

**SOME INSIGHTS INTO THE MENTORING ROLE OF HIGH
SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS: FIVE SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN FOCUS**

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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

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**BY
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ABSTRACT

This study was mainly designed to investigate the extent to which the cooperating teachers are aware of their mentoring role, the extent to which they discharge their mentoring duties and factors that affect of the teachers' mentoring activities.

The subjects of the study were English teachers in five cooperating secondary schools in Addis Ababa who have served as 'mentors' in the last five years, student school directors and English department heads, the teaching practice supervisor, head of the university's teaching practice coordinating unit and teachers in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature Addis Ababa University (AAU).

The data collecting tools used were questionnaire, interview and the student teachers' diaries. Some of the data are quantitative while others are qualitative in nature. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used. For the analysis of the quantitative data, descriptive statistics like, frequency, percentage and mean were used, whereas, the qualitative data were described and explained.

The study has generally shown that the cooperating teachers are aware that they are supposed to serve as 'mentors' and that then are ready to work with the student teachers. However, there are pieces of evidence in the data that show that the

cooperating teachers do not seem to be successfully discharging their mentoring duties.

For example, the study has noted the following as factors that affect the cooperating teachers successful discharging of their mentoring duties shortage of the teaching practice time, weaker liaison between the university and the cooperating schools, the university's failure to give due attention to the student teaching practice program and lack of enthusiasm and under performance in the teaching practice on the part of the student teachers.

Organization of the Study

The study has five chapters. In the first chapter, background issues about the area of the study will be discussed. In the second chapter, relevant literature on the practical aspect of initial teacher education in general and mentoring in particular is reviewed. The third chapter describes the research design. The fourth chapter discusses the data gathered related to the research questions. The last chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

There is a general common understanding among many teacher education institutions and teacher educators that teaching practice is a valuable aspect of the whole process of teacher education. Producing competent professional teachers in general and teachers of English as a foreign language in particular involves both equipping the trainee teachers with the necessary knowledge in their area of specialization and the development of skills that enable them to transfer their knowledge, effectively. In support of this argument Wallace (1991:123) claims that both the theoretical knowledge, 'the received knowledge; and the practical experience, the experiential knowledge,' are equally important in teacher education. These two aspects of the training should be acquired not separately but in a well integrated way. The trainees try out their theoretical knowledge about teaching in the actual teaching context and reflect on their own practices for further improvement. This actually needs to be practiced very well so as to develop the trainees to independent professional practitioners in teaching.

This way of training preservice teachers would be possible through the help of the practicing teachers, who are supposed to have both the knowledge of teaching and practical teaching experience in the actual teaching milieu. The role of the school practicing teachers in the training of professional teachers, has since recently been given due attention in the curricula of many teacher education institutions in the world.

The recent practice in countries like England, Wales, USA, etc., to make teacher education school based (Field, 1994) has promoted the role of school teachers in the process of training preservice teachers.

It would, therefore, be very important to study the nature of teaching practice in general and the mentoring roles of the school practicing teachers in particular in Addis Ababa university's training of professional preservice teachers of English as a foreign language. This may indicate the extent to which the current trend in teacher education is making its way to the university.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Addis Ababa University has been one of the leading institutions of higher learning concerned with the education of professional teachers in Ethiopia for many years. It has acknowledged the importance of the teaching practice program and made it an integral part of the whole training program. However, the introduction of the program is not an end by itself. In order to effectively discharge the responsibility of producing competent professional teachers in general and teachers of English as a foreign language in particular, it has to be very much concerned with the quality of the program.

The training of professional teachers, especially teachers of English as a foreign language, involves both knowledge acquisition and skills development. The practical

aspect of the training demands the trainees' engagement in the actual teaching under supervision. In connection with the importance of teaching practice under supervision, James (1982) says,

There is the important difference between imparting knowledge and the development of skills.... Of course, you can impart knowledge to thousands at a time, but the development of professional skills requires a lot of one - to - one, supervisor - to - trainee relationship... (James, 1982:33).

This shows that the quality of mentoring by cooperating teachers plays a decisive role in determining the success/failure of the basic objective of the teaching practice program.

Regardless of the benefits of the program discussed above, the local research work available so far does not seem to be satisfactory to show the clear picture of the status of the teaching practice in the university in general, and the nature of the mentoring activities of the cooperating teachers in particular. This is, therefore, believed to be a felt problem worth researching so as to maximize the intended benefit to be gained from the teaching practice program in which money, energy and time are invested.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study has been designed to address the following four research questions:

1. To what extent are the cooperating teachers aware of their mentoring role?
2. Are the cooperating teachers ready to work as mentors?

3. To what extent do the cooperating teachers discharge their mentoring role?
4. Are there factors that affect the teachers' practice of their mentoring role?

1.4 Significance of the Findings of the Study

The study is hoped to have the following potential significance:

1. It could provide the teaching practice coordinating unit of the university with reliable information about the status of the mentoring role of the high school English teachers. This is hoped to help the unit to make appropriate decisions to promote the cooperating teachers' active involvement in the teaching practice program.
2. It is hoped to raise the awareness of the cooperating teachers about their responsibilities and roles in the process of equipping the student teachers with the necessary professional skills.
3. It may also help to create a strong link between the university's teaching practice coordinating unit and the cooperating schools.
4. It could initiate further similar research in different teacher training institutions at different levels in the country.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

Although eight high schools in Addis Ababa have accepted the student teachers from the university, only five high schools were taken as sample schools in this study. This was because collecting data from all the schools was found to be highly demanding, in

terms of time and energy. However, most of the sample schools have cooperated with the university in the teaching practice for a longer time. So, it is hoped that the practice in these schools could give us a better insight into the research questions under investigation.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Observation was planned to be used as one of the primary data gathering tools in the study. However, because of time constraint to sufficiently observe all of the sample schools, observation was not used as one of the primary data gathering tools. However, necessary care has been taken to use questionnaire, interview and diaries to collect relevant data for the study.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined in accordance to the way they are used in this paper:

- Teaching practice or practice teaching and the “practicum” are interchangeably used in this study. They refer to the program in which the student - teachers of English are sent to the high schools to practice teaching under the supervision of cooperating teachers and the university supervisors.
- The “cooperating teacher” and the ‘mentor’ are also interchangeably used here to refer to the high school English teacher who works with a student teacher(s) during teaching practice.

- The “student - teacher,” the ‘trainee’ and the ‘protégé’ are used interchangeably to refer to the prospective English teacher who is practicing teaching under supervision.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, research findings and theoretical issues that could shed light on the nature and place of teaching practice program in general and mentoring in particular in initial teacher education and especially in second language teacher education will be reviewed. The roles of the cooperating, practicing English teachers in the training of pre-service English teachers will also be thoroughly discussed in the chapter. In addition, the chapter reviews relevant work done so far in the local context.

The literature reviewed in the local context indicates the extent to which the practicing teachers have played the roles they are supposed to play in initial second language teacher education.

2.2 The Rationale Behind Teaching Practice

In the history of teacher education, the theoretical and the practical aspects of the training have not been well integrated. Studies in the area indicate that more attention has been given to the acquisition of the theoretical knowledge about subject areas and the profession. Wallace (1991:123), who claims that both the theoretical knowledge- 'the received knowledge' and the practical experience- 'the experiential knowledge' are equally important in teacher education, says "... there is sufficient evidence that, until now, it has very often been the case that the trainee's school experience and college

training experience have not, in fact been mutually supportive and complementary.”

This failure to integrate theory and practice in the field of teacher education in general and second language teacher education in particular has necessitated change in the tradition of the field. The need to make teaching a practice based profession therefore gained a wider acceptance in teacher education institutions. That is why there seems to be a growing general common understanding among institutions of teacher education and teacher educators as regards this issue.

Producing competent professional teachers in general and teachers of English as a foreign language in particular involves equipping the trainees with the necessary knowledge in their area of specialization and the development of the practical skills that enable them to transfer their knowledge successfully. The skills development aspect of the training needs careful practical training. In connection with the importance of the development of the practical skills of teaching and that it is more demanding than the acquisition of the theoretical knowledge, James (1982) states that:

There is the important difference between imparting knowledge and the development of skills... of course, you can impart knowledge to thousands at a time, but the development of professional skills requires a lot of one-to-one supervisor-to-trainee relationship...
(James, 1982:33)

The recent move in England, Wales, USA and Australia (Field, 1994) to make teacher education school-based is part of an attempt made to make teaching a practice based profession. The school-based approach could be seen as a revolution in the field of teacher education in which the role of schools and the practicing teachers, in the

process of training preservice teachers, is highly appreciated. A key development in initial teacher training at present (Williams, 1994:134) is the transfer of responsibility for the support and training of students from higher education to schools and from tutor to teacher.

Wallace (1991) shares similar argument with the above scholars. He claims that the idea of becoming a competent professional teacher basically involves not only effective classroom teaching but also other things related to the profession and school environment in general. In particular, he states:

Apart from teaching, there are many other things which trainees should learn about schools, not only theoretically but also experientially, these include such issues as school management, disciplinary procedures, staff relations, appropriate professional behavior both inside and outside the classroom, and so on. (Wallace, 1991:121).

At the heart of the practical aspect of initial teacher education is the mentoring duty which is primarily the role of school practicing teachers. But what is mentoring? The next section will give us some insight into the concept of mentoring.

2.3 The Concept of Mentoring

The term 'mentor', in its general sense, is an old concept that dates back to the classical Greek time. Some writers (Field, 1994; Anderson and Shannon, 1988), for example, state that the concept of 'mentor' was rooted in the story of 'mentor' and Odysseus and Telemachus. Smith and Alred (1993) cited in Field (1994) state the story as follows: "Mentor, left in charge of Odysseus's household while Odysseus went

of [sic] to the Trojan war, was essentially a surrogate father and so had to personify the kingly quality of wisdom." (Field, 1994:65).

Concerning the role of the mentor, Carruthers (1993), again quoted in Field (1994:65) says, "The mentor was to act as a father figure, a teacher, a role model, an approachable counselor, a trusted advisor, a challenger, and an encourager to young Telemachus."

The concept, however, was introduced to the field of teacher education in its present meaning very recently. Various researchers have defined the concept in slightly different ways. The following two definitions, however, seem to be sufficiently comprehensive and inclusive. The first definition is that of Anderson (1987). He defines 'mentoring' as:

A nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring functions are carried out within the context of an ongoing, caring relationship between the mentor and protégé. (Anderson, 1987 in Anderson and Shannon, 1988:40).

The definition enumerates the roles of the mentors in the process. It also shows that mentoring is context bound and that it is determined by the nature of the relationship between a mentor and the protégé.

Another definition which seems to be more elaborate and relevant to the concept of mentoring in school-based teacher education is that of Carruthers (1993) in Field (1994).

Mentoring is a complex, interactive process, occurring between individuals of differing levels of experience and expertise which incorporates interpersonal or psychological development, career and/or educational development, and socialization functions into the relationship....To the extent that the parameters of mutuality and compatibility exist in the relationship, the potential outcomes of respect, professionalism, collegiality, and role fulfillment will result. Further, the mentoring process occurs in a dynamic relationship within a given milieu. (Field, 1994:65)

The definition states the nature, aim and outcomes of mentoring. It also shows that the outcome of the process is determined by the nature of mentor-protégé relationship. It, in short, reveals that mentoring is a very important aspect in one's general development into a whole personality and that it is context bound.

The next section discusses the importance of mentoring in initial teacher education.

2.4 The Rationale Behind Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education

As the preservice trainees are newly joining the profession, they obviously lack the practical skills and experience of teaching. They have not yet assimilated their theoretical knowledge with practice. In other words, because their theoretical knowledge about the linguistic and pedagogical principles underlying language instruction hardly guarantees their ability to become competent practitioners, they should be provided with the opportunity to practice teaching in the actual school environment with the help of the more experienced teachers.

Lawton(1989), cited in Kennedy (1993), states that education is moving towards practice based professions in that educational theory tends to arise from educational practice which is realized in the reflective practitioner. This would be possible when trainees start to evaluate critically and seek to understand their own classroom experiences so that they will develop the kind of intuitive professional 'know-how'. He goes on stating that the ability to reflect by the trainees on their practice would be successfully developed with the help of mentors, who could systematically cultivate the trainees' awareness about their practices and provide them with systematic opportunity to critically evaluate their practices.

