This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

MENTORING STUDENT TEACHERS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN KUWAIT

presented by

Hend Ahmad Almaian

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in **Teacher Education**

Major professor

Date July 29, 2002

MENTORING STUDENT TEACHERS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN KUWAIT

By

Hend Ahmad Almaian

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education
College of Education

2002

ABSTRACT

MENTORING STUDENT TEACHERS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN KUWAIT

By

Hend Ahmad Almaian

This qualitative study investigates the ideas and practices of Arabic language mentors. It addresses the following primary research questions: what ideas about teaching, mentoring, and learning to teach Arabic language do Kuwaiti mentors bring to their work with student teachers? How do Kuwaiti mentors act upon these ideas? How do contextual factors shape mentors' ideas and practices? What learning opportunities do mentors provide for student teachers?

Data collection includes primary interviews conducted with Arabic language mentors to understand their ideas about teaching, mentoring, and learning to teach; observations of mentors' practices and their interactions with student teachers with accompanying interviews; and conversations with student teachers. Other data sources include documents and a short final survey for mentors.

A discussion of how the context in which mentors work and shape their ideas is offered. A case study design was used to look closely at the practices of three mentors of Arabic language in Kuwait.

The cross case analysis reveals that there are several patterns and variations in mentors' thinking and practices. The patterns are that: 1) mentors think about student teaching as a guided experience; 2) mentors are responsive to situations and adaptive to

characteristics of student teachers; 3) mentors adopt the stance of experts and knowers; and 4) mentors focus on helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching it.

Variations among mentors' practices, such as dealing with student teachers' lack of subject matter knowledge, choosing to step in or not while student teachers lead classroom teaching, and helping student teachers learn to plan, are also discussed.

Key issues emerge from the study: 1) the dual responsibility of mentors; 2) mentors' concentration on the performing aspects more than the conceptual ones in their practices; and 3) the status of mentors as experts and knowers.

Implications for improving mentoring practices in Kuwait include: creating a discourse community among Kuwaiti mentors, conceptualizing mentoring as joint inquiry, and providing preparation for mentors.

To my beloved father, my dear husband,

and to the memory of my precious mother

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I complete this dissertation work, I thank Allah for giving me the strength to complete it. I also want to thank many people who sustained me through graduate school and through the writing of this dissertation.

I would first like to give my gratitude to my dissertation director, Dr. Thomas Bird, for his generous assistance, valuable advice, and support throughout this writing. His words of encouragement have kept me in high spirits.

Many thanks, too, to my committee members, Dr. Cheryl Rosaen, Dr. Lynn Paine, and Dr. Brian Delany, whose constructive comments and suggestions played an important role in the completion of this work.

I am most grateful to my husband, Abdullateef, for his generous support, patience, and encouragement. I am also grateful to my father, my mother-in-law, and my father-in-law for their support and ample prayers for me.

Warm thanks are extended to my brothers, Jamal and Mohammad and to my sisters, Maha, Mona, and Bedour, as well as to their husbands and all my relatives for their continuous support and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

MENTORING STUDENT TEACHERS

The purpose of the study

The guidance of experienced teachers' is an essential component of the student teaching experience. Many agree that classroom teachers have a significant impact on the learning of novices (Meade, 1991; Cochran-Smith, 1991; McIntyre, Byrd & Foxx, 1996). Prospective teachers, as well, acknowledge that field-based experience is where the most learning about teaching occurs (Feiman-Nemser, 1983). During field experience, it is the classroom teacher (here referred to as "mentor") who exercises the greatest influence on the development of a prospective teacher (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Meade, 1991; McIntyre, Byrd & Foxx, 1996). Although it is often perceived by student teachers to be one of the most valuable times in their preparation, the research shows that questions remain about the nature of the field experience and possible inadequacies inherent in it (Griffin, 1986; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Therefore, it is important for those who are learning to be teachers, as well as for those who educate them, to understand what is happening during field experiences involving student teachers and their mentors.

Since many educational researchers have called for the need to study the practical aspects of teaching and what influences teaching methods (Carter, 1990; Clark & Peterson, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), there is also a need to observe what mentors actually do and what guides them in their actions to help student teachers learn to teach. This involves getting closer to mentors' actual practices to see what they do, as well as understand the choices they make and the ways they enact their roles.

In this study, I have chosen to concentrate on the practices of mentors in the supervision of student teachers. This is because, as stated earlier, it is the mentor who potentially has the greatest influence on the learning of a prospective teacher due to the close interaction between them during the student teaching experience. Research findings indicate that mentors appear to have more influence on prospective teachers than university personnel (Bunting, 1988, Staton & Hunt, 1992).

Since mentors play a powerful role in shaping how and what prospective teachers learn about teaching, it is important to investigate the form and content of mentors' practices with student teachers and how they provide opportunities for helping them learn to teach.

