

MENTORING IN A UNIVERSITY/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGIATE.

A STUDY OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND THE MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIP.

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The oral tradition of mentoring within the secondary school learning environment has been identified as an area in which more research is required. Insights into the phenomena experienced between mentor and mentee may inform the meaningful design and implementation of future mentoring relationships. Key factors contributing to the cognitive skills development of the mentee appear to be linked to the development of a mutually agreed upon set of operational dynamics in the mentor relationship. These operational dynamics are dependent upon the affective and social development of both parties within the learning environment. The factors of interest to the overall study are the student centredness of the teaching, the motivational techniques, the extended learning processes, the ways in which the class time is used and the overall classroom climate. This paper explores the emotional geography of the classroom and will identify the commonalities and differences in the social and affective learning of the mentors and protégé in two difference curricula experiences.

The University of Newcastle, the Faculty of Education and Arts and the Callaghan Collegiate have established links to support the collegiate strategic plan (2001) to provide quality teaching and learning environments. Within this plan mentoring has been identified as a key strategy. Tertiary education students have been engaged as mentors in school programs in the HSIE and Visual Arts Learning Areas. This paper explores contrasting mentoring styles that have evolved in response to the subject matter and skills expected from different discipline areas. Diary reports from mentor and protégé provide the raw material for the analysis in this paper.

Introduction

Educationalists across a range of settings, including teacher education, must draw from a wide range of teaching strategies to support learning environments and to address individual needs. Mentoring is one strategy that can cater for the development of individual student learning while supporting the development of identified learning outcomes. In this oral tradition whether classroom student, teacher trainee or novice teacher, educational professionals draw on the human resources traditionally available, these being older students, peers or other teacher colleagues.

This research focuses on a emerging type of mentor/mentee relationship being explored in teacher training, that between the novice teacher and a student(s) in a senior collegiate. In this context the educational outcomes and behaviours identified to be achieved for the mentees (senior students) represent both low and high stakes outcomes, while the reciprocal benefit for the trainee teacher is invaluable experiences as mentors while immersed in an secondary education culture. The trainee teachers and the researchers (teacher educators) have entered the program being aware of current models that characterise the mentor/mentee learning relationships. While these present clear operational models they are limited in articulating the role of the emotional geography of the relationship.

Attention in this paper will focus on the affective and social development of both parties within the learning environment, and examine the emotional cognitive factors that may be impacting on the mentor/mentee learning relationship. This will be further be embellished through a comparative curriculum analysis.

Mentoring: Its Definition and History

The term mentor originated as the name of the advisor of the young Telemachus in Homers' Odyssey. He was described as a loyal and most trusted friend, who supported all aspects of Telemachus's personal development (Hays, Gerber, and Minichiello, 1999). The characteristics of the mentor have since evolved and a definition of mentoring has been refined by Jacobi (1991), cited in MacCallum & Beltham (1999). He identified the functions or roles ascribed to mentors as including acceptance, socialisation, challenge, protection, advocacy, coaching, and instruction. Jacobi argued that there were three main components of the mentoring relationship, those being emotional and social support, the direct assistance with career and professional development, and role modelling.

Others have identified mentoring characteristics and types to include broad identifiable functions, relationships and dispositions. These may include counsellors, assessors, evaluators, academic advisers, managers, guides and role models (Hayes; Gerber & Minichiello, 1999; Carruthers, 1993; Smink, 1999). Further to this, there are descriptions that intermix roles and qualities of mentors. Some of these descriptions include role model, guide, willing to be a mentor, supporter, experienced, adviser, trusted counsellor, leader, friend, listener, knowledgeable, shares resources, observes confidentiality, interested, shows mutual respect, shows affection, accessible, networker (Pascarelli, 1998, cited in MacCallum and Beltman, 1999).

Other models have evolved that examine the stages of the mentor/mentee relationship. A four stage model of classical mentoring (Barnes and Stravny, 1995) may include:

- initiation - checking out what each person is learning about and appreciate in each other;
- cultivation - mentor builds on the strengths of the mentee. The mentor illuminates issues and helps the mentee examine options and solutions;
- transformation - mentors role is to provide timely, concrete and non-judgemental feedback;
- separation - the mentee is seen as taking risks, inventing and trying out new approaches without the strong guidance of the mentor.

