mentoree. Nevertheless, there are some general areas of concern that could be discussed and would ultimately help the first year teacher (See pp. 9-10). Vonk (1996) stated,

> at the beginning of the induction process many protégés need an approach with an accent on giving direction, i.e. apart from their role as provider of feedback mentors need to take up their role as instructor more explicitly. My experience as a mentor is that in many cases such an approach speeds up the learning process of beginning teachers. (p. 10)

According to Goddard (2000) it is not the goal or intent of mentors to create a mirror image or clone of themselves. Nor should mentors orphan their mentorees. To neither clone nor orphan, there needs to be a balance of mentor-initiated and mentoree-initiated advice. Through this approach the onus for teaching and learning is not placed upon one individual. Mentors should work with their mentorees to discuss and offer advice related to self, task and student concerns. The discussion could be facilitated

through a Mentoring Activity Plan (M.A.P.). For example, a M.A.P. may include a

discussion of parent-teacher interviews prior to the event, taking place. Table 9 shows an

example of a detailed M.A.P.. A suggested list of mentoring activities is included in

APPENDIX F.

Table 9

Mentoring Activity Plan

Timeline	Topic	Activity
August (Pre-School Opening)	School policies	Tour of the School, Discuss school handbook
	Classroom Management Discipline	Discuss routines, rules and consequences
September	Planning	Share examples of long range plans
	Communicating with parents	Brainstorm ways of communicating with parents, review parent-teacher interview procedures
October	Assessment (Report Cards)	Shares tips and tricks for completing report cards
	Technology	Show how to use a computer generated mark program or report card program

The third recommendation, resulting from the other findings of this study, is that

mentorees should be open to having multiple mentors. Debolt (1994) wrote, "everything

would not be expected to come from one mentor. Just as the Iroquois child had several

mothers to care for and teach her, new teachers could be part of a family in which many

mentors were concerned with their well-being" (p. 99). Mentors being a primary source

of advice and information should encourage mentorees to talk to other staff members,

possibly district support personnel, so that the mentoree has a pool of ideas to draw from

rather than a single point of view (the mentor's). Just as Jay called upon other staff

members for information or advice concerning science labs, all mentorees should

feel comfortable to request assistance from others when needed. The presence of multiple role models and sources of information will also decrease the likelihood of mentor cloning.

Another recommendation of this study is to ponder how money is being spent to facilitate mentoring. In this study it was discovered that some of the new teachers hesitated in taking advantage of the four half days allocated by the school board to meet with their mentors. They claimed planning for a substitute teacher called for extra work. In the future, school board may select to allocate funds to a mentoree/mentor pair so they can have lunch or supper, even with a drink, to discuss school business.

The final recommendation is the need for more research. This study was descriptive in nature. It has increased our understanding of what we know about the process of mentoring. However, there is still plenty of research to be done. The sub-section "Suggestion for Future Research" outlines a few possible ideas.

<u>Reflections of the Research Method</u>

The purpose of this section is to present the researcher's positive and negative thoughts of the research process. First, the explanation-building process was a challenge. I was constantly comparing and re-comparing data. The process of identifying areas of concern was quite intuitive and never perfect. Some journal entries detailed two areas of concern. As Murphy (1995) stated, "there is always another way to slice it with other advantages and trade offs" (p. 140). In the end, I categorized what I thought to be the main idea or concern for each piece of advice.

Using journals as a means of data collection has its pros and cons. On the positive side the journals captured the advice that was passed on to the mentorees. Without

journals it was probable that the advice would have been forgotten. On the negative side, some of the journal entries were more like logs. A log lacks reflection. For example, Natalie sent the following entry in March 2000 that looked more like a log,

- Have students mark their own exam. Verbally, during an informal conversation, because she saw me carry home my work. I thanked [her] and have been asking students to exchange papers and we marked most of the exam in class. The written part I still do it myself.

This example and others like it lead me to wonder if first year teachers are "journalled out" since many teacher preparation programs use journals extensively. Another possible explanation for log type entries may be that first year teachers' lack time. When asked during the interview, what are your thoughts on using journals as a means of collecting data, Jay replied, "the only problem is that it took time. Sometimes I put it off to do marking. I prioritize my jobs. When I did get around to doing it I liked using e-mail."

Five of the six subjects took advantage of e-mail to communicate their journal findings. Only one subject consistently used the fax to send transmissions. E-mail provided an immediate way to communicate with subjects. I sent the subjects monthly reminders via e-mail reminding them to submit their work and I also used e-mail to set up the interview meetings in Red Deer. I would highly encourage other researchers to use e-mail in the future. However, one caution is that information shared through the internet is not 100 per cent secure.