While mentoring has been studied in a number of countries such as the United States, Europe, Australia, and China, and the findings indicate that context matters (Wang, 2001), few studies have been done in the Arab world. The existing Arabic literature on student teaching and field experience has very little to offer about the actual interactions and practices of mentors and student teachers. Research studies have tended to focus on issues related to program evaluation, role definitions of mentors, responsibilities and relationships, and difficulties and problematic issues related to student teaching (Alhashel & Muhammad, 1990; Shareef, 1990; Abukalila & Awad, 1990; Alsuwaidi, 1994; Alkhateeb, 1989; Sulaiman, 1982). In addition, all these studies have been quantitative studies. There are no qualitative studies that look closely at what actually happens between mentors and student teachers in Kuwait and other Arabic countries.

Kuwaiti context for mentoring

In Kuwait, there are some contextual factors that should be considered when talking about and discussing mentoring. Ethnically and religiously, the citizens of Kuwait are mostly Arab Muslims. For Muslims, the holy Koran is the final word of Allah and the first source of the teaching of Islam. The traditions of the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) form the second source for the teaching of Islam.

Politically, Kuwait is a sheikdom with a legislature. The Sheik and Prime Minister are members of the royal family and the legislature is elected by citizens of Kuwait. The latter is one of the most remarkable aspects of Kuwaiti politics: a National Assembly, which is one of the few elected legislative bodies in the region. The National Assembly consists of fifty members who are elected for a four-year term. In Kuwait, the government provides extensive social services, such as free education, even at the college level, as well as free health services for the national population.

In terms of curriculum and policy, Kuwait has national curriculum standards and content, as well as centralized textbooks prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Teachers have no latitude for choosing content topics or resources for their lessons.

In Kuwaiti schools, mentor teachers are the head teachers of the departments. They are considered to be experienced teachers with good reputations in teaching and are selected by the Ministry of Education to be the leader teachers and the mentors for student teachers. They are recognized to be the more experienced and knowledgeable teachers and are, therefore, given the responsibility for guiding novice teachers.

In terms of school organizational context, teachers in Kuwait specialize in teaching one subject, both in elementary and secondary schools. They teach between

three to four periods a day and spend the remainder of their time in a shared department office with other teachers who specialize in the same subject.

Mentors in Kuwait are not released from teaching to be full time mentors, but they teach only one or two periods a day. They also mentor more than one student teacher. The student teachers are in the mentors' classes during the day, but are also required to work in other teachers' classrooms.

Student teaching at Kuwait University

Kuwait University was founded in 1966 with just over 400 students. Today, it has grown to nearly 18,000 students, with both men and women attending. It includes numerous colleges and departments.

The teacher education program at Kuwait University includes a student teaching semester during the senior year of a student, when they go to elementary schools or high schools for practice teaching. They are assigned to work with and under the guidance of mentors in the public schools. The general objectives for the student teaching experience, as indicated in the Guidebook of Student Teaching in the College of Education at Kuwait University (1999/2000), are to help student teachers:

1. understand and be aware of their professional knowledge and skills and to work on developing them;
2. experience the professional life and everything related to school;
3. link theory to practice by practicing what they have learned in their university courses;
4. interact with students and learn patterns of students' behaviors and interactions in different situations; and

5. have the opportunity to evaluate their subject matter knowledge and, if necessary, develop their knowledge through teaching in order to have a better understanding of their subject.

Three people are responsible for the supervision of student teachers: a university supervisor, a mentor, and a school principal. Evaluations of the student teachers are shared among the members of the triad and different weights are given: The mentor can award up to 50 points, the university supervisor up to 30 points, and the school principal up to 20 points. Kuwait University obviously relies heavily on mentors and their judgments.

The purpose of this study is to examine the practices of mentors who work in Arabic language classrooms with student teachers from Kuwait University. I intend to examine how mentors work with and guide student teachers learning, what role they enact, and how and why they enact this role. I plan to examine both mentors' ideas about how to do their work in guiding student teacher learning and their actual practices.

Guiding teacher learning

Many elements combine to form the foundation for the guided practice of teachers. Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen (1997) provide a helpful framework for thinking about these elements and their influence on guided practice by mentor teachers. These elements include: the participants and their relationships, the goals and purposes of guided practice, the context, the conceptual underpinnings, and the practice. The framework explains that guided practice takes place in the context of professional relationships that can be described as core activities shaped and influenced by many factors including participants' personal dispositions and beliefs, program goals, and school culture.

Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen focused on the practice guide making it central to their study in order to emphasize their intention and approach to understanding guided practice work. They characterized the practice of guided learning to teach in terms of forms (e.g., observation, conversation, co-planning, co-teaching) and in terms of content (e.g., probing novice thinking, modeling teaching, reinforcing understanding of theory). They argued that the literature on guided practice tends to emphasize procedures and structures and gives less attention to issues of content. They suggested that there is a "need to refine our categories, moving beyond the familiar vocabulary of describing pattern analysis, conferencing, feedback, and supervision cycles" (p. 14). In the next section, I will discuss each element of guided practice and recent research efforts.