A significant other group have focused on the emotional and social characteristics and dispositions of both the mentor and mentees. Clifford (1999) emphasised the importance of empathy, Fresco (1999) pointed out the value of mentors accepting diversity and difference, while Hall and Kinchington (1995) argued for the importance of developing relationships in the mentoring process. Collins, (cited in Hayes, Gerber & Minichiello, 1999), saw mentoring as fulfilling either a career or psychosocial function. He argued that these relationships cannot be imposed but often emerge as a phenomenological experience between supervisors and their students. The phases of the relationship were described as interaction, investment, facilitation and adaption. Whichever approach or perspective one takes, all appear to isolate the social importance of interactions, without isolating any particular skills, other than listener, within the phenomenological experience that one needs if one is to develop trust, show affection, motivate or facilitate.

Different Types of Mentoring Situations

Over many years this tradition of oral mentoring has been employed to fulfil a range of functions. Corporate mentoring has become popular in management and business parlance (Australian National Training Authority, 1996). Caldwell and Carter (1993) argue that this is because of the need for heightened international competitiveness, expectations for a stronger culture of service in the private and public sector, demands for efficiency in organisational structure and process and the realisation that the traditional workplace practice is rejected in modern society. The mentoring culture provides a view of an organisation as a learning organisation and a collaborative enterprise. These mentoring programs often have a strong technical focus to them with strict procedures for establishment and evaluation (Reilly, 1992). An extension of this corporate notion of a learning culture that can facilitate change is being fostered as a professional development strategy within and between educational organisations (NSW teacher development programs).

There is a renewed interest in providing learning experiences for novice teachers to assist them in seamlessly entering into the school workplace environment. Elliot, and Calderhead, (1993) have reported research on school-based mentoring programs for beginning teachers. This approach is being seen as an effective tool in supporting the professional development and enculturation strategies for post Accelerated Teacher Training (ATT) programs (Grushka, 2002), where experienced teachers are asked to become mentors for these students who have chosen to retrain into the teaching profession. In these programs the mentoring experience is described as 'generally involving a process where someone with more experience and expertise provides support, counselling and advice to a less experienced colleague. It is a shared experience between a mentor and a mentoree' (Curriculum Support for teaching in TAS, 2001, p.9).

Increasingly there are pre service teacher training opportunities where trainee teachers are in schools for long periods of time being mentored by a classroom teacher whilst also being assisted by a university team member. Issues such as selection of appropriate schools, the role of head teachers, selection of mentors, mentor training, initial competency levels, developing an understanding of school culture, stages of conceptual development of the beginning teacher, allocation of responsibility, and models of mentoring in schools (apprenticeship, competency, reflective), are canvassed widely in the literature (Corbett and Wright, 1993; Elliot and Calderhead, 1995; Hagger, Burn and McIntyre, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993). Although they have identified differences among mentors it was found that most perceptions of the role tended to be in terms of nurturing and supporting rather than a critical and technical orientation to the role.

Mentoring has been seen as valuable for certain specialist groups with unique situations. This has been the view of mentoring as an individual and pragmatic experience such as with particular gifted and talented students (Forster, 1998 Goff, and Torrance, 1991), and with academically focussed mentoring situations (Kerry and Mayes, 1995; Frierson, 1998). Da Costa, Klak and Schinke reported on a large inner city mentoring project that emphasised literacy skills development. It was reported that the 'mentorship programs appear to be most successful when they are designed to help develop the 'whole child' socially and academically' (da Costa, Klak and Schinke, 2000, p.14). Overwhelmingly when students enjoyed time spent with mentors, the literacy skills did improve.

The literature further suggests many benefits to disadvantaged youth participating in formal mentoring programs (Perez, 1999). Youth can learn the potency of putting forth a strong effort (Howard, 1990); can become acquainted with values and resources of adults from occupational and social worlds very different from those with which they are familiar

(Smink, 1990), and can attain greater self confidence (Levinson 1978; Mosely and Todd, 1983).

Of particular interest to this study, however, has been the research into mentoring as a tool for guiding pre-service teachers into the teaching profession.