The interview experience was positive. All of the interviews were conducted in a comfortable environment, away from the school. Such an environment allowed the

person being interviewed an opportunity to open up and share freely. The interviews were conducted at the Starbucks Café in the Chapters Bookstore in Red Deer. Large comfortable chairs, next to the fireplace, with ample space between tables provided an ideal setting. Mentorees that arrived early for their interview were able to browse the Chapters book collection while they waited their turn. I would highly recommend to others conducting interviews in a relaxing setting; however, make sure you scout the setting out beforehand. Things to consider are issues such as privacy, electricity for recording devices (if required), background noise and permission for a lengthy stay. Some business owners may not appreciate a lengthy stay.

Recommendations for Establishing a Formal Mentorship Program

Establishing a formal mentorship program is not an easy task, but one that necessitates the collaboration and cooperation of several individuals to be successful. The initiator should begin to establish a mentorship program by engaging stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents, union personnel, etc.) in a discussion of mentoring. Ask yourself, how do people in your school or district feel about mentoring? What are their mental models (conceptions) of mentoring? What do you see as roadblocks (the things that will slow down the project, e.g., money) or springboards (the things that will speed up the project, e.g., administration support)? Lead the stakeholders to discuss reasons for establishing a mentoring program by assessing your current reality (the number of new teachers in your school or district and attrition rates).

Once you have aroused an interest for mentoring ask people to volunteer to be part of a steering committee that would work cooperatively to make decisions. The steering committee should consist of new and experienced teachers, professional

developers, and administrators. The steering committee members should work together to establish program goals, timelines, criteria for selecting mentors and mentorees, processes for pairing, coordinating training meetings, establishing a budget, fundraising (if necessary), communication with participants (possibly e-mail), and monitoring and evaluating the program. The steering committee should also be responsible for coordinating the celebration of the program.

Remember, there is no agreed upon way to proceed, only suggestions. Below is a list of suggestions that you may want to consider as you develop your formal mentorship program.

- allow new and veteran teachers input in the program's creation
- set funds aside for professional development
- encourage people to volunteer to be mentors
- provide a setting (wine and cheese) where mentors and mentorees can pair themselves together
- plan regular activity sessions for mentors and mentorees based upon their needs
- establish and share program goals and expectations
- train mentors and mentorees in communication skills
- communicate with participating individuals regularly
- encourage mentors and mentorees to establish professional growth plans
- celebrate the program's success with others
- make the mentoring program a priority

Mentoring is an investment in human capital. The use of retired teachers in formal mentoring programs should not be overlooked (Boyden, 1994; Gold & Pepin, 1987). Formal mentorship programs may provide an opportunity for retired teachers to pass down their years of learning to a new generation of employees. Boyden (1994) wrote, "with successive generations working together, a stronger and more cohesive community can result and, ultimately, society as a whole can benefit" (p. 51).

Since mentoring involves people, your school, district, or province will have its share of pitfalls and highlights as the mentorship program develops. The works of Ganser (1995), Weber and Carroll (1999), and Wunsch (1994a) are excellent sources of additional information concerning the establishment of formal mentorship programs.

<u>Suggestions for Future Research</u>

This research has increased what is known about the formal mentorship program in Red Deer and the sharing of advice from the mentorees' perspective; however, there is still a lot to learn. Further investigation might explore the following topics:

1. Repeat this study looking at the mentors' perspective.

2. Repeat this study with a group of elementary teachers.

3. Further examine the different approaches of mentoring (reactive versus proactive). Which approach do mentors or mentorees prefer?

4. Investigate if gender influences the advice shared in a mentoring relationship.

5. Compare formal mentorship programs for teachers.

6. Investigate the necessary components of mentorship training programs as perceived by participating individuals.

7. Investigate the advice shared between mentors and mentorees in different professions (e.g., nursing).

8. Conduct a survey to discover poor advice that mentorees received.

9. Investigate mentoring activity plans to determine if they are helpful and/or followed.

10. Investigate the advice that mentorees pass on to mentors.

Research in the any one of the above areas will advance what is known about mentoring.

Chapter Six Summary

Mentoring is a fascinating topic of study. This chapter has brought this study to closure. A summary of the study and findings, recommendations related to the research findings, reflections of the research method, recommendations for establishing a formal mentorship program, and suggestions for future research, were all contained in Chapter Six. It is my hope that those that read this dissertation will have at least one question or insight that will advance what we know about this interesting phenomenon, mentoring.