Relationships

The learner/mentor relationship comprises personal qualities and dispositions that the participants bring to a guided practice, as well as the formal obligations or expectations associated with the guide's role or position (Feiman-Nemser & Rosean, 1997). Research on mentoring indicates that, in addition to personal qualities, the characteristics of the relationship (e.g., hierarchical, collegial, reciprocal) are also important and influence the practice of the guide. For example, Feiman-Nemser, Parker & Zeicher (1993) found that the conferences between the mentors and novices they studied revealed little about novices' thinking; also, that the mentors seemed relatively uninterested in probing novices' ideas or engaging in critical discussions with them. This situation implies a *laissez-faire* conception of a mentoring relationship that influences the practice of mentors. Hawkey (1998) also found that when the relationship between mentors and

student teachers was characterized as "advisory" the mentor tended to be more directive and informative, and talked more than the student teachers did. However, when the relationship was collaborative, although the mentor tended to be more informative, the mentor was able to draw out the student teacher through mutual conversations.

Elliot & Calderhead (1993) conducted interviews with nine mentors working with student teachers in primary grades. The interview questions focused on four areas: perceptions of the mentoring role, specific approaches the mentor was adopting, the rationale for these approaches, and the mentor's perceptions of how novices learn to teach. Across and within each of the mentors' elaborations of their role, Elliot & Calderhead (1993) found that there is a diversity of mentors' perceptions of their roles and relationships. For example, some mentors discussed it in terms of being a "guide" or a "leader," others in terms of "being a friend" or "good listener."

Given the different views that mentors had of their roles, it is not surprising that the researchers found that mentors reported a wide range of mentoring strategies, such as active listening, challenging novices' ideas, and encouraging novices to discuss their views about teaching. The researchers found that mentors act according to their relationships with novices.

McNally and Martin (1998) conducted in-depth interviews with eight mentors from six different discipline areas to explore the practice of mentors in applying the model of effective mentoring that the program adopted. " In particular, the research set out to explore their notions of setting targets or goals for novice teachers, either implicitly or explicitly, and the factors that influenced this process... Details of their background experience in teaching and mentoring were also collected" (p. 41). Drawing on Daloz's

(1986) framework of support and challenge in mentoring, they identified three types of mentors: The first type of mentor stressed the nurturing and supportive role of mentoring and took a *laissez-faire*, low-challenge approach that tended to maintain the status quo. The second type was a collaborative mentor who combined high support with high challenge to empower student teachers to engage in learning to teach as a critically reflective process. The third type included imperial mentors who have a sense of themselves as authorities in the mentoring role but tend to have a lack of real engagement with the student teachers' needs, which may result in student teachers feeling unsupported. The researchers suggested that these differences in mentoring strategies and styles reflect mentors' different perceptions of the mentor/novice relationship.

Goals and purposes

Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen's framework also holds that any guided practice has a goal. The general goal is to improve teaching. However, improving teaching can take different forms and mean different things. Such variations include helping teachers to implement new teaching strategies, to study their practice in systematic ways, and to restructure teaching (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1997). But not all the purposes and goals of guided teacher practice are predetermined. Sometimes, "guides shape their work around more immediate goals arising from the practical realities of the situation and from the teacher's concern" (p. 13).

For example, in a study of four mentor teachers and four novice teachers to determine how they discussed issues about the teaching and learning of content, Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1990) found that when novices' questions and comments revealed a

shaky understanding of multiplication the mentor teacher would show the novice a concrete way to represent the content. The mentor indirectly contributed to the novice's understanding of subject matter while directly enlarging his instructional repertoire. Such practice was shaped by an immediate goal that arose from the situation.

Context

Many research studies have highlighted the role of context -- the classroom, school program, community, and larger culture-- in guided practice. For example, Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993) compared the perspectives and practices of mentor teachers in two U.S. beginning teacher assistance programs. They found differences in the way mentor teachers conceived and performed their work, which they linked to differences in the contexts. In one setting, mentors functioned as "local guides," explaining school policies and practices, sharing methods and materials, and helping novices survive their first year of teaching. In the other setting, mentors functioned as "educational companions," helping novices cope with immediate problems, keep their eye on broader professional goals, and help them learn to uncover students' thinking and develop sound reasons for their actions. The researchers described mentor's working conditions, role expectations, and program structure and explained how these aspects of context shape mentors' practices and novices' learning opportunities.