Mentoring in Pre-Service Teacher Training

Research has identified the value of mentoring programs as an aspect of teacher training. Fresko, (1999, p.1) stated 'mentoring and tutoring provide prospective teachers with special opportunities in the early stage of their professional development. The experience can have significant impact on their professional growth by broadening their outlook on teaching and learning'. These experiences, it is argued, effect the development and awareness of the mentor's tolerance and empathy of individuals, greater social awareness, better communication skills, greater self-confidence and a stronger sense of social responsibility. Mentoring activities for teacher trainees offer the mentors authentic learning environments, where the needs and problems of a child who has difficulty at school are real and engaging. It offers firsthand knowledge of different groups in society-they are better prepared for the diversity which they will meet in the classroom once they become teachers. A mentor learns to be empathetic and to listen. It 'emphasises the affective side of teaching' p.6.

Harwell (1995) examined diaries of mentees (trainee teachers) who tutored for 10 weeks. Students improved their ability to reflect on their work, their decision to become teachers were reinforced, they became more realistic in their perception of the teaching professions. It changed their concept of the teaching role. The relationship with the child refocused the trainee teachers from a consideration of the content of the teaching, onto the specific needs of child and the selection of activities in accordance with these needs. Further strengthening mentoring as a valuable activity for trainee teachers Newman and Wilson (1999) found that the experience helped provide confidence in teaching as career choice, increased personal efficacy in teaching, gave insight into pupil motivation, enhanced willingness to do community service and provided for personal growth and fulfilment. The mentor program that forms the basis of this research taps into the teacher training in the last year of study at university and of particular interest for this work are the relationships and the emotional environments that are established within the mentoring process.

Relationships and Emotional Environments

For some researchers it is the establishment of relationships based on trust and empathy that characterise the best in mentor/mentee partnerships. MacCallum and Beltman (1999, p.ii) have found that trust is 'the crucial component of mentoring' while Clifford (1999) found that the mentors' emotional empathy was a major contributor to the building of successful mentor-protégé. He also acknowledged the work of Gallimore (1992) and Vygotsky (1962, 1978) in recognising the contribution of relationships within the social interactive component of learning. For Elliot (1995), the work of Turner (1993) offers further evidence for the importance of the emotional bonds of mentoring. His research acknowledged the importance of the interaction between individual mentors and individual students in determining an effective learning relationship. For Turner, 'deep relationships between students and their mentors fosters feeling of responsibility within the mentors which may have important implications for student learning' (p. 249). For Clifford (1999) and Young and Sato (1988) there was a strong link between having empathy and being willing to engage in helping behaviour, and increasing an individual's willingness to offer help to unfamiliar and distant others - surely a key prerequisite for a teacher.

There is, however much less literature which identifies the characteristics and interactions of the mentoring relationship in terms of a social and affective learning environment. It is this aspect that will form the basis of our inquiry. Hargreaves & Bascia (2000) have identified that in effective teaching and learning emotional understanding, that is the ability to read and respond quickly to others' moods and feelings is an essential characteristic of a good teacher. Without this understanding they argue that teachers can misconstrue much of the messages students give them, and in so doing create anxieties and stresses that can undermine any good teacher/student learning relationship. In an earlier study Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan and Hopkins (1998) had characterised good teachers as more than well oiled machines, but 'emotional, passionate beings who fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy... good teachers are passionate about ideas, learning and their relationships with students' (p.559). Other researchers have extended these findings and elaborated on these descriptive characteristics of the teacher, placing significant emphasis on the role of emotions in the lives of teachers. Day, C. & Leitch, R. (2001) have examined teaching in relation to the work of Goleman on emotional intelligence, and have acknowledged that 'emotional intelligence is at the heart of good professional practice' (Goleman, 1995). They further identify emotional health as crucial to effective teaching and that emotional and cognitive health are affected by personal biography and social context.