Feiman-Nemster and Parker(1992) quoted in Field (1994:67) who have similar view on mentoring say :

The promise of mentoring lies not in its contribution to novices' emotional well being as survival, but in its capacity to foster an inquiring stance towards teaching and commitment to developing shared standards for judging good practice.

Studies in the area show that student-teachers are naturally most concerned with acquiring the competencies of classroom subject teaching. If they, however, are to become professionals in the widest sense, they also need to understand that being a teacher involves more than teaching one's subject. They should therefore be helped to understand other responsibilities of a professional teacher. (McIntyre, Hazel and Katharine, 1994).

Another relevant argument is that of Elliott (1991) in Kellett (1994:124). Elliott stresses the importance of action research in teacher education so as to develop a teacher's

capacities for situational understandings as a basis for wise judgment and intelligent decisions in complex, ambiguous and dynamic educational situations.

It should be noted here that such action research based teacher education would hardly be successful without the active participation of the classroom practitioners (or the mentors) whose actual classroom practices and experiences are a potential source of action research.

Now that the need for mentoring has been established in the preceding section; let us move on to the next section to get some insight into why the practicing teachers should be mentors.

2.5 The Practicing Teachers as Mentors

Studies in the area of teacher education indicate that the role of the schools and school practicing teachers in the training of preservice English teachers has remained negligible. Much of the training responsibilities were left to the training institutions and University/College tutors. This could be seen from the little time allocated to the practical aspect of the training in most teacher training institutions. It seems from this that teaching practice is considered as a peripheral requirement for the completion of the training program.

However, with the general change of the philosophy underlying teacher education in

general and second language teacher education in particular, there is a growing understanding among teacher educators and training institutions with regard to promoting the involvement of cooperating teachers in the process. Field (1994), who states a move to make preservice teacher education school based in recent years, states that in England and Wales, about three fourths of the total training time (120 days out of the total 180 days) for the students of post graduate certificate was given to schools.

Even though this seems to be an extreme case where drastic shift is made, the very idea of making initial teacher education more of school-based is getting wider acceptance. A key development at present (Williams, 1994:134) is the transfer of responsibility for the support and training of students from higher education to school and from tutor to teacher.

In connection with the above argument, Rust (1988:56) says, "... cooperating teachers by virtue of their more frequent interaction with student teachers, eventually teach more than college supervisors." Yates (1981), cited in Haberman and Harries (1982), has also found that over seventy per cent of the student teachers he sampled in England, felt that their cooperating teachers were of greater help than their college supervisors because they were more accessible for observation and discussion.

Some studies indicate that the cooperating teachers could influence the student teachers emotionally, psychologically, socially and intellectually. Hodges (1982) claims

that if a course work, in reading or any other curriculum area, is to have a long-term effect on the beliefs and teaching practices of preservice teachers, it has to be directly related to the pressures and day-to-day responsibilities connected with classroom teaching which is backed up by the feedback and help of the cooperating teachers.

A study by Bunting (1988) on the influence of teachers with differing views on the beliefs of their student teachers pointed out that changes observed in candidates subsequent to student teaching were clearly related to differences in the character of candidate-teacher pairing. He further states that this led to the conclusion that there is a possibility of the cooperating teacher's serving as a socializing influence.

Student-teacher could also learn practical classroom procedures that help them to be flexible in their lesson preparation and presentation. In connection with this, Westerman (1991) states that the expert teachers thought about learning from the perspective of the student and performed a cognitive analysis of each learning task during planning which they adapted to the needs of students during teaching. Novice teachers, however, used specific lesson objectives to form structured lesson plans that they did not adapt to meet student needs during teaching. A similar study by Akyel (1997) on the experienced and student EFL teachers' instructional thoughts and actions, has confirmed the above argument. He then suggests that EFL student teachers should be encouraged to observe experienced teachers teaching in other educational setting and ESL/EFL contexts to help them develop their knowledge of processing behaviors observed during language instructional setting rather than trying to stick to previously planned instructional activities.

The other area where the cooperating teachers exert powerful influence is assessment of learner progress. Many research findings (Boydell, 1986; Yattes, 1982; Partington 1982) cited in Wondwosen (1998) state that cooperating teachers are of greater help to the student teachers' learning and are of less source of anxiety related to assessment because they rather tend to trust them more than they trust the supervisors for assessment. The following words by Saunders and Saunders (1990) quoted in Wondwosen (1998) may summarize the role of cooperating teachers.

By virtue of the role with which they are entrusted, the opinions of cooperating teachers form the most important and influential basis for the identification of teaching skills and their active cooperation is essential in the supervision of trainee teachers. (Wondwosen, 1998:5)

The other thing that should be raised in the process of mentoring is the specific roles of mentors. The following section will briefly summarize some of the basic roles.

2.6 Roles of Mentors

In order to successfully discharge their mentoring role, the cooperating teachers should clearly know their specific roles. Otherwise, there may not be a smooth interaction between the mentor and the student-teacher. Actually, different scholars have stated many different roles that mentors should play. In this section, however, only the major and probably the inclusive ones will be discussed.

Elliott and Calderhead (1992) cited in Williams (1994) state that the idea that mentor is someone who supports or nurtures the student is the most prevalent perception. Watkins (1992) on his part identifies three major aspects of the mentor's role. These

are, pastoral support for a new teacher, supervisions and sequential introduction to professional issues in education.

The pastoral support in Watikin's opinion refers to the role that mentor, as more experienced teacher, plays in familiarizing the student teacher to the school environment. Supervision refers to the assessment of the trainee's classroom performance. The third role sequential introduction to professional issues in education refers to more of academic related issues like, helping the trainee understand general education policy, education curriculum in general and subject specific syllabus in particular, etc.

D' Arobn(1992) cited in Williams (1994) has also stated similar roles. He argues that the mentor oversees the immersion of the intern into the school culture in a number of ways. S/he acts as liaison between the school and the university. S/he encourages engagement with the professional culture and acts as the focus person responsible for a particular intern in the school.

More specific and comprehensive roles of mentors are those mentioned by Anderson and Shannon (1988:40). These are:

- a. The process of nurturing which is a developmental process where the nurturer helps the protégé provide appropriate environment by recognizing the ability, experience, and psychological maturity of the person being nurtured and provides appropriate growth-producing activities so that the person develops into fuller maturity.
- b. The act of serving as a role model-here mentors provide the protégés with a sense of what they are becoming. Protégés can see a part of their adult selves in other adults (Levinson et al 1978). By their example, mentors stimulate growth and development in their protégés.

- c. The five mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending).
- Teaching includes modeling, informing, confirming/disconfirming, prescribing and questioning.
 - sponsoring involves protecting, supporting and promoting.
 - encouraging involves the behaviors of affirming, inspiring and challenging.
 - counseling is a problem solving process that includes behaviors such as listening, probing, clarifying and advising.
 - befriending... mainly includes, among other behaviors, accepting and relating...
- d. The focus on professional and/or personal development....
- e. The ongoing caring relationship-Levinson et al (1978) cited in Anderson and Shannon (1988:40) assert that the essence of mentoring may be found more within the kind of relationship that exists between the mentor and protégé than in the various roles and functions denoted by the term 'mentoring.'

Having discussed the roles of mentors, it seems reasonable to briefly shed light on the characteristics that qualify good mentors.

2.7 Qualities of Good Mentors

It is stated in the definition by Field (1994) that the term mentoring is a complex and interactive process. It involves a good rapport between the mentor and protégé. Unless there is love, trust and mutual concern between the two parties, the process would most likely fail to achieve its objective. It follows from this that not every teacher can be a good mentor. There are both personal and professional qualities that teacher should possess to become a successful mentor.

Anderson and Shannon (1988: 41) mention three important dispositions that mentors

should have. First of all, they should have the disposition of opening themselves to their protégés by, for example, allowing their protégés opportunities to observe them in action and convey to them reasons and purposes behind their decisions and performance. Secondly, they should have the disposition of leading their protégés incrementally over time. Finally, they should have the disposition of expressing care and concern about the personal and professional welfare of their protégés. Schein (1978) in Gebrke (1988) claims that in order to successfully discharge their mentoring roles, mentors must be more mature, more advanced or more experienced, not a peer. Mentors should also be abreast of the developments in their own areas of curriculum expertise (Field, 1994:73-75) and of education in general. She further states that on the practical side, mentor teachers need to know how to manage an inquiry model of teaching and learning which involves being open to the new ideas of the student teacher and allow a degree of risk taking to occur, while setting limits. She goes on stating that mentors should be highly motivated so that they will be able to expect the highest standard from the students; they have to have skills of team leadership as they are expected to work in collaboration with others; they should also have skills in both formative and summative evaluation techniques because they are supposed to assess the student teachers' progress in both short and long period of time of the practicum; they should also be familiar with whole school organization so that they are able to advice and guide the student teacher.

McCulloch and Fidler (1994:146) list the following specific activities which the mentor would actually carry out each week to support the student teacher:

Watching the student teach and writing notes on the lesson observed;

teaching the class for the student to observe; reading the student's school experience file, setting aside 'quality time' for reflective discussions, arranging for the student to observe other members of staff.

The above discussion seems to show that it is difficult to enumerate the specific roles and qualities of a mentor. It could, in short, be argued that mentors are supposed to provide the student teachers with the necessary professional support that could develop the student teachers to a self reliant, professional teacher.

The next section will discuss the factors that promote and/or hamper the cooperating teachers' mentoring practice.

2.8 Factors That Contribute to the Success/Failure of Mentoring Process

Apart from the qualities discussed in the preceding section, there could be many other factors that could have a bearing on the cooperating teachers' mentoring practice. According to Clauson (1980) in Anderson and Shannon (1988:43), there should be a relationship that must entail mutual personal involvement in which the protégé feels admiration, respect, appreciation, gratitude and even love for the mentor. He further states that the relationship cannot be one sided;... it must be comprehensive, involving the mentor in the protégé's total life, not just work.

The second and highly important factor, as stated in various literature, that determine the success/failure of mentoring is the cooperation between training institutions and

cooperating schools. School administrators and cooperating teachers should clearly know what the training institutions exactly expect from them and what both parties should expect from the student-teachers. Hickling and Glenny (1992:146), for example, argue that placing the practicum at the center of the course design requires effective communication with schools so that a range of school setting and activities can be provided. They also stress the need for closer relationship with schools which ensures a joint commitment to the project through a sense of reciprocity and mutual respect for each other's contributions and concerns. They claim that, this is one of the ways of sharing our anticipation of what we expect from students by producing a profile to monitor progression and development of student learning.

In Field's (1994) opinion, the student-teachers put the theoretical principles of education into practice in the schools. The mentoring teachers should, therefore, know the courses offered in the training institutions and participate in the planning and organizing of the courses. Fidler and McCulloch, (1994:178) also argue that schools and universities exist in communities; students, tutors, teachers and their pupils belong to those communities in a variety of ways. Gebrke (1988:44-45) on his part, mentions the following specific factors that enhance mentoring:

- choice - mentors and trainees should be given the right to choose their protégés and mentors respectively.
- time - plenty of time should be given so that they know each other in depth.
- negotiation - a format established should allow the two people to negotiate the kinds of things to be taught and learnt and they have the freedom to renegotiate as time

passes.

- growing independence - the protégé must be encouraged to gradually move from dependence on the mentor to independent professional action, from subordination to equality.
- acknowledging uniqueness - the uniqueness of the mentors - protégés should be discerned and taken into account by the mentors and others as they plan for relating to the protégé. Mentors will create experiences in which the protégés can develop and test their unique visions of teaching.
- reciprocity - the mentor will sometimes become the helped, as the protégé shares her/his unique talents, strengths and knowledge.
- whole - life vision - the help should go beyond the work - day and should establish a view of how work fits into a whole life.
- dialogue - a dialogue not a monologue should be encouraged.

2.9 A survey of Local Research Work

There are a handful of studies conducted in the area of teaching practice in general and the mentoring role of high school teachers in particular in Ethiopia.

In Addis Ababa University, which is the focus of the present study, little has been researched into the teaching practice program so far. Marew (1995) briefly states how the program is conducted, the amount of time devoted to the classroom theoretical teaching about teaching practice, the observation and the practical teaching. Azeb,

1990; Last, 1990 and Abraham, 1987 show that the teacher training program in Addis Ababa University in general and the student teaching practice in particular is inadequate.