Nevins's (1993) study of five experienced elementary classroom teachers in a Professional Development School and their work with novices highlighted the role of context in mentoring practices and the importance of examining the conditions that support the enactment of the mentors' role in helping novices. Her study showed that an

environment could be created within public schools that supports both experienced and prospective teachers' learning. She pointed out some conditions that are critical for creating an environment where university and classroom educators work together to prepare novices. Some of these conditions include sharing beliefs, language, and goals about teacher education; sharing views about learning; and seeing knowledge as actively constructed and flexibly changing.

Nevins's study concentrated on mentoring in U.S. schools. Wang (2001) drew on data from twenty-three U.S., UK, and Chinese mentors from both induction and pre-service programs in different levels of schools, to explore the relationship between mentoring contexts and mentoring practices. Based on interviews with mentors, logs of mentor-novice interactions, and documents of each program and school system, the researcher found that mentors and novices in different settings paid differing attention to varied issues in their interactions. He related these differences to contextual factors in each setting, such as the particular curriculum and assessment, student population, and structure of teaching and mentoring.

For example, the decentralized curriculum structure pushed U.S. teachers to take more responsibility for developing specific curriculum units, lessons, and teaching materials in order to teach, while the lack of shared standards placed them in a different position to discuss the effectiveness of teaching practices. However, the national curriculum made it possible for the UK teachers to pay less attention to the curriculum goals and content than their U.S. counterparts and pay more attention to working together to customize teaching units and materials by integrating the national curriculum requirements and teachers' own ideas. In Chinese settings, the national curriculum

limited teachers' autonomy in making curriculum decisions but it contributed to the shared standards and ethics of the teaching profession. These contexts confined the space for the Chinese mentors and novices to discuss curriculum issues and novices' needs. However, it was important for the mentors to help novices learn to teach the standardized curriculum and develop a shared understanding about norms and issues of teaching.

I have the impression that some context aspects of Kuwaiti schools are different from what Wang discussed about U.S. settings, but they may have some similarities to what he found in UK and Chinese contexts. As I have said earlier, Kuwaiti teachers in elementary and secondary schools are organized to teach one subject area and do not always spend their time in the classrooms. They have a shared department office and many teaching activities happen there. This context may allow mentors and student teachers in Kuwait to have more time for interaction and discussions in their offices without being interrupted by on-going teaching activities in the classrooms.

In addition, the national curriculum in Kuwaiti schools may give mentors a common content around which they can structure their work with student teachers. In this context, perhaps discussions about curriculum and what to teach are limited between mentors and student teachers. More attention could be paid to pedagogical issues, to helping student teachers learn to teach the national curriculum, and to incorporate the national curriculum requirements into teachers' strategies and styles of teaching.

Conceptual underpinnings

Clark & Peterson (1986) emphasized the important role that prior knowledge and beliefs play in shaping teachers' objectives, perceptions, and practices. Underlying beliefs about

teaching and learning to teach influence what guides see and do (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1997; Elliott & Calderhead, 1993; McNally and Martin, 1998).

Researchers, who have talked about teachers' beliefs as implicit theories (Clark & Peterson, 1986), or metaphors (Carter, 1990), or even images, (Connelly & Clandinin, 1985; Elbaz, 1983) have pointed out how teachers' beliefs filter the information they receive, how they interpret and organize it, and how they define their range of options for action.

For the purpose of my study, I suggest that mentors come to their work with student teachers with two sets of ideas and beliefs: those about classroom teaching and those about learning to teach and their role in helping student teachers.

Ideas and beliefs about classroom teaching

Since mentors are, primarily, classroom teachers, what they are achieving in the mentor role is shaped by their conceptions of teaching, their knowledge and beliefs about learning, about learners and what is important for them to learn, and their knowledge and beliefs about the nature of the subject they are teaching. Also, teachers' practices may be shaped by many contextual influences such as: working conditions, expectations that a department or school has of teachers, social norms at school, etc. In general, all these elements serve as a source of mentors' knowledge and beliefs about learning to teach and their work with student teachers. Martin (1997), in an eighteen-month ethnographic study which looked at two student teachers and two mentors in primary school classrooms, revealed that mentors interpreted their roles in very different ways, appearing to be reflections of their own approach to teaching. As they taught, so they mentored.

Ideas and beliefs about learning to teach and their role in helping student teachers

Mentors' practices with student teachers can be connected to the way they perceive the task of learning to teach and the way they conceptualize their role. It also can be connected to their expectations of student teachers-- what they believe student teachers need to learn, and how they think the learning takes place.

Barnes (1992) discussed the nature and formation of the interpretive frames that guide teachers' choices of teaching strategies and performance of their professional tasks. He defined the concept of "frame" as "the underlying assumptions that influence teachers' actions in the classroom" (p. 10) and emphasized that the concept "can be used to consider the ways in which teachers perceive and execute their professional tasks" (p. 16). Barnes argued that teachers' frames and underlying assumptions for teaching are embedded in their beliefs about the nature of what they are teaching, students and how they learn, how learning takes place, and the context of teaching and learning.