While Day and Leitch have examined the work of Goleman from the perspective of professional practice, a deeper examination of his work in relation to social cognition may offer further insights into our understandings of both novice teacher mentor and their mentee learning relationship. It may well be a key indicator of mentoring success or failure. Firstly Goleman (1995) identified the core of the art of handling relationships to be the ability to know and manage ones emotional intelligence (p.112). He argued that the emotional intelligences mentors need to have include self awareness, social awareness, social skills and self management. This emotional intelligence has also been identified by Howard Gardner, in *Frames of Mind*, 1983 as intrapersonal intelligence. That is the ability to 'access to one's own feelings and the ability to discriminate among them and draw upon them to guide behaviour' (Gardner in Goleman, p.39). The need to process this intelligence is both true of the child as well as the teacher in this closely formed mentoring relationship. The key social competence, is thus the ability to be able to 'empathise, recognise difference,... be a good listener and question asker,... as well as learning the arts of cooperation, conflict resolution, and negotiating compromise' (p.268). The consequences of being socially incompetent, lacking an understanding of the unspoken rules of social harmony (such as speaking directly to others when spoken to, initiating social contact, being able to carry on a social conversation, beyond yes and no, to express gratitude, understanding personal space to name a few) are classroom requirements for both teacher and student. Many people lack the emotional competence to recognise and interpret their feelings or develop these social competencies. For a teacher this represents an important competence. Goleman identified the work of Thorndike who concluded that 'social intelligence is both distinct from academic abilities and a key part of what makes people do well in the practicalities of life' (p.42). Therefore one may conclude that varying levels of mentoring success, may be related to social competency and emotional intelligence, and the development of mutual responsibility, the lack of which inevitably effects the learning environment and learning outcomes.

The second key aspect for consideration is how the role of emotional intelligence impacts on the learning in general, and whether the display and evidence of emotional intelligence operating in a mentor/mentee relationship can effect learning outcomes or impact on the learners general inclination to learn. Goleman's research related to this study is his identified links between emotional intelligence and intellect. Goleman stated that 'intellect cannot work at its best without emotional intelligence' (p. 28). He also identified that 'The single most important element in group intelligence, it turns out, is not the average IQ in the academic

sense, but rather in terms of emotional intelligence. The key to a high group IQ is social harmony' (p.160). This finding is of particular interest in this study as some of the mentor/mentee relationships were in groups rather than one on one relationships. Thus in many instances the mentoring was along the lines of group motivation and learning.

Mode of Inquiry

In this research we have framed our analysis from the understanding that all our knowledge is constructed from a historical and cultural positioning and is momentary. As teacher educator researchers we acknowledge our considerable depth of knowledge in relation to novice teaching and possible biases we bring to this research. In so doing we accept this framing as both a vulnerability in the validity of our qualitative analysis. However we also present this framing as one that may give richness and insight into the phenomena of mentor teaching. The resultant narrative, and mentor, mentee stories acknowledge and accept the assumption that there is no single objective truth. Rather the goal is to understand, through the building mentor mentee descriptive interactions that we improve the quality of the mentor models informing our knowledge of the social and affective learning occurring at these sites across the different curriculum learning environments.

Grounded in the field of qualitative inquiry, the research will use a rich compilation of phenomenological approaches to best represent the researcher's field of study, questions and data sources. The most important assumption is that the lived experience lies at the heart of one's perceptions and interpretations of the world. This means that one can rarely make a positive prediction, as the life experiences are socially and personally complex and dynamic. The research will embrace both a philosophical hermeneutic phenomenological approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001 & Plager, 1994), combined with the field of inquiry of the critical discursive psychology methodology (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). The research has been carried out by two researchers therefore attention has been given to the nature of the epistemological transformations that occur when one uses phenomenological inquiry. The researchers also acknowledge that the mentor/mentee relationships used in this research could be seen as pseudo, in that at no time was the mentor able to work independently of the classroom teacher. The teacher remained responsible and accountable for the attainment of the students' learning outcomes. It must be acknowledged that the mentors were not able to create a relationship that was not in some way influenced by the classroom climate, be it other students or teacher trainee peers working in close proximity and all that this scenario presents as complex interactions and influences.

The inquiry mode attempted to transpose much of the subjective data into socially validated research. It employed a range of data collection techniques including questionnaires, diaries, observations, and interviews. It acknowledged the powerful observations and experiences of the mentors, mentees, teachers and the researchers as valid phenomenological data sources. The data will undergo a series of transformations (Reinhartz, 1983). These transformations will be by experiencing people into words, then by the researchers personal grasp of that which is being translated, acknowledging that all data embodies critical discursive elements. The data will then be systematically categorised acknowledging the critical discursive nature of what is written and spoken and the hermeneutic processes that accompany phenomenological inquiry.