Another teacher training college where comparatively good deal of research has been done in the area of teaching practice is Kotebe College of Teacher Education. A study by Alemayehu (1985) about the adequacy of teaching practice program of English department, Kotebe College of Teacher Education, shows that the program was adequate. However, he was more interested in such areas as the usefulness and applicability of the knowledge of theories of learning to the actual teaching, the value of the teaching practice for future teaching, the adequacy of the evaluation checklist etc. The study says little about the role of the cooperating teachers.

Tilahun (1990), however, argues that there are various problems related to the teaching practice program of Kotebe College of Teacher Education. He has identified such problems as the absence of defined objectives, shortage of time, absence of independent office for the program, weakness of the evaluation format in terms of validity and comprehensiveness.

Other studies worth mentioning are those by Kedir and Gebre, 1997; Melakneh, 1997; Zeleke, 1997 and Wondwosen, 1997, all of which aimed at preparing a guideline for the teaching practice at KCTE. They were interested in general issues such as supervisory processes and the need for the guideline.

More relevant work to the present study is the study conducted by Wondwosen (1998).

He tried to examine whether the cooperating teachers discharge the duties they are entrusted with. The study, which was conducted on Kotebe College of Teacher Education, found that the cooperating teachers are practically of limited help for the success of the program. It has also indicated that the link between the college and the cooperating schools is not satisfactory and that it is mainly based on administrative issues. However, the study has not investigated, in depth, the mentoring practices of the cooperating teachers and the various factors that contribute to the success/failure of the process of mentoring.

The present study will try to address the place of teaching practice in general and the nature of mentoring in particular in the training of preservice Teachers of English as a foreign language in AAU. It would perhaps be the first attempt to entertain in depth the role of cooperating teachers in initial second language teacher education that has been practiced for years in the university.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents the review of the results of the pilot study, the description of the subjects involved in the study, justification for the selection of the subjects, the data collecting tools employed and the procedure followed to analyze the data.

3.1 RESULTS OF THE PILOT STUDY

The three primary data gathering tools (questionnaire, interview and the student teacher diaries) used in this study were piloted to see to what extent they were appropriate to serve the purpose they were designed for.

Ten copies of the cooperating teachers' questionnaire were distributed to English teachers in "Misrak Comprehensive Secondary School" and "Addis Ketema Comprehensive Secondary School." Ten copies of the student teachers' questionnaire were distributed to the student teachers taught in the above mentioned two comprehensive secondary schools. Both sets of questionnaires were distributed in the last week of December 2000.

Although most of the questions in both sets of the questionnaires were found to be clear and appropriate to be used for the main study, there were some lessons learnt from the result of the pilot study. First of all, the order of the responses in the first part

of the student teachers' questionnaire in the pilot study and the second and third parts of the questionnaire for the cooperating teachers were found to have created some inconvenience. This was because some of the respondents canceled their first choices and ticked the other boxes. It was therefore felt in the main study that the responses should be ordered the other way round.

Secondly, most of the subjects of the pilot study left the open-ended questions unanswered and five of the ten cooperating teachers did not return the copies of the questionnaire. This was thought to be because of time constraint since towards the end of the first semester both the student teachers and the cooperating teachers could be busy. Moreover, they were given a short time to fill in the questionnaires because of lack of enough time to present the result of the pilot study.

To minimize the problems, the number of open-ended questions was minimized in the main study. The questionnaires were distributed at the beginning of the second semester when both the student teachers and the cooperating teachers had free time to fill in the questionnaire. They were also given enough time to fill in the questionnaire.

My prior informal communication with some of the English teachers and English department heads of "Misrak Comprehensive Secondary School" and "Addis Ketema Comprehensive Secondary School" helped me to design comprehensive interview questions for the main study.

My progressive follow up while the student teachers (the focus group of the study) were

writing the diaries, also helped a lot in guiding the student teachers to focus their diaries on the desired information by avoiding some misunderstandings.

3.2 SUBJECTS OF THE STUDY

Cooperating teachers, student teachers, university supervisors, teaching practice coordinator and school administrators were the subjects of this study. These subjects were selected because they all directly or indirectly take part in the teaching practice program. The data that were collected from these subjects enabled me to get sufficient insight into the nature of the problem investigated in this study.

3.2.1 The Cooperating Schools

There are totally eight high schools that accepted the prospective English teachers for teaching practice from the university. Five of these schools were selected as sample schools for this study. These high schools are: Yekatit 12 comprehensive Secondary School; Entoto Academic, Technical and Vocational School; Menilik II comprehensive Secondary School; Kokebe-Tsibah comprehensive Secondary School and Higher 12 Secondary School.

These high schools are selected, first of all, because of their relatively long-standing cooperation with the university in teaching practice. Secondly, I had an easy access to some of these schools because of their proximity to the university. Thirdly, it was also felt that some of these schools are very big where many cooperating teachers are found.

3.2.2 The Cooperating Teachers

Only those English teachers who have had the experience of working with the student teachers were selected. Accordingly, all English teachers who have served as mentors in the last five years in the five sample schools were selected as the subjects of this study. A total of thirty teachers admitted to have served as mentors and volunteered to take part in the study.

3.2.2.1 Background Information About the Cooperating Teachers

Table 1

The Cooperating Teachers' Highest level of Qualification

*N= 24

Qualification	No. of Respondents	%
Diploma	2	8.33
B.A. (English Major)	16	66.67
B.A. (English Minor)	5	20.83
*M.A. (English Minor)	1	4.17

* English Minor is that of the first degree (B.A.)

As shown in Table 1, all but two of the teachers who participated in this study have their first degree and above. It could, therefore, be argued that qualification wise most of the teachers are professionals who are able to serve as mentors. This is because the teachers who have first degree and above could have a good deal of theoretical knowledge about the teaching profession.

Table 2

The Cooperating Teachers' English Teaching Experience and Experience as Mentors

Responses	English Teaching Experience		Experience as Mentors	
	No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
Below 5 Years.	2	8.33	16	66.67
6-10 Years	3	12.5	2	8.33
11-15 Years	2	8.33	-	-
Above 15 Years	17	70.83	-	-

About sixty-seven per cent of the subjects have limited experience of serving as mentors. This could, in turn, limit the teachers' competence to serve as mentors. The rest of the teachers did not specify the number of years they have served as mentors for reasons not clear. On the other hand, their long years of service as English teachers, as can be seen from the table, are perhaps an indication of their potential to become better mentors.

Table 3

Whether the Cooperating Teachers Have Ever Participated in a Workshop, Seminar, or Any Sort of Training About Teaching Practice

Items	No. of Respondents	%
Yes	19	79.17
No	5	20.83

As can be seen from the Table, the majority of the teachers have participated in workshops on teaching practice. This might have given them some insight into the idea of mentoring. Five of the respondents (20.83 per cent) said that they have had no opportunity to participate in any sort of training related to teaching practice. This may indicate that this particular group of teachers has insufficient awareness that could have a negative impact on the mentoring practice of these teachers.

Table 4

Whether the Cooperating Teachers Have Access to Reading Materials Related to Teaching Practice Either in Their Schools or Out of Their Schools

Items	Responses and No. of Respondents		%
	Responses	No. of Respondent	
Do you have access to reading materials about teaching practice either in your school or out of the school?	Yes to a greater Extent	2	8.33
	Yes to some extent	19	79.16
	I do not have any access at all	3	12.5

The data reveal that the majority of the respondents have got some access to the literature on teaching practice, which could raise their level of understanding about teaching practice. This may contribute to their better practice of mentoring.

3.2.3 The Student Teachers

A total of forty-nine student teachers participated in the teaching practice program in the sample schools. Each school accepted ten student teachers except Higher 12 Secondary School, which accepted only nine-student -teachers. Seven student teachers were randomly selected from each school and a total of thirty-five student -teachers took part in this study.

3. 2. 4 The School Administrators

Directors (or deputy directors) and English department heads of the five sample schools were selected as subjects of this study. These people were selected because the issue of teaching practice directly concerns them. Hence, they have more direct interaction with the mentors, the student teachers and the university as well. One director, four deputy directors and four English department heads volunteered to be subjects of this study.

The directors and/or deputy directors of the five sample schools who were subjects of the study have served from three to five years. The department heads, however, have served from four to seven years. Moreover, they are actually involved in the implementation of the teaching practice in their respective schools. They are, therefore, appropriate source of information for this study.

3.2.5 The University Supervisors and the Teaching Practice Coordinator

In Addis Ababa University, the whole responsibility of running the teaching practice

program is left to the Faculty of Education. Supervisors of the student -teachers' teaching practice are also instructors in the Education Faculty. The subject area teachers hardly involve in the practicum. Accordingly, there were only two supervisors for the total of eighty -nine prospective English teachers who taught in the eight high schools. One of the supervisors participated in the study. The other supervisor, who worked as a supervisor only this year, was not able to take part in the study. The student teachers' supervisor who participated in this study has served for seven years at his present position. Moreover, second language teacher education is his area of specialization. He could therefore be a source of information for this study.

There is a teaching practice coordinating unit under the Faculty of Education. This unit is responsible for the planning and implementation of the program as a whole. The head of this unit was also selected as the subject of this study. The coordinator of the teaching practice unit has served for two years at his current position. Although his years of service is short, he could be a good source of information on the current practice of teaching practice program as he is currently in charge of the unit.

It could, in general, be argued that the subjects of the study have a fairly long years of service as teachers and perhaps a better awareness about the management of student teachers' teaching practice program. Therefore, they are appropriate sources of data for this study.

3.3 THE DATA COLLECTING TOOLS

The primary data collecting tools employed in the study are-questionnaire, interview and student - teacher diaries.

3.3.1 The Questionnaire

Questionnaire is used as one of the primary tools because of the nature of the study. The study, which is descriptive and explanatory, needs the collection of data from large population and various sources. Because it is also partly exploratory, it involves the consideration of various factors in detail. Questionnaire, therefore, helps to gather such multifaceted data from a large and various subjects. Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) who argue for the inappropriacy of questionnaire for wide population than interview say:

...When a survey requires a wide coverage and addresses a population that is widely dispersed geographically, interviewing would involve expensive travel cost and time for interviewers. (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987:228)

Two sets of questionnaires were designed. One set of the questionnaire was used for the cooperating teachers and the other for the student teachers. Both sets of questionnaires were designed in English.

3.3.1.1. The Questionnaire for the Cooperating Teachers

The questionnaire for the cooperating teachers has four parts. Part I has questions on the teachers' background information. Part II has questions designed to explore the

teachers' perception of their mentoring roles. Part III is on the factors that affect the cooperating teachers' effective discharging of their mentoring role. The questions in part IV were planned to gather data on the extent to which the cooperating teachers are discharging their mentoring roles and other related issues. The questionnaire consists of both closed and open -ended questions.

The cooperating teachers are the main target of this study. Because of this the questions designed for them are more in number than the questions for the student teachers.

Thirty copies of teacher questionnaire were distributed to English teachers who have served as cooperating teachers in the five high schools used in the study. Twenty-four copies were filled in and returned. Since eighty per cent of copies of the questionnaire were returned, the analysis was based on the returned copies. The questionnaire was distributed through the department heads in the second week of February 2001. The second week of February is the beginning of the second semester for secondary schools. It is a time when the secondary school teachers seem to have free time to fill in the questionnaire with care.

3.3.1.2 Student -Teacher Questionnaire

Student teacher questionnaire was designed to cross-check the data collected from the cooperating teachers. The questionnaire has three parts. The first part is on the

student teachers' perceptions of the teaching practice program. The second part was needed to obtain data on the practical help the student teachers gained from their mentors. The last part has questions that explored the problems the student teachers faced during the practicum and their suggested solutions.

A total of thirty -five copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the student teachers who taught in the five secondary schools stated earlier. Seven students were randomly chosen from each school to fill in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed in the last week of February 2001. Thirty copies (eight-five per cent) were filled in and returned.