> The frames that experienced teachers take to a lesson enable them not only to recognize what is happening but also to consider the action that they would take if they were playing the teacher's role. Though the frames appear to be made up of information about teaching, they incorporate an equally complex system of values and priorities, along with strategies which would enable them to be put into effect (p. 16).

Just like classroom teachers, mentors are guided by their ideas and beliefs about teaching and learning that structure their activities and guide them in their work on how best to support novices' learning to teach.

Many studies have focused on the ideas, perceptions, and beliefs that mentor teachers bring to their work. Saunders, Pettinger & Tomlinson (1995) (cited in Hawkey, 1997) conducted interviews with 32 prospective teacher mentors to examine their beliefs and ideas about their mentoring work. Their analysis of the interviews showed four types

of orientations among mentor teachers. The first type was the "hands-off" facilitator-type mentor who emphasized discussion with novices rather than shared or team teaching. The second type was the progressively collaborative mentor who focused on working alongside novices, offering guidance and advice. The third type was the professional friend mentor who regarded the student teacher as part of the school, focusing on the importance of the novices' actual performance in the classroom. The fourth type was the classical mentor who emphasized counseling techniques, listened to problems, and gave feedback.

Saunders, Pettinger &Tomlinson's (1995) research represented only the beliefs and theories of action that prospective mentors held and the types of mentors they became. There was no examination of whether and how these beliefs and theories of action would influence their practice of mentoring.

Elliot and Calderhead (1993) found that mentors differed in their conceptualization of their roles and reported various strategies that were used with novices. Some mentors' practices included challenging novices' ideas and encouraging discussions, while others believed in being active listeners to novices and offering feedback to them. The researchers suggest that the conceptualizations that mentors bring to mentoring reflect their own thinking and beliefs about teaching and learning to teach and these conceptualizations influence what approaches the mentor uses for mentoring and the rationale for using these approaches.

Although this study relates mentors' beliefs, perceptions, and conceptualizations of their role to mentoring approaches they use, it does not analyze the form and content of mentors' practices. The study reports what perceptions mentors bring to mentoring

and strategies utilized, but does not relate the mentoring practices to those perceptions and assumptions, nor does it include observation of mentoring practices.

McNally and Martin (1998) found that some mentors focused on nurture—the supporting of novices' needs, while others collaborated with novices and engaged them in learning to teach as a critically reflective process. The researchers suggested that these differences in mentoring styles reflect the mentors' beliefs about teaching and learning and their exposure through experience and training to the pedagogy of mentoring.

All these studies have helped me to understand that mentors bring their own ideas and beliefs to their work with student teachers. And yet, with a few exceptions to be discussed, these studies did not address how mentors act upon these ideas and beliefs, and how these ideas and beliefs influence their practices with student teachers.

The relationship between mentors' ideas and practices is neither linear nor causal. The relationship is reciprocal and dynamic. Knowledge, beliefs, and thinking are shaped by, and in turn, shape practices (Dembele, 1995). Therefore, to understand mentors' ideas and beliefs we should not limit ourselves to exploring them only. We need to look at practices to appreciate and be able to critique these ideas and beliefs. Thus, it is important to look at and analyze how mentors act upon their ideas and beliefs.

Practices

Many research studies emphasize the role of mentors in guiding student teachers and novices. Such guided practice involves a specific kind of expertise that needs to be viewed as distinct professional knowledge and skills developed in their own right (Stoddart, 1990). Researchers claim that in order to understand guided practice the

process and practice of guidance has to be carefully studied and analyzed (Stoddart, 1990; Little, 1990).

The literature on clinical supervision (e.g., Goldhammer, 1969; Cogan, 1973; Sullivan, 1980; Garland & Shippy, 1995, Beach & Reinhartz, 2000) provides an array of strategies and models, but does not include the range that comprises the way that mentors enact their guided practice work. Clinical supervision structures guided practice as a series of steps or patterns of actions to follow; it does not consider how mentors can use their own practice as a site for student teacher learning (Schwille, 1997; Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

However, research on mentoring provides vivid pictures of how cooperating or mentor teachers approach their mentoring task. Based on interactions with approximately 150 mentor-beginner dyads, Wildman, Magliaro, Niles & Niles (1992) described activities that mentors used in helping beginning teachers. However, the researchers limited their attempt to only self-reports by mentors. No observations of mentoring activities were undertaken nor was there an analysis of what actually happened between mentors and novices. The presented summary table of reported mentoring activities is of limited help; it would have been more helpful to have had cases and analyses that provided images of practice.