Participants

The research was carried out at a collegiate campus over a period of two years. On each occasion trainee teacher mentors would be assigned a small group or individual student (dependent on the curriculum area and suitability for the classroom teacher) for a period of 8 weeks. There were two curriculum areas to be investigated (one high stakes and one low

stakes in terms of learning outcomes). For the purposes of this paper the social science group, or Case Study 1, was the low stakes group whereas Case Study 2, a visual arts group represented the high stakes group. Both had differing data collection strategies and for clarity of understanding, each case study will analyse their own findings and both will then be subjected to a comparative examination.

Case Study 1

The mentors in this case study were 15 postgraduate Diploma of Education students studying to be either history or social science teachers. They had limited experience in classroom interactions and were chosen to be part of this program to help them establish relationship skills and research strategies. There were 60 mentees from two year 10 history classes. They worked either individually or in groups with either an individual mentor or a pair of mentors. The task was a research project and presentation with a wide choice of topic. After an initial week of orientation and 'get to know you' activities the groups were provided with some clear guidelines and expectations of achievement for the first two weeks. Thereafter they were given a looser rein with the proviso that what was put together was to be presented on a particular day. They worked together for 2 hours per week for 8 weeks. Both groups recorded comments in diaries in each week of the experience.

There is always a difficulty with these one year education diploma students. They have so much to learn about the subject matter and skills they will be teaching, but they also need to know about how to work with secondary students and the constraints of the school context. A few of them resisted the challenge, finding the personal experience too confronting and the constraints of classroom curriculum too inhibiting. Thus the emotional geographies were confounded by a four way relationship between the mentors, the mentees, the classroom teachers and myself as the university lecturer. The classroom teachers and the researcher/lecturer had built up a rapport over a period of four years and there was a mutual trust and appreciation of each of our weaknesses and strengths. A couple of the mentors decided after a week or so that they would have been better served by tutorials back at the university despite all evidence to the contrary. This attitude did not assist the mentor/mentee relationship.

There were some differences in perception between trainee teachers and collegiate students about what the mentor role was. These perceptions also changed over time, and this shift is evident in the Table 1A and B below:

Table 1A : From the collegiate student point of view

BEFORE Mentoring Started	AFTER Mentoring had Finished
Helps when you need it, helps when things get difficult, helps with questions	Helps , learns,
Listens, listens a lot	Listens, supports
Guides, suggests, gives good advice	Gives advice
Nice, friendly,	Helps us understand
Understands, discusses, talks,	Helps us get things together

Makes lessons fun	Helps presentation
Supports decisions	Helps but not too much, doesn't dominate
Learns and listens	Offers a different opinion
Helps us work together	Has to be a friend
Knows the ultimate direction	
Communicates well, asks opinions	Helps present
Talks through	Supports
Teaches skills	Doesn't let you down
Assists- supports decisions	Guides
Helps when things get difficult	Helps get the info together
Teaches	
Work	Encourages

Table 1B: From the University Students' point of view

BEFORE Mentoring Started	After Mentoring had Finished
Listens, positive, supports, encourages	Helps group stay focussed
Knows the outcome	Follows and guides -doesn't do the work
Guide, facilitator	Enlightens
Listens	Motivates
Assists	Oversees
Gives guidance	Helps
Guides	Assists

Never judges	Supports
Guides, prompts.	Practical advice

The overall direction was that of movement from the perception of the mentor role being a passive role to one of a much more active role. The university students didn't identify the mentor relationship to be as important as the school students did. However collegiate students identified from the start the need for an affective relationship with their mentor. It was obvious from an observer's point of view that the university students moved from a distant shepherding type of role to a much more 'hands on' gang leader type of role as the relationships progressed even in groups where there were some problems.

The data showed that the groups that didn't work as well failed to establish an affective learning environment, whether by mentor or protégé. For example some of the responses that found the mentoring boring were:

'The mentor told us how to do things'

'Our mentor distracts us from our work'

'He told us important information'

'Told us what to look up.'