3.3.2 The Interview

Interview was used as another main tool of data collection for some practical reasons. First of all, it enabled me to elicit relevant information in depth. This means that the face to face communication with the interviewees enabled me to compensate for some shortcomings in the questionnaire like the respondents misunderstanding of some questions, leaving out some open ended questions unanswered. The idea is also supported by Nachmias and Nachmias (1987), who state the advantage of interview as follows:

The interview allows the interviewer to determine the wording of the questions, to clarify terms that are unclear, to control the order in which the questions are presented, and to probe for additional and more detailed information (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987:240)

A semi-structured interview was used. This enabled me to focus on the relevant areas

of the study. The fact that the questions were partly open enabled the interviewees to forward their ideas sufficiently.

It was planned to interview the directors (or deputy directors), the English department heads in each of the five high schools, the student teachers' supervisors and the teaching practice coordinator of the university. It was possible to interview one director, four deputy directors and four English department heads. One of the student teachers' supervisors (an overseer of the student teaching practice) and the teaching practice coordinating unit head were interviewed.

The interviews with the school administrators were held in Amharic because it was felt that the interviewees might feel more comfortable to express their ideas in Amharic than in English. This enabled me to elicit deeper and fuller information. A friend who has long experience in recording interviews transcribed their responses. I then translated them into English. The interviews with the student -teachers' supervisor and the teaching practice unit head were administered in English but were written by hand because the interviewees seemed to be unwilling to be recorded.

3.3.3 The Student Teacher Diaries

The student-teacher diaries were used as a tool of data collection because it was felt that diary could be the most important source of information for this study. The diary data show the nature and the extent of the continuous interaction between the trainees and the mentors throughout the practice teaching program in all of the schools selected

for the study. The importance of diaries, in helping to get a first hand and immediate experiences of the writers, is stated by Nachmias and Nachmias (1987)as follows:

Diaries provide a first hand account of the writer's life experience. Written close to the occurrence of events, they convey immediate experiences unimpaired by distortion of memory. Diaries are not inhibited by the fear of public showing; therefore, they reveal events and experiences that were considered significant at the time of their occurrence. (Nachmias and Nachmias 1987:330)

All of the student teachers who taught in the five sample schools were asked to keep the diary. A short orientation was offered to these subjects before they began the teaching practice on how to keep the diary. The diary was written in three stages- before, while and after the practicum. Before the practicum, they wrote what they would expect from the cooperating teachers. During the practicum, they wrote their actual interactions with their mentors and after the practicum they wrote their overall impressions about the practicum in general and the cooperating teachers in particular.

However, a continuous follow up during the pilot study revealed that there were some misunderstandings among the student -teachers as to how and what to exactly write about. In some schools, for example, the teachers who were first assigned to work with

the student-teachers were changed. But the student teachers wrote about the previous teachers. Some of them wrote little because they did not meet the teachers although they could have written something about why they failed to find them. Still others wrote about the university supervisors though they were required to write about the cooperating teachers only.

Ten student -teachers, two from each school were selected to be a focus group. The selection was made randomly. Members of the focus group were continuously consulted while they were writing the diary so that it was possible to clarify points which were not clear. So, they were able to write the diaries in line with the objectives of the study.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Because some of the data are quantitative and some are qualitative in nature, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques have been used. The quantitative data have been tabulated and descriptive statistics like frequency; percentage and mean are used to analyzes such data. The qualitative data are, organized and discussed.

The data gathered through the different tools were analyzed in an integrated way so as to avoid unnecessary repetition of similar ideas.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter II, literature related to the practical aspect of initial second language teacher education in general and the place of mentoring in particular was reviewed. In this chapter, the data gathered through different research tools (the questionnaire, interview and the student teacher diary) will be presented and discussed.

The data will be categorized into four main sections. The first section will be on the cooperating teachers' awareness about their mentoring role. The second section will be about the cooperating teachers' readiness to work as mentors. The third section will be whether the cooperating teachers successfully discharge their mentoring role. The final section will address factors that affect the cooperating teachers' practice of their mentoring duties. These sections address the four research questions of the study.

Section I

4.2 The Cooperating Teachers' Awareness of Their Mentoring Role

In this section, the data collected regarding the teachers' awareness, about their role as mentors, will be presented and discussed. Because all of the questions in this section are related to the same idea, i.e. the cooperating teachers' awareness of their

mentoring role, I used a single table. However, specific references are made in the discussion, to items in the Table so that readers could easily refer to specific information in the Table.

Table 5
Perception of the Cooperating Teachers About Their Mentoring Role

Items	No. of Respondents and Percentage					Mean (X)
	Strongly agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1. The cooperating teacher is more appropriate in helping the student teachers during teaching practice than the university supervisor.	5 20.83%	15 62.5%	1 4.17%	2 8.33%	1 4.17%	2.13
2. Training the student teachers is basically the responsibility of the university instructors. Therefore, the cooperating teachers should play little role in the training of the student teachers	4 16.67%	5 20.83%	-	9 37.5%	6 25%	3.33
3. Because the university instructors have more knowledge about teaching/learning, they are more appropriate to help the student-teachers during teaching practice than the cooperating teachers.	4 16.67%	3 12.5%	-	12 50%	5 20.83%	3.46
4. Because the cooperating teacher is engaged in extra work when working with the student teacher(s), s/he should be paid for it.	8 33.33%	12 50%	-	2 8.33%	2 8.33%	2.08

5. Serving as a mentor during the teaching practice is part of the professional duties of the cooperating teachers.	10 41.67%	6 25%	1 4.17%	4 16.67%	3 12.5%	2.33
6. The cooperating teacher should repeatedly observe the student teacher teaching and give feedback.	16 66.67%	4 16.67%	2 8.33%	1 4.17%	1 4.17%	1.63
7. The cooperating teacher should look upon a student teacher as his/her peer.	8 33.33%	11 47.83%	1 4.17%	3 12.50%	1 4.17%	2.00
8. The cooperating teacher should create a strong and close relation with the student-teacher s/he has worked with and the relation should be long lasting even after the practice is over.	7 29.17%	9 37.5%	4 16.17%	4 16.67%	-	2.21
9. Because the student teachers have current knowledge about the methods and techniques of language teaching, the cooperating teacher could learn a lot from them.	1 4.17%	15 62.5%	4 16.67%	4 16.67%	-	2.46

As seen in the Table (see item 1 in Table 5) , about 83 per cent of the cooperating teachers agree that they are of more help to the student teachers during teaching practice than the university supervisor. It is evident from this that over three fourths of the teachers are aware of the decisive role they could play as mentors. This agrees with the findings by (Boydell, 1986; Yates, 1982; Partington, 1982; cited in Wondwosen

(1998) which state that cooperating teachers are of greater help to the student teachers' learning than the university supervisors. Three of the respondents disagreed.

Their disagreement might have emerged from their lack of understanding about their mentoring role.

The disagreement of fifteen of the respondents (62.5 per cent) (see item 2 in Table 5) to the idea that training the student teachers is primarily the role of the university instructors, also seems to indicate that most of the teachers feel responsible as trainers. Nine teachers (37.5 per cent) agreed to the idea. This shows that these teachers hold the long standing 'traditional' belief that gives the training institutions and college/university instructors the upper hand in the training of preservice teachers.

Similarly, about 71 per cent of the respondents (see item 3 in Table 5), opposed the idea that university instructors have more knowledge about teaching/learning and they are more appropriate to help the student teachers than the cooperating teachers during teaching practice. Only seven respondents (about 29 per cent) agreed to the idea. This also indicates the teachers' confidence as regards their knowledge to help the student-teachers.

It could be seen from the above discussion that the majority of the cooperating teachers have a better awareness about their decisive role in the whole process of the training of preservice English teachers. This favorable perception of the teachers could help them to better practice their mentoring duties.

The majority of the respondents (about 83.4 per cent) have shown their agreement to

the idea that serving as a mentor is an extra job to the cooperating teachers and they need to be paid for it, only four respondents (about 16.7 per cent) do not share the idea. (See item 4 in Table 5). On the other hand, about 67 per cent of the subjects said that serving as mentor is part of their professional duties, while about 29 per cent did not agree to the idea and one of the respondents said s/he has no idea. It could be argued from this that though most of the teachers feel that they should serve as mentors, they believe that it is an extra activity for which they should be paid. This indicates the need for funding the program so that the teachers are paid well and be motivated to successfully discharge their mentoring practice.

The data in Table 5 also depicts that most of the respondents (about 82.5 per cent) have agreed to the need for the mentors to repeatedly observe the student teachers teaching and give them feedback. Almost the same proportion of the respondents has also agreed to the idea that the cooperating teachers should look upon a student teacher as his/her peer. (see items 6 and 7, in Table 5). The idea that the cooperating teacher should create a strong and close relation with the student teachers s/he has worked with and that the relation should last long even after the practice is over, is supported by 66.67 per cent of the respondents. The same number of respondents have admitted that the student teachers have current knowledge about the methods and techniques of language teaching which they could share with the cooperating teachers. (see items 8 and 9 in Table 5). Four of the respondents said that they have no idea and the other four respondents disagreed to both ideas.

The agreement of most of the respondents to the above stated ideas which according to (Clauson, 1980; Bravmann, 1986; Buber, 1970 cited in Gebrke, 1988; Kellett, 1994) are found to promote the practice of mentoring, reveals the teachers' positive attitude which in turn shows the presence of favorable ground for the teachers' mentoring practice.

Four of the respondents (16.67 per cent) said they have no idea about whether they should create a strong and long lasting relation with their protégés and whether the student-teachers have a current knowledge about the profession that they could share with them. The same number of respondents disagreed to the two ideas. This may indicate their lack of awareness about the stated essential ideas. This could have a negative influence on the mentoring practice of this particular group of teachers.

It could generally be argued from the above discussion that the majority of the teachers involved in this study are aware of their paramount roles as mentors. They also believe that they should and they could benefit from serving as mentors.

Because the teachers' awareness does not necessarily show their readiness to serve as mentors, the next section will be devoted to the discussion of the teachers willingness to serve as mentors.

Section II

4.3 The Cooperating Teachers' Readiness to work as Mentors

This section discusses the data gathered on whether the cooperating teachers are willing to work with the student teachers or whether the duty is imposed upon them.

Table 6

**Whether or Not the Teachers Volunteer to Accept Student Teacher(s)
to Work With**

Item	Responses and No. of Respondents		%
	Responses	No. Of Respondents	
Do you volunteer to accept student teachers to work with?	Yes	20	83.33
	No	3	12.5
	No answer	1	4.17

The Table reveals that the majority of the teachers (83.33 per cent) willingly accept the student teachers to work with. Such readiness could help them practice mentoring better. Only few of them (12.5 per cent) seem to be unwilling to work with the student teachers.

In an open-ended question in the questionnaire, the respondents were also asked to justify their responses. Those who said that they are volunteer to accept the student teachers mentioned two major justifications. The first one is that it is part of their

professional duties to help the student teachers become competent teachers. The second reason is that they could learn a lot from the student teachers who are with fresh knowledge about the profession. However, the help of the student teachers in relieving them of their teaching load, though it is believed, by school administrators and the student teachers, to be a popular reason, did not come out in their responses. This could perhaps be because the teachers may feel that openly admitting the help of the student teachers in sharing their load could be a threat to their profession. This is because, as could be seen from the forthcoming discussion, many cooperating teachers claim that the student teachers do not teach well.

Those who said they are not ready to work with the student teachers stated that serving as mentor is extra responsibility besides their regular duty - teaching. They also said that it is a time consuming activity and above all they said that they gain little out of it. Such perceptions have also been reflected by the majority of the respondents in the foregoing discussion (see item 4 in Table 5). It, therefore, seems that the factors mentioned above could seriously affect the teachers' mentoring duties.

The school administrators were also asked, in the interview a question related to whether the cooperating teachers are ready to take up the responsibility of working with the student teachers or whether they are forced to serve as mentors. All of the nine interviewees said that there is no formal rule that obliges the teachers to serve as mentors. They said that serving as mentors basically depends on the willingness of the teachers which emanates from professional responsibility rather than administrative

duty imposed upon them. The department heads have also mentioned, during the interview that the student teachers' sharing of the teachers' burden as one of the major reasons for the teachers' readiness to serve as mentors. They further stated that because of the benefit they gain from sharing their burden, some teachers have even gone to the extent of presenting complaints if they are not selected as mentors.