Studies done by Nevins (1993), Dembele (1995), and Feiman-Nemser (2001), demonstrate the value of looking closely at what happens between mentors and novice teachers. Nevins conducted a study designed to describe how five experienced elementary classroom teachers in a Professional Development School made sense of their work with novices, and how they viewed student teaching as an occasion for teacher

learning. Using interviews and observations, she described and documented the teachers' views about learning to teach, the sources of knowledge upon which they drew, and their conception of reflection and how it influenced their work with novice teachers.

Nevins concluded that there were patterns among the five mentors studied at the professional Development school: "[A] teacher education discourse community was created as a result of work with Professional Development School and Academic learning, ... the ways in which the mentors interacted with the context affected the source of knowledge used to mentor, and ... the content of mentors' reflections focused on the subject matter, and the mentor's influence on the student teachers' learning" (p. 255). She also came to the conclusion that as teacher educators start to involve classroom teachers in more prominent roles in teacher education, it is important to examine the conditions which support the enactment of the new role in teacher education.

Work done by Dembele (1995) demonstrated the importance of looking closely at the practice of mentoring and its connections to novices' learning. In particular, the study contributed significantly to understanding the content and forms of mentoring practices and their influence on novices' learning. Dembele conducted a study, which looked closely at and described the mentoring practices of two experienced teachers in a Professional Development School. Using interviews, periodic weekly interaction logs, and observations, Dembele documented how mentors' frames of action, views about learning to teach, and knowledge upon which they drew influenced how they worked with novice teachers.

Dembele came to the conclusion that being a good classroom teacher is necessary but not sufficient for being a good mentor. "Classroom teaching and mentoring are both

professional practices. They have different sets of responsibilities and demands. The cases of Ken and Nancy show us that being good at teaching does not automatically qualify one for mentoring" (p. 169-170). Dembele also concluded that novices do not necessarily learn key aspects of teaching from first-hand experience alone. They also need guidance to notice and understand what needs to be learned.

Drawing on Dewey's (1938) concept of educative experience, Feiman-Nemser (2001) presented the idea of educative mentoring and described an exemplary support teacher's philosophy and approach in working with new teachers. She undertook to "uncover Frazer's reasons for becoming a support teacher, his views of his role, how he learned it, and his thoughts about the impact of the work on his own teaching" (p. 19). She showed a qualitative image of the meaning of mentoring for the mentor and provided insight on the conditions that support Frazer's practice. More importantly, she demonstrated how "educative mentoring promotes beginning teacher development by cultivating a disposition of inquiry, focusing attention on student thinking and understanding, and fostering disciplined talk about problems of practice" (p. 28).

Nevins, Dembele, and Feiman-Nemser's studies provide detailed descriptions of mentors' interactions with novices and trace how their ideas, beliefs, and conceptions influence mentors' actions. They also provide analyses of the opportunities to learn that such actions hold out for novice teachers. The present study shares these aspects of the work of Nevins, Dembele and Feiman-Nemser. It differs from them in that it will be conducted in a divergent national and cultural context as well as educational system, namely that of Kuwait. The study attends to most of the elements laid out in Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen's (1997) framework. More studies of this kind are needed if we are

going to truly understand this important professional practice and its influence on novice teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Research questions

The following questions were used in my examination of mentors' ideas and practices:

1. What ideas and beliefs about teaching and learning to teach Arabic language do Kuwaiti mentors bring to their work with student teachers?

    a. How have mentors come to think as they do?

    b. How are these ideas and beliefs influenced by the contextual factors named above?

2. How do Kuwaiti mentors act upon these ideas and beliefs? And what are the contextual factors which shape Kuwaiti mentors and student teachers?

3. What learning opportunities do mentors provide for student teachers?

Chapter Two is a description of the methods of collecting and analyzing the data, while Chapter Three summarizes Kuwaiti mentors' ideas about teaching, learning to teach, and mentoring. Chapters Four, Five, and Six present cases of three mentors at work, and Chapter Seven is a look across the cases and a discussion of patterns and variations among the cases. Chapter Eight presents conclusions and implications and then I complete my dissertation with a Coda, which describes my personal journey to the study of mentoring.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

Research design

This study investigates the ideas and practices of Arabic language teachers in Kuwait as they mentor student teachers and provide opportunities for learning to teach. I chose to study the area of Arabic language teaching because it is my field and therefore gives me the necessary background knowledge to study the teachers' role in mentoring. The investigation called for qualitative design, which allows for systematic inquiry within a natural setting (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In order to begin my study and set the premise, I conducted initial interviews with eleven mentors who were mentoring student teachers in Arabic language one semester at Kuwait University. It was important for me to explore and describe the range of their ideas about teaching, mentoring, and learning to teach. After the initial interviews with the eleven, I then felt a need to get closer to the ideas and practices of mentors, and decided to focus on three of the mentor teachers. To understand the choices they made, the practices they performed, and opportunities they created for student teachers' learning, I completed three case studies to review in depth as I explored the commonality and variations among the cases. By analyzing the case studies, I hoped to illuminate and bring out the complexity of mentoring practices.