'Explained things'

'Pointed us in the right direction.... I felt bored'

Some of the responses may reflect an attitude about what they perceive 'real' teaching to be. As a broad generalisation one may be able to assume that there was a difference between mentors who saw their role as imparting discipline knowledge (holders of all knowledge) as opposed to mentors who saw themselves as facilitators, or neutral teacher, or teacher as team member and an equal sharer of the learning experience.

The following excerpts from the collegiate students' diaries, where they explained what they had done in that session and what the student felt about it have been listed in Table 2A, while Table 2B records the progress of some of the relationships over the research period.

Table 2A: From collegiate student's point of view

What the mentor did	How the student responded
He gave us advice and guided us. He helped us figure out how we should present our assignment	I was happy with what we achieved and the amount we got done
He didn't help much	There was a problem because he told me I did an insufficient amount of work and that I walked around too much. I was actually going to find books and the librarian was helping me
Made suggestions	OK - not much achieved
Gave us ideas and helped in search process	Today's lesson was good. We got a lot done
They didn't - they talked to each other	It was boring
Helped with presentation and gave confidence	Encouraged
Giggled lots with me but stayed calm	It was great
Helped set up	Was positive and helped give me courage
He told us what to do	It was boring. I hate our topic

These paired comments are very insightful. They reflect a range of different relationships and some demonstrate with painful clarity the disjunction in the relationship. Even where the emotions were not as obvious it is clear that when there was a joint understanding of the goal and that it was seen as a joint goal then the progress was obvious.

Table 2B: Progress of the relationships from some matched diary entries over a period of weeks

Caesar	<p>Busy, unsettled, noisy fun, interesting</p> <p>Mentor keeps it fun</p>	<p>I learned. Mentor helped greatly. I felt fine</p>	<p>Achieved lots. The mentor helped. I felt good</p>	<p>Achieved lots- had to work independently` Mentor didn't come. Felt good</p>	<p>Got it finished. Felt OK</p>
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Mentor		<p>Planning and further research. Worked out a good plan for our research and I brought idea and gave direction and focus. Group was energetic and I felt good about it.</p>	<p>Researching and searching.</p> <p>We began to flesh out a plan from last week.</p> <p>Gave specific task for each group member. It was good and whole classroom felt good.</p>		<p>I achieved nothing. I didn't help. I felt good. The classroom mood was good</p>
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This relationship was developing until the week when the mentor didn't come. That was seen as letting the mentee down and led to a complete collapse in the relationship. In the last week the mentor spent the time watching others and doing little seemingly completely unaware that his mentee felt 'out of it' and only simply relieved that it was over-not the exuberance of some of the other groups. The emotions that emerge include resentment, joy, carelessness, disappointment, enthusiasm.

Angel	<p>Made progress on assignment. I would prefer to do History</p> <p>Uni students are friendly and helpful but I would prefer history</p>	<p>Research skills are better. Mentor helped by bringing books from uni library. It was all right but I would still prefer to be doing history</p>		<p>Half of our presentation finished. Mentor didnt help and was unpleasant I don't like it</p>	<p>We did all right considering. Everyone did excellent work. Our mentor is very controlling and didnt help at all today</p>
Mentor (Dragon Lady)	<p>Good teamwork, decision making, busy, happy, enthusiastic</p>	<p>We worked out some ideas of how to summarise. I was urging, probing for information. We were a</p>	<p>A slow beginning- they seem totally unmotivated. I offered suggestions of brainstorming. Slightly</p>	<p>Reselecting our topic. Guided thinking about questions. Suggestions for web search. I feel OK.</p>	<p>Focused student attention on certain tasks - identifying questions. Divided responsibility</p>

		little pensive. The topic was not very motivational	disappointed. They don't seem to care very much even when I give them an open choice of topic. We were all slightly distracted.	Students are unmotivated although a little more productive today. Concerned that no marks are attached to this assignment	
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The mentor continually works on with her plan for the project while the student sullenly follows. She is desperately looking for marks to motivate them. The mentor leaves it to them to present but organises them efficiently. The mentees find it difficult to operate within the constraints that the mentor applies. The emotions that appear include fear, resentment, possibly jealousy, concern, disappointment.