Another source of information for this section is the student teachers' diaries. Most of the student teachers, in their diaries, have complained that the teachers disappeared once they have passed the classes over to them and they rarely interacted with them. Some teachers have also openly welcomed the student teachers to share with them their tiresome burden.

From the above discussion, it could be argued that the majority of the cooperating teachers seem to be willing to work as mentors. They are ready not only to help but they are also ready to get relieved from their teaching burden, at least during the practicum.

In the next section the data on the extent to which the cooperating teachers discharge their mentoring role will be presented and interpreted.

Section III

4.4 The Extent to Which the Cooperating Teachers Discharge Their Mentoring Role

Table 7a
The Cooperating Teachers' Responses to the Questions Related to the Extent to Which They are Discharging Their Mentoring Roles

Questions	Responses and No. of Respondents with %			
	once in two weeks	once a week	twice a week	more than twice a week
1. How often do you observe a student teacher teaching?	1 (4.17%)	10 (41.67%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.67%)
2. How often do you discuss with the student teachers issues related to their teaching and/or other issues related to the profession?	2 (8.33%)	10 (41.67%)	8 (34.78%)	4 (16.67%)

The Table shows that nearly all of the teachers observe the student teachers teaching once or more than once a week. All but two of the teachers also said that they discuss issues related to their teaching once or more than once a week. In a total of one month teaching practice, the teachers seem to have discharged their mentoring role in this regard fairly frequently.

Table 7b

**Whether the Teachers Let the Student Teachers Observe Their Classes
and Whether They Work With Them in Lesson Planning**

Questions	Responses and No. of Respondents with %	
	Yes	No
1. Do you let the student teachers observe your classes while you are teaching outside the observation week?	17 (70.83%)	7 (29.17%)
2. Do you help the student teachers to plan their lessons very well?	16 (66.67%)	8 (33.33%)

The Table shows that the majority of the respondents let the student teachers observe their classes while they are teaching outside the observation week. Similarly most of the teachers help the student teachers in planning their lessons. They were also asked to specify how often they help the student teachers. Seven of the respondents said that they let the student teachers observe their own classes as often as the students wanted to. Two teachers said twice a week. One of the teachers said once a week and another one said two or three periods a week. Twelve (50 per cent of the respondents left the question unanswered.

To the second question in the Table, two teachers said as often as the student teachers want to; six of them said every week; three of the respondents said only once

throughout the program. Here again thirteen of the respondents (more than 50 per cent) left the question unanswered.

The fact that significant number of teachers, i.e., seven teachers in the first question and two teachers in the second question, said that they help the student teachers as often as the student teachers wanted to, may show that the initiative for the help does not come from the teachers. The failure of over half of the teachers, on the average, to mention the frequency of their help for reason(s) which is not clear, also seems to affect the reliability of the responses of the teachers. My own classroom observation during the teaching practice in some of the schools has also hardly shown any help in the areas mentioned above.

Table 8a

Whether the Student-Teachers Feel That They Gained Useful Help from Their Mentors

Items	Responses and No. of Respondents with %					Mean (x)
	Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
1. The cooperating teacher was of more practical help to me than the university supervisor during the practice teaching	8 (26.67%)	10 (33.33%)	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.33%)	4 (13.33%)	2.63
2. I did not gain as much help and practical experience as I had hoped to gain from the cooperating teacher.	7 (23.33%)	11 (36.67%)	1 (3.3%)	8 (26.67%)	3 (10%)	2.63

Table 8b

Responses of the Student Teachers to the Questions Related to the Kinds of Help They Gained from Their Mentors

Items	Responses and No. of Respondents with %	
	Yes	No
1. The cooperating teacher wanted me to teach just like s/he did and criticized me when I deviated.	7 (23.33%)	23 (76.67%)
2. The cooperating teacher introduced me to other teachers and administrative workers. This helped me to feel at home (relaxed) in the school compound.	14 (46.67%)	16 (53.33%)
3. Whenever I wanted the cooperating teacher for discussion or any sort of consultation s/he was available and s/he warmly accepted me.	18 (60%)	12 (40%)
4. S/he encouraged me to freely express my views about teaching and s/he did not try to impose her/his own belief upon me during feedback sessions.	15 (50%)	15 (50%)
5. S/he invited me to his/her class while s/he was teaching outside the observation week so that I learned from his/her lesson presentation.	19 (63.33%)	11 (36.67%)

6. The cooperating teacher helped me to know more about the curriculum in general and the English language syllabus in particular.	8 (26.67%)	22 (73.33%)
7. S/he sometimes worked with me in planning and team teaching the lesson.	7 (23.33%)	23 (76.67%)
8. S/he told me in detail the rules and regulations and the administrative structure of the school, how to deal with disruptive students etc.	18 (60%)	12 (40%)
9. I want to take the cooperating teacher as model in my professional and general personal life.	10 (33.33%)	20 (66.67%)

As shown in Table 8a, the majority of the student teachers seem to agree to both of the statements in the Table. It could, however, be argued from the Table that the students gained more practical help from the cooperating teachers than from the university supervisors. This agrees with the argument of (Rust 1988; Yates, 1981 cited in Haberman and Harries, 1982) which states that the cooperating teachers are found to be of greater help for the student teachers than college supervisors because of their more frequent interaction with the student teachers.

The Table also shows that the student teachers felt that they did not gain as much help as they hoped to gain from their mentors. Such feeling is also clearly expressed in the students' diaries. This seems to indicate the need for further promoting the teachers' mentoring role.

It could be seen from Table 8b that the amount of help the student teachers gained from their mentors on different areas is different. According to the information in the Table, the cooperating teachers' flexibility in letting the students try their own way of teaching; their availability for any sort of consultation and their readiness for discussion; their willingness to let the student teachers into their classes for observation and their cooperation in telling the student teachers, in detail, about the rules and regulation of the schools and how to deal with disruptive students are the areas in which the teachers' help was very significant.

Introducing the student teachers to other members of the staff and concerned administrative workers; and their approach to giving feedback are also areas in which the teachers rendered good deal of help. However, very important areas like helping the student teachers to know the curriculum and working with the student teachers in lesson planning and team teaching the lesson are areas that did not get due attention. The fact that twenty of the respondents, i.e. 66.67 per cent (see the last item in Table 8b) said they do not want to take the cooperating teachers as models in their lives in general and in their professional lives in particular, seems to belittle the help of the teachers as a source of motivation.

They were also asked to specify how often they meet their cooperating teachers to discuss issues related to their teaching. Twenty-four of the student teachers(80 per cent) said once or more than once a week. This agrees with the responses of the

teachers to the same question (see item 2 in Table 7a). Fifteen of the respondents said they were informally meeting their mentors to discuss general issues about the profession and general life experience. It seems from this that the relationship between the two parties is more on specific issues related to teaching than on general life experience which could help the student-teacher to get wider insight into the profession

The last question the student teachers were asked was to list down other aspects in which the cooperating teachers helped them. Some respondents said that the teachers:

- helped them with ideas on class management.
- provided them with some teaching materials like textbooks, teacher's guide, duster, etc.
- helped them with ideas on appropriate use of the blackboard.
- showed them the school compounds
- gave them some pocket money.

Most of the points listed by the respondents are more of administrative support than specific classroom practices. This shows that the cooperating teachers did not play well the primary role of helping the student teachers to develop confidence in the actual classroom practices. This idea is clearly stated by Rhodes (1994:71-72) who says, "mentors are undoubtedly key people in helping student teachers to acquire basic classroom competence...."

The university supervisor, in his response to the interview question on whether he thinks that the cooperating teachers have played the roles they are supposed to play, stated that they are not successfully discharging their assumed roles. He used the expression, "not this much", to show the situation. The teaching practice coordinator, who shares a similar idea with the supervisor on the same question, has also expressed his reservation by saying "to some extent." This shows the extent to which the roles of the cooperating teachers are limited in the teaching practice program.

The diaries of the student teachers have also revealed that the teachers under performed their mentoring duties. For example, one of the student teachers says:

As a matter of fact I did not make much discussion with my cooperating teacher for he was not available....After we handed over [sic] the task of teaching even though I was eager to discuss with him....

Another student, who expresses the nature of relationship with the cooperating teacher, writes:

At the end [of first supervision], he brought us to his office... and read us a list of weaknesses..., and he firmly said, "yes, you should improve; otherwise, your grades... be affected. I have given [sic] 50% of your grades....

He further stated that the same thing happened after the second supervision session, "our hatred on the teacher had increased. We thought that he will undoubtedly give us below the average. So we were highly disappointed..."

Still another Student wrote,

There have been several times that we clearly told him to meet us and

share the experienced [sic]. We knew he had a tremendous experience in the profession, nevertheless, he never had a minute he could spare for us.”

The diaries of most of the student teachers reveal similar situations, i.e., sense of dissatisfaction with the kind of relation they had with the cooperating teachers. The ideas in the extract quoted above from student-teacher diaries reveal that there was a limited interaction between the student teachers and their mentors.’ The extracts also show that the major aim of the teachers was evaluation rather than professional development. This seems to have frustrated the students and affected the nature of the rapport between the student teachers and the cooperating teachers.

In the final part of most of the sample diaries, the student teachers expressed their overall impression about the teachers. The majority of them clearly admitted that they did not practically gain as much help as they expected to gain from their mentors. Most of them have also said they do not want to take the cooperating teachers as models in their general as well as professional lives. The actual words of the students clearly show this. One of the students says,

Though he was considered to be ‘our maid’ while we were there, he didn’t seem to do so. He supervised us by our request. And the comments provided were somewhat trivial.

Another student says:

We don’t like to take him as a model. Rather he made us to hate the staff in general. It made us to think that the profession involves some traditional teachers who hate the communicative approach w/h [sic] we have been trying to implement. We feel that most of them will not well come us next year

The preceding chapter has given us a clear insight into the extent to which the cooperating teachers have discharged their mentoring role. The next section deals with the factors that affect the teachers' mentoring practice.

Section IV

4.5. Factors That Affect the Cooperating Teachers' Practice of Their Mentoring Role

Data related to this area have been gathered from all of the subjects of the study. The data are integrated so that it would be possible to identify the factors which are commonly shared by the subjects.

The responses of the cooperating teachers to the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire are tabulated and discussed as follows:

Table 9

Responses of the Cooperating Teachers to the Questions Related to Factors that Affect Their Mentoring Role

Items	Responses and No. of Respondents With %				Mean (X)
	Not a Problem at all	It my cause some problems	It is serious problem	it is very serious problem	
1. Getting little or no payment for the extra responsibility I assume during the teaching practice in working with the student teachers.	4 (16.67%)	13 (54.17%)	5 (20.83%)	2 (8.33%)	2.21

2. Lack of enough time to sit down and work with the student-teacher(s).	2 (8.33%)	15 (62.5%)	5 (20.83%)	2 (8.33%)	2.29
3. Inappropriacy of the time of the teaching practice program	2 (8.33%)	9 (37.5%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.67%)	2.63
4. Shortage of the teaching practice time to effectively help the student teachers given to me to work with.	3 (12.5%)	11 (45.83%)	7 (29.17%)	3 (12.5%)	2.42
5. Number of student teachers given to me to work with.	16 (66.67%)	8 (33.33%)	-	-	1.33
6. Lack of adequate knowledge about the current language teaching theories, methods and techniques to give the student teachers feedback effectively.	11 (45.83%)	7 (29.17%)	4 (16.67%)	2 (8.33%)	1.88
1. The university's failure to clearly tell me the objective(s) of the teaching practice and what is expected of me.	8 (33.33%)	9 (37.5%)	5 (20.83%)	2 (8.33%)	2.04
8. Failure of the representative of the university to usually come to my school to discuss the problems of the student-teachers and solve them for further improvement.	3 (12.5%)	15 (62.5%)	4 (16.67%)	2 (8.33%)	2.21
9. Lack of assistance from the school administrators while I was working with the student-teachers.	17 (70.83%)	5 (20.83%)	1 (4.17%)	1 (4.17%)	1.42
10. Lack of the student-teachers' readiness to discuss problems and exchange ideas with me and to receive advice from me.	10 (41.67%)	6 (25%)	7 (29.17%)	1 (4.17%)	1.96
11. Absence (or being late) of the student-teachers from classes.	4 (16.67%)	13 (54.17%)	4 (16.67%)	3 (12.5%)	2.25
12. The student -teachers' low English command that has negatively affected their teaching.	3 (12.5%)	5 (20.83%)	11 (45.83%)	5 (20.83%)	2.75
13. The student teachers' failure to behave in a professional manner when they interact with students.	6 (25%)	6 (25%)	8 (33.33%)	4 (16.67%)	2.42
14. The student teachers' reluctance to create interaction with other teachers in the school.	7 (29.17%)	8 (33.33%)	9 (37.5%)	-	2.08
15. The student teachers' unpreparedness before they come to classes.	7 (29.17%)	7 (29.17%)	4 (16.67%)	6 (25%)	2.38

16. The student-teachers' failure to give clear and precise directions to students in the classroom.	5 (20.83%)	8 (33.33%)	6 (25%)	5 (20.83%)	2.49
17. The student teachers' overuse of mother tongue while teaching English.	5 (20.83%)	8 (33.33%)	7 (29.17%)	4 (16.67%)	2.42
18. The student teachers' failure to manage classes very well.	2 (8.33%)	6 (25%)	8 (33.33%)	8 (33.33%)	2.92

It should generally be noted that on a continuum from 1 to 4 which stands for "not a problem at all" and "it is a very serious problem" respectively, the means (X) of fourteen of the total eighteen items are between 2 and 3. The means (X) of the remaining two items are below two. Since the means (X) with the wider range may not clearly show the strength and weakness of every item, the results should closely be analyzed to have detailed understanding.