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APPENDIX A: Compliance with Ethical Standards for the University of Calgary

The section numbers below refer to the sections in the University of Calgary Ethical Policy.

Section 5 Research Policy-Ethics on Human Studies
Risks and Benefits:

- 5.3. The benefits for participating in this study include: 1) Participants will have an opportunity to reflect upon teaching practice 2) Participants may experience a sense of satisfaction for having contributed to educational research 3) Participants can link their contribution to research to a teacher growth project.
- 5.2. There are no greater risks associated with this study than those ordinarily incurred in daily life.

Section 6 Research Policy-Ethics on Human Studies
Guidelines Informed Consent

- 6.1.3.1. Participation is voluntary.
- 6.1.3.2. Participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty.
- 6.1.3.3. Exemplary care will be taken to safeguard participants.

Section 7 Research Policy-Ethics on Human Studies
Deception

- Deception is not part of this study.

Section 8 Research Policy-Ethics on Human Studies
Privacy and Confidentiality

- 8.2.1. Confidentiality will be assured in the following manner: Names of participants and their schools will not appear on the final report or presentation.
- Anonymity will be assured in the following manner: Instead of using the participants pseudo names will be used.
- 8.2.10. Disposition of the data will be carried out in the following manner: The journals, field notes and transcribed data will be shredded at the conclusion of the study. Also, audio tapes will be erased.

APPENDIX B: Information Letter

The Nature of Advice Shared in Formal Mentoring Experiences

Dear _____:

      This letter outlines a study concerning your formal mentoring experience and invites you to participate, if you are mentor or mentoree working in the Red Deer Public School District. There are three purposes of this study. The purpose is to know the advice shared with mentorees. The second purpose is to know how and why advice is shared. The final purpose is to analyze how mentorees respond to the advice shared with them.

      Your participation would mean keeping a point form journal of the well-remembered events experienced during mentoring, especially outlining advice shared by mentors and received by mentorees. In an effort to make your work minimal a sample journal template will be supplied. Participants are requested to submit their journals monthly for analysis. In addition to the journal, you will be interviewed. Further, you will have an opportunity to review and critique the findings of the research.

      Participation in this study is completely voluntary and confidential. There are no risks for your involvement. On the other hand there are several benefits. First, by participating you will have an opportunity to reflect upon teaching practice. Secondly, you may experience a sense of satisfaction for having contributed to educational research. Thirdly, you may be able to use your involvement in this research for your teacher growth project, which is required according to Alberta Learning guidelines.

      If you have a question, I can be contacted at (w) 226-5789, (h) 275-3407 or e-mail bszumlas@telusplanet.net. My supervisor Dr. Alice Boberg can be contacted at 220-7520 or e-mail boberg@ucalgary.ca. If you have a questions regarding this study Dr. Veronika Bohac Clarke, Chairperson of the Division Research Ethics Committee can be contacted at 220-3363. Furthermore, Dr. L. T. Bruton, Vice-President (Research) for the University of Calgary can be contacted at 220-5465.

      If you would like to participate, please forward your name to Mr. Don Falk, Deputy Superintendent of the Red Deer Public School District or myself. Thank you for considering this request. It is an exciting opportunity to be a part of a study that will add knowledge to the field of mentoring.

Sincerely,

Bryan Szumlas,
Doctoral Graduate Student, University of Calgary

APPENDIX C: Letter of Informed Consent

This form confirms the consent of _____ to participate in the research project titled, "The Nature of Advice Shared in Formal Mentoring Experiences", conducted by Bryan Szumlas under the supervision of Dr. Alice Boberg in the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. There are three purposes of this study. The first purpose is to understand what advice is shared with mentorees. The second purpose is to discover how and why advice is shared? The final purpose is to analyze how mentorees respond to advice shared with them.

I have been informed, to an appropriate level of understanding, about the purpose and methodology of this research project, the nature of my involvement, and any possible risks to which I may be exposed by virtue of my participation.