Case Study 2

The mentors in this case study are final year visual art teacher trainees, and their mentees are visual art students working to complete their higher school certificate outcomes in the area of art making, within the Visual Arts syllabus. The mentors enter a high stakes learning outcome environment and are asked to mentor the students towards concept and media resolution in their artworks, which will be submitted for external examination in the Higher School Certificate. The mentors are paired with a senior student who is either working in a similar media area such as painting or sculpture or in a like conceptual direction, where the mentor and mentee may share similar thematic interests, such as gender issues or environmental concerns. In some respects this relationship is a little like the apprentice/artist model, but within a modified classroom learning environment and the mentors work with the students once a week for 6-8 weeks. This pairing is done in consultation with the classroom teacher, who at all times remains in control of classroom outcomes per week. This case study will focus primarily on the mentors reflections of their mentees captured in their teaching diaries and reflective evaluations. This reporting style, while highly subjective gives an extremely rich source of data. (both descriptive and interpretive). Students were encouraged to write down anything and everything, including feelings and emotions to one another, meeting dates and schedules with concept ideas and working media notes. The mentors were also required to evaluate the success or otherwise of the mentoring experience. They were asked to report both on learning outcomes (mentor and mentee), organisational aspects as well as their relationship with mentee and classroom teacher. During the entire 8 week period the researcher was engaged in constant observations and informal interviews (with mentee, mentor and teacher) both in the classroom and via phone or email and these interpretive reflections will form a significant mixing agent in the data analysis. The case study will describe a collective learning relationship, compiled from 3 years of implementation across different classes. The program has gained acceptance by the classroom teacher and school initially because of the rich and diverse learning experiences coming to the classroom and secondly because of the direct correlation of improved learning outcomes for the visual art students in their external exams.

Analysis involved documenting and interpreting data in a systematic way which filtered responses to identify signifiers which would present the researcher with insights into the

emotional geography of these learning partnerships. The results will narrate a story emerging in what they do not specifically say at times, but imply about their learning and learning environments. The story will seek to examine the possibilities of meanings trapped between the silences and spaces of their writings.

To enter the established learning environment of the classroom teacher provides the mentor with the first of many relationship and communication challenges. They very quickly must learn the expectations of the classroom teacher, which range from an understanding of program outcomes to expectations in relation to an ability to 'get on' with their selected student and motivate them to achieve much higher outcomes than they are presently displaying. One of the perceived benefits of mentoring is that this intimate one on one relationship has the potential to improve learning outcomes for the students involved. The trainee teachers are aware of the research behind mentoring on entering the program and hence will, like the teacher, want to see 'improvements' or 'progress'. So what were the emotional environments that surrounded this relationship?

Are you going to 'let me down'?

Initial responses to how the mentors and mentees felt about the program hinged heavily on their expectations of outcomes and student (mentee) and classroom teacher performances. For the mentors the key primary factor before the mentee, was a perceived support by the classroom teacher, the most disappointed mentors felt that their success with the mentee was in direct correlation to the commitment of the classroom teacher. 'This has been an extremely difficult task, the lack of commitment of the teacher and student'. If a student lacked enthusiasm, mostly through being absent or making a non- effort, this translated to break down in 'mutual commitment' and feelings of disappointment.

'Although I believe strongly that there is no such thing as a bad student, only bad teachers, this experience has pushed that theory to the limit' (frustrated)

'I found it difficult to work with little enthusiasm'

'That feeling of responsibility'

'It's a shame we don't have them for longer', was not an uncommon feeling, even though they themselves had heavy assessment commitments in relation to their other subjects. The effect of entering the classroom climate presented as the first initial hurdle. Where the teacher showed enthusiasm and commitment to the program, mentors began their mentor experiences with enthusiasm. For the others they struggled. A 'good' relationship was one where there was a sense of activity, business and where the students were perceived as interested and motivated. It was not uncommon to hear mentors or mentees commenting about being locked within a class program which may be hard to access and often expressed in terms of deadlines and pressure of quality outcomes, as well as through language of 'they must'.

'The vibes' emotional needs

For the mentees and mentors the emotional needs were varied but presented in some of the following quotes:

'Not just a commitment issue'

'She was scared to begin with.....

'vulnerability'

'How much patience do I have with you?'

Of significant concern were the range of dilemmas associated with selection of learning styles and activities.

'Participating... the student developed a sense of achievement'

'Still this is what he wants to do'

'I just hope she tells me exactly what is going on, good or bad' instead of just OK'

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For the mentor it was always: 'Can you understand me, how can I reach you?'