Table 9 shows that inappropriacy of the time of the teaching practice, the student teachers' low English command, and the student teachers' failure to manage classes seem to have caused more serious problems to the cooperating teachers than other factors. (See items 3, 12, and 18 in Table 9)

Table 9 also shows that the second set of problems that the cooperating teachers identified as areas of problem to their mentoring practice are: shortage of teaching practice time, the student teachers' unpreparedness before coming to classes, and the student teachers' overuse of mother tongue while teaching English.

The items which are said to have relatively the least impact on the teachers' practice of

their mentoring role are: the number of student teachers, lack of adequate knowledge about the current language teaching theories, methods and techniques on the part of the cooperating teachers to provide effective feedback; lack of assistance from the school administrators and lack of the student teachers' readiness to discuss problems and exchange ideas with their 'mentors.'

Factors like, little payment for the 'mentors,' lack of time on the part of the 'mentors', and the university's weak liaison with the schools were not identified as felt problems by the teachers. It should be noted that these areas are identified as the most serious problems by other sources, i.e. the school administrators, the teaching practice supervisor and the head of the teaching practice coordinating unit.

What is very interesting here is that most of the factors identified by the teachers as sources of problem to their mentoring practice are related to the student teachers. This has also been confirmed through my observation while I was interacting with the cooperating teachers for data collection. Many teachers were severely criticizing the student teachers for their poor English command, failure to use blackboard properly, failure to manage classes, failure to cover the portion they were supposed to cover, etc. Some of them even went to the extent of blaming the university for the student teachers' failure.

Although the factors related to the student teachers could partly be a genuine problem, it does not seem to be fair to put the student teachers at the center of blame for the

major failures. This could perhaps be because of the teachers' ambitious expectation of the student teachers' performance. The cooperating teachers do not seem to be very well cognizant of the fact that the preservice teacher who is newly joining the profession is like a child who has recently come to this world. In each case both of them are trying to explore the new world they have just joined. The student teachers should not be compared with the experienced teachers who have rich experience in a given teaching milieu. Related to this argument Field (1994) who discusses the way teachers perceive supervision says, "Teachers believe that the 'babes' in the profession, the neophytes, have to be helped and assisted into the ways that the supervising teacher knows of being a teacher" (Field 1994:48).

The teachers were also asked in the questionnaire whether they themselves or someone else determines the number of periods they should observe the student teachers.

Table 10

Whether the Cooperating Teachers Themselves or Someone Else Determines the Number of Periods They Should Observe the Student Teachers.

Item	Responses and No. of respondents		%
	<u>Responses</u>	<u>No. of respondents</u>	
Who determines the number of periods you should observe the student teachers?	A. Yourself	9	37.50
	B. Coordinator from the University	8	33.33
	C. Your department head	4	16.67
	D. The University coordinator and Student teachers	3	12.50

The Table depicts that only 9 respondents (37.5 per cent) decide how often they should observe their student teachers. This seems to indicate that most of the teachers are alien to the planning and implementation of the program. In connection with this, Field (1994) argues that since the student teachers put the theoretical principles of education into practice in the schools, the mentoring teachers should know the courses offered in the training institutions and participate in the planning and organizing of the courses.

To see their perception of the profession, the teachers were also asked, in the questionnaire, whether they advise the student teachers to remain teachers.

Table 11

Whether the Cooperating Teachers Advise the Student Teachers to Remain Teachers.

Item	Responses and No. of Respondents		%
	Responses	No. of Respondents	
Do you advise the student teachers to remain teachers?	Yes	6	25.00
	No	16	16.67
	No answer	2	8.33

The fact that about 73 per cent of the teachers said they do not advise the student teachers to remain teachers indicates their negative attitude towards the profession.

The major points they have listed as justification for their responses are:

- low salary

- the society's negative perception of the profession and low respect for teachers.
- that the job is boring and tiresome
- that the job is full of hardship
- discipline problems

Many researchers in the area have identified motivation as one of the major factors affecting mentoring. Field (1994:74) for example, claims that the mentors themselves should be highly motivated and that they should be able to expect the highest standards from the student teachers.

Finally, the teachers were asked, in the questionnaire, to comment on the student teachers' evaluation checklist set by the university and given to them (see Appendix E). As regards its strong sides, they said that the checklist covers many points and helps to evaluate the student's whole personality and efficiency. Some of them, however, mentioned that some of the items require further clarification; others said that it is too detailed and cannot be applied to the day-to-day teaching activities; still others commented that the checklist does not let the teachers evaluate the students based on their actual performance.

The teachers' comments on the checklist were also confirmed while I was observing some of the classes with the cooperating teachers. The teachers had the checklist in their hands and were busy jotting down points related to the items in the checklist

instead of describing the actual lesson so that the student teachers could reflect on it. It, therefore, seems that the teachers' main focus was more on a 'traditional' supervision (Stanulis, 1994:37) that implies evaluation and performance than on modeling and learning together.

It would be appropriate to consider the data collected from other sources at this juncture to see the issue under discussion, i.e., the factors affecting the teachers' mentoring practice, from different angles. Accordingly, the responses of the student teachers to the related questions are presented below.

Table 12

The Student Teachers' Perceptions of the Problems Affecting the Success/Failure of the Teaching Practice in General and the Mentoring Practice in Particular

Items	Responses and No. of Respondents with %					Mean (x)
	Strongly agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
1. Teaching practice is a very important aspect of the training without which the training should be incomplete.	14 (46.67%)	9 (30%)	-	4 (13.33%)	3 (10%)	2.1
2. The time of the practicum was too short for me to acquire enough practical teaching skills.	7 (23.33%)	9 (30%)	2 (6.67%)	9 (30%)	3 (10%)	2.73
3. The cooperating teacher is hardly familiar with the recent theories of language teaching and s/he has been following the 'traditional approach.'	13 (43.33%)	10 (33.33%)	2 (6.67%)	3 (10%)	2 (6.67%)	2.03

4. The whole situation of the school was so discouraging that I felt that teaching is not a rewarding profession.	10 (33.33%)	5 (16.67%)	1 (3.33%)	11 (36.67%)	3 (10%)	2.73
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As shown in the Table (see item 1 in Table 12), most of the student teachers agree to the idea that teaching practice is a very important aspect of the training without which the training should be incomplete. Such favorable attitude of the student teachers towards teaching practice could promote the success of mentoring practice.

The Table also shows that most of the student teachers agree that the cooperating teachers are hardly familiar with the recent theories of language teaching and s/he is following the 'traditional' approach.' This specific data contradicts the teachers' responses to the same question in which they have identified lack of theoretical knowledge about the profession as the least area of problem (see item 6 in Table 9-). This could affect the student teachers' confidence in the competence of their mentors. This means that unless the student teachers trust the mentor's professional competence and have respect for him/her, s/he may not be ready to fully acknowledge the professional help of the cooperating teacher. In support of this argument, Field (1994) says that mentors should be abreast of the development in their own areas of curriculum expertise and of education in general.

More than half of the respondents (53.3 per cent) (see item 2 in Table 12) also mentioned shortage of the teaching practice time as a problem. Moreover, fifty per cent of the respondents agreed that the whole situation of the schools was

discouraging. They felt that teaching is not a rewarding profession (see item 4 in Table 12). This might have a negative impact on the success of the mentoring practice. This is so because unfavorable attitude towards the profession may affect the student teachers' overall curiosity and devotion to the program in general and their reaction to the mentoring practice in particular. Kellett (1994) who describes the experience of the university of York in UK, seems to hold a similar opinion when he states:

The general feeling amongst department colleagues tends to be that helping to train students is a role that they want very much to fulfill. This is especially so, since the student teacher has commitment, energy, new ideas, new skills, fresh and imaginative materials and, above all, enthusiasm to offer to the departments within which they work. (Kellett, 1994:97).

Other related questions the student teachers were asked are related to the nature of the relationship between them and their mentors, and the impact of their attending regular classes during teaching practice on their performance on teaching practice.

Table 13

The Nature of the Relationship Between the 'Mentors' and the Student Teachers and the Impact of Attending Regular Classes on the Student Teachers' Performance in Teaching Practice

Items	Responses and %	
	Yes	No
1. I looked upon the cooperating teacher as equal and approached him/her freely as a friend or professional colleague.	19 (63.33%)	11 (26.67%)
2. Do you think that the fact that you were attending regular classes at the university during the practicum had negative impact on your performance of the practicum?	18 (60%)	12 (40%)

According to the responses to item 1, (see table 13 above) it seems that there was a friendly relationship between most of the student teachers and their mentors. However, about twenty seven per cent of the students seem to have had weaker rapport with their mentors and this could have impact on the success of mentoring practice.

The responses to item 2 in Table 13 shows that sixty per cent of the students said that attending classes during the practicum had given them hard time. They were also asked to state the extent of the problem. They stressed that because some of the schools are far from the university, they spent much of their time on their way to the schools and back to the university. Some of them mentioned that they sometimes went to classes unprepared. Still others said they missed their regular classes. They have also stated that they got tired at the end of the day and couldn't read for their courses.

The other data which would be relevant to this section are the data obtained from the school administrators. One of the areas of interest in the interview with the school administrators was the nature of the link between the schools and the university. All of the nine interviewees admitted that their schools accept the student teachers from the university based on the agreement between the two institutions. In fact there are no formally established rules that both parties should obey.

As to whether they work in collaboration for the success of the program, the interviewees stressed that their link is weak. The school administrators complained that very few people are responsible for the program from the university, and as a result

they could hardly work in collaboration with all the schools. They said that the supervisors go to the schools only to evaluate the trainees. The school administrators, however, said that the university representatives discuss with them the success/failure of the program after the practicum. Although it is found to be a very crucial factor by many scholars in the area, continuous and well planned collaboration seems to be lacking between the university and the cooperating schools. Hickling and Glenny (1992), for example, stress the need for effective communication with schools for placing the practicum at the center of the course design.

Another area of focus in the interview was the positive and negative impact of the practicum on their regular activities and the measures they take to solve problems mentors face during their mentoring practice. Some of the interviewees stated that the student teachers come with new teaching methods that their teachers could share. Some of them have also said that there are instances in which the trainees teach better than the experienced teachers and win the attention of the students.

The majority of the interviewees, however, stressed the negative impacts of the practicum as follows:

- The trainees do not cover as much portion as they are supposed to and the regular teachers lag behind.
- Some trainees do not teach well and the regular teachers are forced to reteach the portion.
- The trainees attend classes at the university. As a result, they sometimes miss classes and they do not give due attention to the practice teaching.

This shows that the school administrators perceive teaching practice as an intervening program that creates inconveniences to their regular duties. Most of the interviewees have also said that because their teachers have rich teaching experience, they have little to learn from the student teachers. Such attitude could possibly affect their readiness to successfully run the program.