The participants

The participants for this study were eleven mentors of Arabic language who worked with student teachers of Kuwait University to help them learn to teach. These teachers made up the entire population of Arabic language mentors during the semester of this study, which was spring, 2001. All eleven mentors were willing to be a part of the study, and understood that their participation was completely voluntary. Identities were protected by use of pseudonyms for the mentors, student teachers, and school sites.

All eleven mentors and student teachers were females. Since Kuwaiti schools are separated by sex, it is typical to see female mentors working with female student teachers. In the semester that this study was conducted, there was no male student teacher registered for the practicum. When I asked about the previous semester, I learned that there had only been two male student teachers. It is easy to see that teaching tends to be a female profession in Kuwait!

The experience of the eleven mentors ranged from ten to twenty-three years of classroom teaching. All mentors were head teachers in the Department of Arabic Language at their schools, except for one who took the responsibility of mentoring student teachers after one of the head teachers had to take an urgent leave just before the student teaching course began. In Kuwait, assigning mentoring responsibilities to head teachers means that there is only one mentor teacher of Arabic language in each school.

Each of the eleven teachers mentored two or three student teachers, except for one who had only a single student teacher. Of the twenty-eight student teachers in Arabic language that semester, only seven participated in the study. Although I interviewed all

eleven mentors initially, I selected only three for a closer examination of their ideas and practices as they mentored these seven student teachers.

All mentors in the study were teachers in intermediate schools in which the pupils' ages range between 11 and 14 years old. The pupil population in these schools is between 450-590 and each classroom contains about 27-32 pupils.

Data collection

Data collection tools for this study varied. As I stated previously, I conducted primary interviews with the eleven mentors, and then selected three of them for a closer study of their ideas and practices. In order to get this kind of information, I conducted in-depth interviews with the three mentors, observed their interactions with the student teachers, conducted conversations with the student teachers, and collected documents from the three selected mentors and their student teachers. Finally, I conducted a short final survey of the other eight mentors.

The primary interviews with the eleven mentors

In conducting initial interviews with the eleven mentors, I used an interview guide (see Appendix A) which gave me a basic structure for framing and sequencing my questions. The purpose of these primary interviews was to: 1) gather information about mentors' ideas of teaching, mentoring and learning to teach; 2) understand how Kuwaiti mentors conceptualize their role; 3) understand the influences of the context on their ideas; 4) help in choosing the subjects for the case studies and; 5) gain ideas, questions and issues to be pursued in the three case studies.

Some of the interview questions I used included asking about mentors' ideas on what needs to be learned, why it is important, how it can best be learned, what the mentor can or is doing to assist student teachers in that learning, and how they relate to student teachers and respond to their needs. Some of the questions were also about the school as a context for mentoring and learning to teach. In addition, these interviews investigated mentors' interactions with student teachers, explored how they supported student teachers' learning, highlighted key features of role enactment, and investigated the contextual factors that shaped these interactions. The interviews lasted from one and a half hours to two hours each.

Types of data collected from the three selected mentors and their student teachers

Autobiographical interviews

For each of the three mentors that I studied closely, I conducted an autobiographical interview to gain a better understanding of their lives and philosophies of teaching. The underlying assumption was that teachers' backgrounds and personal experiences have a strong influence on their classroom behaviors and practices, as well as on their mentoring practices. Therefore, mentors were asked to talk about their school and general learning experiences, how they became teachers, and their ideas about learning to teach and teaching.

Observations

Based on the interviews with the eleven mentors, I followed up with three of them to observe their practices with student teachers, how they enacted their ideas with them,

and how contextual factors shaped these enactments. I observed both formal and informal interactions. These were varied and included the following: modeling how to teach, helping student teachers learn how to lead classroom discussions in analyzing a literary text, helping them plan for lessons in different genres, giving specific feedback on student teachers' classroom actions and behavior during teaching, involving student teachers in writing and grading tests, and providing opportunities for student teachers to collaborate with Arabic language teachers and other teachers in the school. It also included conferences that mentors and student teachers held about teaching, where they explored how these created opportunities for student teachers' learning.

In order to capture these interactions, my observations were focused on three sub-tasks. First, I observed the mentors' teaching (at least one lesson) in order to understand them as models and guides of student teachers. Secondly, I observed student teachers' teaching. This observation helped me to have a sense of their teaching performance, and allowed me to understand the content and the context of their formal interaction in the conference that followed their teaching. It also helped me observe what the mentor does while the student teacher teaches and whether she gets involved in the lesson or not. Thirdly, I observed the formal interactions during the conferences of mentors and student teachers, which explored how these interactions contributed to student teachers' learning.