I agree to participate in this project by doing the following:
- keeping a point form journal and submitting it monthly for analysis
- being interviewed in the spring of the year 2000
- reviewing the research findings

I understand and agree that:
- My participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from this research at any time without penalty.
- The researcher has the right to terminate my participation in this research at any time.
- Participation or non-participation will have no effect on my participation within my agency.
- All data will be kept in a secure place inaccessible to others.
- Disposition of data will be carried out in the following manner:
    - Copies of the journals and the transcribed interview data will be shredded when this project is completed.
    - Audiotapes data will be erased when the research is completed.
- Confidentiality will be assured in that only the researcher will have access to the data.
- Anonymity will be assured, since data will be coded in such a way that I will not be identified.
- The participants will be able to read or obtain the research report in the Spring of the year 2000.
- The benefits of participating in this study include the following:
    - I will have an opportunity to reflect upon teaching practice.
    - I may experience a sense of satisfaction for having contributed to educational research.
    - I may be able to use my involvement in this research for my teacher growth project, which as of this year is required according to Alberta Learning guidelines.
- There are no greater risks for your involvement other than those ordinarily incurred in daily life.

I understand that it may be desirable, for comparative purposes, to repeat this research on another site or to use the data from this research for comparison with related existing research. I understand that any subsequent use of the data from this research will conform to the above parameters.

I understand that the results of this research will be used for publication, presentation to scientific groups, etc.

If you have any further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Bryan Szumlas (w) 226-5789 (h) 275-3407 or e-mail bszumlas @telusplanet.net

Dr. Alice Boberg (Professor, University of Calgary) (w) (403) 220-7520

Dr. Veronika Bohac Clarke, Chairperson of the Division Research Ethics Committee (w) (403) 220-3363.

Dr. L. T. Bruton, Vice-President (Research) for the University of Calgary (w) (403) 220-5465.

I have read the consent form and I understand the nature of my involvement. I agree to participate within the above stated parameters.

Printed Name: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

School Address: _____

Phone Numbers: (w)_____(h)_____

E-mail: _____

Fax: _____

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Sincerely,

Bryan Szumlas

APPENDIX D: Journal Template

Name: _____   Date: _____

Questions for Reflection:

What was the advice?

Why and how was the advice presented?

How did you respond to the advice?

<u>APPENDIX E: Interview Template</u>

Name: _____   Date: _____

Background Information:
- Thank the mentoree for participating.
- Reiterate the purpose of the study and the research questions.
- Clarify the length of the interview; approximately 1 hour of your time.
- Ask permission to tape-record the discussion, so it can be accurately transcribed and analyzed.
- Make her comfortable. Ask them if they would like a coffee.

Interview Questions:
- Tell me about yourself (where you work, grade you teach, your education, etc.)
- How was your mentor assigned?
- Share a little bit about your mentor's background (grade taught, proximity to you within the school, etc.)
- Please share your thoughts on your mentoring experience (Highlights/Pitfalls).
- In your opinion, when is the best time to share advice?
- When was most of the advice shared with you?
- In your opinion, where is the best place to share advice?
- Where was most of the advice shared with you?
- Some people say that advice is mentoree initiated. What are your thoughts on this matter?
- Would you agree or disagree that you acted upon the advice given to you?
- Why did you act upon the advice?
- Was there a pressure to please your mentor?
- Overall, would you rate the advice given to you as good or poor?
- Can you recall receiving poor advice? If yes, why was it poor?
- Some people say that mentors should not give advice because it creates dependency. How would you respond to this claim?
- What was the single most important piece of advice you received?
- Did you receive advice from people other than your mentor?
- Do you have any recommendations for the sharing of advice? Explain.
- Do you have any other reflections concerning mentoring and sharing advice?

APPENDIX F: List of Suggested Mentoring Activities

The following list of activities is meant to assist mentors and mentorees in their journey through mentoring. They are presented only as suggestions. Mentors and mentorees should be encouraged to pick and choose the activities that they are most comfortable with. The following list of activities has been modified from Mentorship Program: A Model Project, 1999.

- have dinner or lunch together
- keep a list of issues to be discussed
- plan together
- observe lessons
- daily contact
- share resources
- start a journal
- attend a conference together
- set a regular meeting time
- teach together
- clarify expectations
- record tips and tricks
- share class activities
- team teach
- discuss school policies
- discuss report card grades
- be honest
- visit the library together
- share thoughts on professional readings
- brainstorm areas for P.D.

- tour the school
- videotape a lesson and critique
- plan common themes
- plan a special event
- talk about students with diverse needs
- discuss discipline
- discuss classroom management
- use technology
- discuss assessment strategies
- talk about fears
- discuss teaching contracts and job situation
- talk about embarrassing situations
- discuss best teaching practice
- compare assessment techniques
- look at literacy ideas together
- go on a field trip together
- trade jobs for a day
- do collaborative parent meetings
- make a teaching portfolio to share