That deep commitment

Much of what the mentor expressed was in terms of the emotional relationship:

'How do I feel at the end... it's a partnership'

'I really do hope I'm wrong and she picks herself up'..

'I really feel she will struggle to complete her work on time'

These were often complex and as dynamic as any relationship in life, where conflicting needs present:

'Should have concentrated more on the student and less on my assignment'

' Need to push hard and not back off'.

In this high stakes scenario there was always reflected a strong desire to see the student achieve.

Mentor: 'Had I been the regular teacher I would have encouraged him to do 3-D'

Mentee : 'hesitant'...

Finally there was that reflective aspect of the mentor where they question their role and value in this learning partnership:

'I'm afraid I am putting words into her mouth. That worries me'

'My aim.... My expectation'

'I really feel she will struggle to complete'

Discussion

The crucial differences in the relationships were the personal emotional factors. Some groups were obviously not connecting and with the Visual Arts groups the outside factors of the classroom teacher's overriding influence and the fear of the HSC dominated. Instead of categorising the emotional factors under Goleman's four groups which tended to bring in some organisational factors as well as the interpersonal factors we sifted through the data for the emotional concerns of the groups. We came up with what we saw as some of the key silent questions that the mentor/mentees were asking of each other.

- How do I feel about this mentoring project?
- How do I feel about mentors/
- How do I feel about the mentee?
- Do I get positive or negative 'vibes' from mentor/mentee/teacher educator/classroom teacher?
- How much freedom do I have in this relationship?
- Are you going to let me down?
- Friend or foe?
- Friend or just another teacher?
- What is a teacher?
- How much patience do I have with you?
- Can you understand me?
- Are you attune to my learning styles?
- Can you accommodate 'my way'?
- What are the four way interconnections?
- How committed are you?
- How responsible do I have to be?

Many judgements mentor and mentee made of each other were based on misjudging the answers to some of these questions while many relationships obviously resolved them. We felt that whether in Visual Arts or Social Science and whichever task was being tackled these elements were crucial. It is obvious that some work on building emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills are essential to the teaching process and must be built into any teaching program.

Conclusion

This research has sought to isolate contributing factors that may impact on the cognitive skills development of the mentee. These appear to be linked to the development of a mutually agreed upon set of operational dynamics in the mentor/ mentee relationship. This may be described as the emotional geography of the learning environment. Within these different curricula experiences and student centred learning environments the mentor/ mentee relationship and the educational outcomes appear to be strongly linked to the degree of emotional intelligence presented by both parties.

This study has been designed to allow for a degree of longitudinal, comparative and ongoing data collection during the mentoring period. By using two different case studies both with differing data collection methodologies the researchers have been able to achieve significant triangulation verification during analysis.

The two case studies offer different perspectives on the issue of emotional geography in the mentor/ mentee relationship. The first study offering a view of changes in the emotional environment over time while the second offers a map of the differing emotional geographies that came across in the diaries. The story is not overtly visible but locked into language of

concern which so often translated for both mentor and mentee into emotional dilemmas that required the mentor and mentees to draw on their interpersonal and intuitive selves to achieve the learning outcomes for both. This proved more difficult for some than for others and it could be fair to say that the less experienced teachers in case study 1 struggled with the relationship issues more than the students in case study 2. The aspects of the emotional environment pulled out in case study 2 can also be applied to case study 1.

What is particularly evident in the material analysed is the emergent importance of this emotional relationship and a reinforcement of the need for student teachers to possess emotional as well as social competence. As with case study 1, mentors with a degree and sound communication skills were not necessarily able to develop supportive learning environments.

These findings support other research discussed in this paper pointing out that an emphasis on the technical aspects of a mentoring relationship, will not explain the success or not of the mentoring experience. This research paper also draws attention to the fact that the emotional environment of mainstream teaching experiences is not well documented or understood and that these small scale mini teaching experiences may yet inform a more large scale success in teaching. In conclusion this research draws attention to the need for all teacher trainees to develop skills to be critically aware of their own emotional intelligences as well as those of their students and of the dynamic relationships that emerge when teaching. This may hold for all learning partnerships whether mentor/mentee or teacher and class.

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