The other related question was what criteria, if there are any, they use in selecting the mentors and whether the mentors and the trainees have the right to choose each other. All of the interviewees said that selecting mentors is the responsibility of the respective departments. Although the English department heads mentioned qualification, experience and personality as some of the criteria of selecting the mentors, they admitted that the selection is primarily based on the class schedules of the mentors and of the student teachers.

All of the interviewees also stated that both the student teachers and 'mentors' have no right to choose each other. As stated in the related literature reviewed in chapter II not every teacher can be a good mentor. There are some dispositions that good mentors should exhibit. (Anderson and Anne, 1988; 41), for example, state three dispositions- opening themselves to their protégés, leading their protégé incrementally over time and expressing care and concern about the personal and professional welfare of their protégés. So, the selection of mentors in the sample schools does not seem to be well thought of and carefully done. It seems from their responses that every teacher whose class schedule does not clash with that of the student teacher could serve as

mentor. The fact that the student teachers do not have the right to choose their cooperating teacher and vice versa could also have a negative impact on the kind of relationship between the two as they do not know each other well in advance.

The last question the school administrators were asked is about their perception of the role of the cooperating teachers in the training of the student teachers. They said that the teachers play a decisive role. The university supervisor and the student teaching practice coordinator were also asked a similar question. They have also reflected that the teachers have a major role to play in equipping the student teachers with the practical skill of teaching.

The supervisor and the coordinator mentioned limited incentive, time constraint, limited help from the university and the schools, trainees' behavior and carelessness of some mentors as factors affecting the success of the practicum in general and mentoring in particular.

They were also asked whether they have set detailed guidelines for the student teaching practice and whether the cooperating teachers have access to them. Although both of them said that there are guidelines, the coordinator admitted that they are not yet in written form. They have also stated that the teachers have no access to them. This seems to indicate that the teachers do not clearly know their responsibility.

The supervisor and the teaching practice coordinator were also asked whether they believe that the responsibility of running student teaching practice should be left to the few individuals in the Faculty of Education or whether other instructors from the different departments should get involved in it. Although they believe in the need for others involvement, they expressed their reservation about the professional competence and readiness of most of the instructors in different departments to run the student teaching practice. They have also stressed the shortage of the teaching practice time and the need for extending the time for effective practice.

The discussion in this section has revealed that there are multifaceted problems that hinder the success of the cooperating teachers' mentoring practice. It is also clearly seen from the discussion that the degree of the seriousness of the factors varies.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In chapter IV, the data collected from the subjects of the study on the four research questions were analyzed and interpreted.

Research question I is whether the cooperating teachers are aware of their mentoring role or not. The discussion of the data related to this area has shown that the teachers believe that they should play an essential role in the process of equipping the student teachers with the practical skills of teaching. In other words, they are aware of the fact that they should practice the decisive mentoring duties they are supposed to.

The study has also addressed the issue of whether the cooperating teachers are ready to serve as mentors or whether the duty is imposed upon them. The study indicated that the teachers are willing to accept and work with the student teachers. It was, however, found out that the cooperating teachers' willingness is not only because they are really devoted to render professional service in the training of the preservice English teachers but also it is because the trainees share the cooperating teachers' teaching burden during the teaching practice.

The result of this study also shows that regardless of their awareness and readiness, the cooperating teachers feel that serving as mentors is an extra burden besides their regular school practices. They, therefore, believe that though they, as professionals, are supposed to take up the responsibility, they need to get a good deal of financial incentive so that they would be motivated to successfully discharge their mentoring duties.

The other major area of investigation in the study is whether the cooperating teachers successfully discharge their mentoring practice or not. It was stated in the review of related literature that mentoring is a complex process that involves the accomplishment of various specific tasks like, for example, role modeling, facilitating, counseling, advice giving, acting as the student's teacher, assessing the student's competence, (Williams 1994:139), Levinson et.al. (1978), in Anderson and Shannon (1988:40) also stresses the need for the ongoing caring relationship. This is because the essence of mentoring may be found more within the kind of relationship that exists between the mentor and protégé than in the various roles and functions. It seems obvious that such ongoing relationship could only be established if the mentor and the protégé have the opportunity to choose each other and interact (or work together) for longer time.

The study, however, has shown that although the cooperating teachers have, to some extent, helped the trainees, it is hardly possible to argue that they have successfully discharged the complex mentoring duties stated above. The study indicates that the teachers are more concerned with evaluating the students' classroom performances

than with serving as 'mentors' in the real sense of the term.

The study has also investigated factors that hinder the teachers' effective practice of their mentoring duties. Accordingly, the following factors were found to be the major ones.

- Shortage of the teaching practice time.
- The existence of weaker liaison between the university and the cooperating schools.
- The fact that the entire responsibility of running the teaching practice program is left to few instructors in the Faculty of Education.
- The university's failure to involve the cooperating schools and the mentors in the planning and management of the teaching practice program.
- The school administrators' low awareness about the benefit their schools could gain out of the program.
- Conducting regular classes at the university during the practicum.
- Insufficiency of the financial incentive for the cooperating teachers and the student teachers.
- Lack of enthusiasm and under performance on the teaching practice on the part of the student teachers.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. The teaching practice time should be extended so that the student teachers stay in the schools for a reasonably longer period of time. This might enable them to get along with the complex school environment very well and practice the teaching with confidence.
2. A strong link needs to be created between the university and the cooperating schools so that effective bilateral exchange of knowledge and experience would be possible. This may involve getting the cooperating teachers involved in the planning of theoretical courses offered in the university on general teaching methods and subject area teaching methods. This may enable the cooperating teachers to confidently and critically assess the extent to which the trainees put their theoretical knowledge into practice in their respective schools.
3. The management of the teaching practice in the university should be reconsidered and made in such a way that it involves not only few instructors in the Faculty of Education but also subject area instructors who teach subject area methodology.

4. The role of the cooperating teachers is changing from the long-standing 'traditional' concept 'supervision' to the new concept 'mentoring.' This innovation, as Kennedy (1988) argues, should be introduced through the normative - re-educative strategies, which involves the participation of all those affected by the change. The university therefore should organize workshops and short term training for both the school administrators and the 'mentors' in order to further promote their awareness and skills of managing the teaching practice program.
5. The cooperating schools should also be given the power of managing the teaching practice program including controlling the budget for the program so that they would be beneficiaries of the program. This might also make them feel more responsible for the successful implementation of the program.
6. The research has also indicated the need for further funding the program so that the cooperating schools, the cooperating teachers and the student teachers could get a reasonable amount of financial benefit out of the program.
7. The teaching practice should be rescheduled and be conducted towards the beginning of every semester. This might be a more convenient time for all the parties involved in the teaching practice program. For example student teachers may not be busy to cover courses. The cooperating teachers may not also be busy preparing and administering tests.

8. The student teachers should register for as minimum credit hours as possible in the semester the teaching practice is conducted. This would be possible by making prior adjustment of the distribution of the courses over the three years (six semester) during which the student teachers stay in their area of specialization.

9. Before I conclude my paper, I should remind readers that Addis Ababa University has had the lion's share in the training of pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language. I would, therefore, like to recommend that further research should be conducted on how to make initial second language teacher education more school-based in the Ethiopian context.

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Appendix - A
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Questionnaire to be Filled in by High School English
Teachers

Dear teacher,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data from cooperating teachers for a project that has been designed to study "The mentoring Role of High School English Teachers." The questionnaire has four parts. The first part has questions on the teachers' background information. The second part is about the cooperating teachers' perception of their mentoring role. The third part explores the factors that affect the cooperating teachers' effective discharging of their mentoring role. The last part is about the extent to which the cooperating teachers are discharging their mentoring role and other related issues.

I, therefore, kindly request you to read all the questions in this questionnaire and then give your responses clearly. Your genuine contributions are essential for the success of this study.

Thank you in advance

Note: the terms 'cooperating teacher' and 'mentor' are used interchangeably in this questionnaire. They refer to the high school English teacher who is assigned to work with a student-teacher (s) during teaching practice.

Part - 1 Background Information

Directions: 1. Write your responses to questions 1-3 in the blank spaces.

2. Indicate your responses to questions 4 and 5 by circling one of the letters of alternatives under the questions.

1. Your highest qualification _____ major _____ minor

2. Your English teaching experience _____ years.

3. Number of years you have served as cooperating teacher, _____ years.

4. Have you ever participated in a workshop, seminar or any sort of training about teaching practice?

A) Yes

B) No

5. Do you have access to reading materials about teaching practice either in your school or out of the school?

A) Yes, to a great extent

B) Yes, to some extent

C) I don't have any access at all

Part-II. Perception of the Cooperating Teachers About their Mentoring role

Directions: Please indicate your opinion about the following statements by putting a tick (✓) in one of the boxes (1-5) against each statement

1= strongly agree

2= agree

3= no idea

4= disagree

5= strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. The cooperating teacher is more appropriate in helping the student teachers during teaching practice than the University supervisor.					
2. Training the student teachers is basically the responsibility of the University instructors. Therefore, the cooperating teacher should play little role in the training of the student-teachers.					
3. Because the University instructors have more knowledge about teaching/learning, they are more appropriate to help the student-teachers during teaching practice than the cooperating teachers.					
1. Because the cooperating teacher is engaged in extra work when working with the student-teacher/s/he should be paid for it.					
5. Serving as a mentor of the student teachers during teaching practice is part of the professional duties of the cooperating teachers.					

6. The cooperating teacher should repeatedly observe the student teacher teaching and give feedback.					
7. The cooperating teacher should look upon a student teacher as his peer.					
8. The cooperating teacher should create a strong and close relation with the student-teacher /s/he has worked with and the relation should be long lasting even after the practice is over.					
9. Because the student-teachers have current knowledge about the methods and techniques of language teaching, the cooperating teacher could learn a lot from them.					

Part Three

Factors that affect the cooperating teachers' effective discharging of their mentoring role

Direction: Please indicate the magnitude of each of the following problems by putting a tick (✓) in one of the boxes against each statement.

1= not a problem at all

2= it may cause some problem

3= it is a serious problem

4= it is a very serious problem

	1	2	3	4
1. Getting little or no payment for the extra responsibility I assume during the teaching practice in working with the student teachers.				
2. Lack of enough time to sit down and work with the student-teacher				
3. Inappropriacy of the time of the teaching practice program				
4. Shortage of the teaching practice time to effectively help the student-teachers given to me to work with.				
5. Number of student teachers given to me to work with				
6. Lack of adequate knowledge about the current language teaching theories, methods and techniques to give the student-teachers feedback effectively.				
7. The university's failure to clearly tell me the objective(s) of the practicum.				

8. Failure of the representatives of the university to usually come to my school to discuss the problems of the students-teachers and solve them for further improvement.				
9. Lack of assistance from the school administrators while I was working with the student teachers.				
10. Lack of the student-teachers readiness to discuss problems and exchange ideas with me and to receive advice from me.				
11. Absence (or being late) of the student teachers from classes				
12. The student teachers low language command that has negatively affect their teaching.				
13. Students teachers' failure to behave in a professional manner when they interact with students				
14. The student teachers' reluctance to create interaction with other teachers in the school.				
15. The student teachers' unprepadness before they come to classes				
16. The student teachers' failure to give clear and precise directions to student in the classroom				
17. The student teachers' overuse of mother-tongue while teaching English.				
18. The student teachers' failure to manage classes very will.				

19. Please list down other problems that you think are not included in this questionnaire but that have negatively affected your mentoring role.

Part- Four

Please indicate your responses to the following questions by circling one of the given choices under each question. Write your responses briefly to the open-ended questions.

1. Do you volunteer to accept student-teachers to work with?

A) Yes B) No, Please justify your response to Q1

2. How often do you observe a student teacher teaching?

A) More than twice a week B) twice a week

C) Once a week D) Once in two weeks

3. Who determines the number of periods that you should observe the student-teacher?

A) Yourself

B) the University coordinator

C) Your department Head

D) Other, place specify _____

4. How often do you discuss with the student-teacher issues related to their teaching and/or other issues related to the profession?

A) Once in two weeks

B) Once a week

C) Twice a week

D) More than twice a week

5. Do you let the student teachers observe your classes while you are teaching outside the observation week?

A) Yes

B) No

If yes, how often?

6. Do you help the student-teachers to plan their lessons very well?

A) Yes

B) No

If yes, how often?

7. Do you advise the student-teacher to remain a teacher?

A) Yes

B) No

8. Whatever your response to Q7 above, what is the basis of your advice?

9. How do you evaluate the evaluation checklist set by the university. Comment on its strong sides as well as weak sides.

9. Please list down (other) aspects in which you have practically helped the student teachers during the teaching practice (other than evaluating them)

10. List some of the weaknesses which were characteristics of those student teachers you thought were less successful.

11. List any pieces of advice which you would like to give to prospective student teachers to become successful teachers.

12. What do you say the university should do if any improvement is desired?

Appendix - B

Addis Ababa University

School of Graduate Studies

A questionnaire for the student teachers.

Dear trainee,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data from student-teachers for a project that has been designed to study "The mentoring Role of High School English Teachers." The questionnaire has three parts. Part I is about the students' perception of the program. Part II is about the practical help the students gained from the cooperating teachers and part III is about the problem they faced during the practicum and their suggested solutions.

I, therefore, kindly request you to read all the questions in this questionnaire and then give your responses clearly. Your genuine contributions are essential for the success of the study.

Thank you in advance.

Part one

Directions: Please indicate your responses to the following statements by putting a tick (✓) in one of the boxes against each statement.

1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= have no idea 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Teaching practice is a very important aspect of the training without which the training should be incomplete					
2. I enjoyed the teaching practice very much and was encouraged to become competent teacher in the future					
3. The cooperating teacher was of more practical help for me than my university supervisor during the practice teaching					
4. I did not gain as much help and practical experience as I had thought to gain from the cooperating teacher.					
5. The time of the practicum was too short for me to acquire enough practical teaching skills					
6. The cooperating teacher is hardly familiar with the recent theories of language teaching/learning.					
7. The whole situation of the school was so discouraging that I felt that teaching is not a rewarding profession					

Part Two

Directions: Give responses to the following statements by putting a tick (✓) in one of the boxes against each question.

	Yes	No
1. I looked upon the cooperating teacher as equal and approached him/her freely as a friend or professional colleague		
2. The cooperating teacher wanted me to teach just like she/he did and criticized me when I deviated		
3. The Cooperating teacher introduced me to other teachers and administrative workers. This helped me to feel at home (relaxed) in the school compound.		
4. She/he encouraged me to freely express my views about teaching: he/she did not try to tell me the right way to teach during feedback sessions.		
5. She/he invited me to his/her class while she/he was teaching to enable me to observe her/his lesson presentation and learn from it outside the observation week.		
6. The cooperating teacher helped me to know the curriculum in general and the English language syllabus in particular.		
7. She/he sometimes worked with me in planning and team teaching the lesson with me.		

8. She/he told me in detail the rules and regulations and the administrative structure of the school; how to deal with disruptive students etc.		
9. I want to take the cooperating teacher as a model in my professional and general personal life.		
10. Whenever I wanted the cooperating teacher for discussion or any sort of consultation, she/he was available and he/she warmly accepted me.		

Directions: Indicate your responses to the following questions by circling the letter of the given alternatives or by writing

11. How often did you meet the cooperating teacher to discuss your teaching and other related issues?
- a) More than twice a week
 - b) Twice a week
 - c) Once a week
 - d) Once in two weeks
12. Did you get opportunities to informally discuss with the cooperating teachers general issues about the profession or general life experience?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - If yes, how often?
13. Please list down other aspects not included in this questionnaire in which you think the cooperating teacher helped you.

Part Three

Direction: Indicate your responses to the following questions by circling one or more of the letters of the given alternatives or by writing.

14. Do you think that the fact that you were attending classes at the university during the practicum had negative impact on your performances on the practicum?
- a) Yes b) No If 'yes', to what extent?
15. What things did you like most about the teaching practice program?
- a) The cooperating teacher's role
- b) The supervisor's role
- c) Length of the program
- d) The fact that the program takes place towards the end of the semester
- a) Others, specify...
16. In your opinion, to what extent is this year's teaching practice program successful in equipping the student-teachers with practical teaching skills?
- a) to a great extent
- b) to some extent
- a) it hasn't been successful at all
17. If your answer to 16 about is b or c please list down other factors that you think have negatively affected the success of the teaching practice program?
18. What do you think should be done if the teaching practice program is to successfully attain its objective(s) i.e., equipping the student-teachers with practical teaching skills?

Appendix C

Interview Questions for the University Supervisor and the Teaching Practice Program Coordinator

1. What is your responsibility in the teaching practice program?
2. For how long have you served at this position?
3. What (or how much) role should the cooperating teachers in the cooperating schools play in the process of STP?
4. Do you think that the cooperating teachers have played the role they are supposed to play in the process of equipping the trainees with practical skills of teaching?
5. What practical factors do you believe have stood against the teachers' effective discharging of their mentoring role?
6. How do you think they could be solved or minimized?
7. Do you say that the Education Faculty has successfully worked in collaboration with the cooperating schools to facilitate the implementation of the program? If yes, how? If not, What are the reasons for your failure to work in collaboration with the schools?
8. Have you set detailed guidelines for teaching practice program (TTP) that clearly state the duties and responsibilities of the cooperating teachers in the TTP?
9. If there is the guideline, have the cooperating teachers access to it?

10. Do you think that the responsibility of running the TPP should totally be left to only some instructors in the Faculty of Education or should instructors in the other departments as well be involved.
11. Do you think that the time allotted to the TPP is enough for the cooperating teachers to fairly successfully carryout their mentoring role? If not how long should it be?
12. Do you think that the cooperating teachers have enough theoretical knowledge and practical experience to serve as mentors?
13. Do you think that the cooperating teachers are willing (ready) to work as mentors? Why?
14. Are there any criteria used in the selection of teachers who serve as mentors? If yes, what are they?
15. What possible measures should be taken to maximize the mentoring roles of the cooperating teachers?

Appendix D

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ድኅረ ምረቃ ት/ቤት

ለትምህርት ቤቶች እስተዳዳሪዎች/ ድሬክተሮች እና ምክትል ድሬክተሮች እና

የትምህርት ክፍሉ ኃላፊዎች/ የቀረበ ቃለ መጠይቅ

1. በትምህርት ቤቱ የሥራ ድርሻዎ ምንድነው?
2. በኃላፊነትዎ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ሠርተዋል?
3. ለማስተማር ልምምድ የሚመጡ የተማሪ አስተማሪዎችን ከአዲስ ጣባባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የምትቀበሉት እንዴት ነው? ደንብ አለ ወይንስ በሁለታችሁ መሃል የሚደረግ መግባባት ነው?
4. የማስተማር ልምምድ ሥራ በተሳካ ሁኔታ እንዲካሄድ ዩኒቨርሲቲው /የትምህርት ፋኩልቲው/ ምን ያህል ከእናንተ ጋር ተባብሮ ይሠራል? ትብብራችሁስ በምን በምን መልኩ ነው? /በገንዘብ፣ ዕውቀት በማካፈል፣ ያጋጠሙ ችግሮችን ተከታትሎና ከእናንተ ጋር ተወያይቶ መፍትሔ በመፈለግ ወዘተ።
5. ይህ የማስተማር ልምምድ በሥራችሁ ላይ ያለውን አሉታዊና አዎንታዊ ተፅዕኖዎችን ቢገልጹልኝ?
6. ከተማሪ አስተማሪዎች ጋር እንዲሠሩ የሚመደቡት የት/ቤታችሁ ተባባሪ መምህራን ከተማሪ አስተማሪዎቹ ጋር በሚቆዩበት ጊዜ አጋዋጊቸው ለእናንተ የሚያሳውቁት ችግሮች አሉ? ካሉ ዋና ዋናዎቹን ቢጠቅሱልኝ?

7. ከተማሪ አስተማሪዎቹ ጋር የሚሠሩ ተባባሪ መምህራንን የምትመርጡበት መስፈርት አለ? ካሉ ምን ምን ናቸው? ለምሳሌ መምህሩ አብሮት መሥራት የሚፈልገውን የተማሪ አስተማሪ ወይም የተማሪ አስተማሪው አብሮት መሥራት የሚፈልገውን መምህር የመምረጥ መብት አላቸው?
 8. ከተማሪ አስተማሪዎቹ ጋር ለመሥራት የተባባሪ መምህራናቸው ፍላጎትና ዝግጁነት ምን ያህል ነው? በሌላ አባባል ሥራውን እንደ ተጨማሪ ጫና ነው የሚያዩት ወይስ የሥራቸው አካል እንደሆነ አድርገው ነው የሚቀበሉት?
 9. በዚህ ወቅት እነዚህን መምህራናቸውን የሚያጋጥሟቸውን ችግሮች ለመፍታት በእናንተ በኩል የሚወሰዱ እርምጃዎች /ድጋፎች/ ምን ምንድን ናቸው?
 10. እርስዎ እንደ አንድ ግለሰብ እነዚህ ተባባሪ መምህራን የተማሪ አስተማሪዎቹን በማሠልጠኑ ሂደት ውስጥ ያላቸው ሚና ምናልባትም ከዩኒቨርሲቲው ከሚመጡ ገምጋሚዎቻቸው ሚና ጋር ስናነፃፅር ምን ያህል ነው ይላሉ?
- ሀ/ በጣም የጎላ ሚና አላቸው ለ/ መጠነኛ ሚና አላቸው
 ሐ/ እርግጠኛ አይደለሁም መ/ የጎላ ሚና የላቸውም
11. እንደ እርስዎ እምነት እነዚህ ተባባሪ መምህራን ከተማሪ አስተማሪዎች ጋር ለመሥራት አስተዳደራዊ ግዴታ አለባቸው ወይስ በፈቃደኝነታቸው ላይ የተመሠረተ ነው ይላሉ?
 12. ተባባሪ መምህራናቸው ተማሪ አስተማሪዎቹን በተግባር ልምምዱ ላይ የበለጠ እንዲረዱ በዩኒቨርሲቲውም ሆነ በእናንተ በኩል መደረግ አለባቸው የሚሏቸውን ነገሮች ካሉ ቢገልፁልኝ?

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Department of Curriculum and Instruction**

**Assessment Check list for Lesson Observation During Student Teaching
Practicum**

Assessment points 1 to 5 are given. The highest is 5 and the lowest is 1. Indicate your assessment by writing one of the points and your comments in the columns provided. The evaluation is out of 150.

Name of Student Teacher _____ Date _____

Grade/Section _____ Subject _____

1.	PERSONAL QUALITIES	GRADE	COMMENTS
	1.1 Ability of establish rapport	_____	
	1.2 General style: dress, appearance	_____	
	1.3 Voice: Audibility, ability to project	_____	
	1.4 Command of the language	_____	
2.	PREPARATION (Plan)	GRADE	COMMENT
	2.1 Lesson plan: balance and variety of activities, timing, structuring	_____	
	2.2 Objectives: clarity, and specification	_____	
	2.3 Suitability of materials and methods for level and type of class	_____	
3.	EXECUTION (Teaching)	GRADE	COMMENTS
	3.1 Techniques of class management and movement	_____	
	3.2 Progress through the lesson changes in activity, pace, etc.....	_____	
	3.3 Presentation of materials: meaningful, motivating contextualized, appropriately staged	_____	
	3.4 Questioning: graded, directed, appropriate, varied	_____	
	3.5 Controlled practice: choral, individual pair or group work	_____	
	3.6 Use of teaching resources: blackboard and other visual aids	_____	
	3.7 Maintenance of interest	_____	
	3.8 Involvement and encouragement of learners	_____	

	EXECUTION	GRADE	COMMENTS
	3.9 Checking of learning	_____	
	3.10 Achievement of aims	_____	
	3.11 Ability to adapt materials	_____	
4.	Areas of Focus		
	4.1 Understanding and handing of		
	a. listening text	_____	
	b. comprehension text	_____	
	c. oral fluency exercises	_____	
	d. writing exercises	_____	
	e. grammar exercises	_____	
	f. vocabulary exercises	_____	
	4.2 Quality of Input	_____	
	4.3 Quality of Tasks	_____	
	4.4 Teacher - student interaction	_____	
	4.5 Classroom - interaction	_____	
	4.6 Ability to foster genuine language use	_____	
	4.7 Feedback	_____	
	Total (out of 150)		


Evaluator's Name: _____

Signature _____

DECLARATION

The thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Solomon Geda

Signature: 

Advisor _____

Signature _____

Date of Submission: _____