The purpose of the observations was to examine how mentors' ideas get reflected in what they do with student teachers and how the contextual factors may shape their practices. Each observation was written up in detail with vivid descriptions in order to create an accurate picture of the teaching and mentor/student teachers' interactions.

The observations consisted of two week-long observations of each mentor and her student teachers in the classes taught by the student teachers. During these observations, I watched what the mentor did while the student teacher taught. I noticed whether or not she got involved in the lesson. I also watched for what the student teacher did.

Each observation was written up and augmented by comments and questions to be asked to mentors at the post-observation interview. These interviews were designed to probe mentors' reasoning for their actions and explore the content and dynamics of their interactions with student teachers as well as to elicit information for filling in details in my field notes.

Post-observation interviews

After each observation, I had many questions to ask the three mentors whom I studied. Therefore, I conducted a follow up interview with them based on my observations. This kind of interview was designed to understand mentors' practices with student teachers and their reasoning about these practices. The interview questions were drawn from mentors' actual practices—what they tried to teach student teachers, how they helped them learn what they needed to learn, activities they employed, the content of their interactions, their reasoning about their actions, and what they thought about their guidance and the student teachers' learning. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

Conversations with student teachers

Based on the observed interactions, I also had conversations with student teachers about their interactions with their mentors. After each event or interaction between mentors and student teachers I observed, I talked informally with the student teachers in order to learn what they thought about these interactions and how they interpreted these experiences. These conversations helped to capture the opportunities provided for student teachers' learning and what they think they learned. Some of the conversations were audio-taped and transcribed. Others were recorded in a notebook, usually on a daily basis.

Documents

The three main documents that I used were the Student Teaching Guidebook, student teachers' lesson plans, and the mentors' notebooks of observing student teachers.

Student Teaching Guidebook

I studied the student teaching guidebook to learn more about the program and its goals. This guidebook included information about the objectives of the student teaching experience, what was expected from the mentors, and who assessed the student teachers and on what basis. It included a form for student teacher assessment.

Student teachers' lesson plans

I looked at the student teachers' planning notebooks and reviewed their lesson plans, especially for the lessons that I observed them teaching. Looking at student teachers' lesson plans served the purpose of: 1) understanding what the student teachers were doing in planning for their lessons; 2) learning whether their lesson plans fit with

their teaching performances; 3) seeing what kind of comments and feedback the mentors wrote on the margins about student teachers' lesson plans and; 4) noticing whether the student teachers benefited from mentors' comments on their planning and considered these comments and feedback in their next lesson plans. This helped me to draw inferences about whether mentors' feedback created opportunities for student teachers' learning.

Mentors' notebooks of observing student teachers

I examined the written notes and comments that the mentors wrote while they were observing student teachers' teaching. The purpose of examining mentors' notes was to understand: 1) what the mentors were observing and noticing while the student teachers were teaching; 2) mentors' thoughts of student teachers during that time and; 3) the kind of feedback that mentors wrote for student teachers in relation to what they discussed in the conferences after the observation.

Short final survey of the other eight mentors

On the basis of what I learned through observation and interviews, I constructed a short survey for the eight mentors that I did not observe (Appendix B). The purpose of the survey at this point was to get an idea of the prevalence of the ideas and practices that I observed. I used the survey to check out some of my early hypotheses to give me a range of responses to check across the mentors. This survey called for short written answers and was conducted a week after the conclusion of the student teaching course.

Data analysis and organization

The collection and analyzing of data was an iterative process. I did a preliminary analysis for the primary interviews, making notes of the issues and themes that emerged. Based on a preliminary analysis, I formed some hypotheses to be tested while reviewing the cases. The fact that that many issues emerged early from the observations led me to watch for them in other cases and see whether they were shared by those cases or why not.

As the data piled up, I used the Nvivo (NUD*IST vivo) program for organizing and analyzing the qualitative data. I entered all data as documents in the program. The program helped me to organize the data as sets: the primary interviews and the three individual cases: the Sarah case, Amal case, and Dana case, as they became known.

I started to code the primary interviews according to themes and ideas that emerged from the data. This included mentors' ideas about teaching, about mentoring, and about their role conceptualizations, as well as the influences on their ideas. The Nvivo helped to link the selected passages of the mentor's interview to the category created for coding. I then examined these themes and ideas to discern patterns and variations across mentors' ideas. I then wrote memos which included my emerging hypotheses. The Nvivo enabled me to link memos to references in data locations.

Based on the research questions and emerging themes I also generated codes and labels for the data of each case. I then examined emerging issues and themes, and wrote memos and remarks linking the issues and themes to their data locations within a case and across cases. Data related to each code/label was also subjected to a content analysis. This analysis was guided by the need to learn more about the interactions between mentors and student teachers, and the contributions made to student teachers' learning.

This included such items as what happened, what caused the event/interaction, what role the mentor played in it, and how the event/interaction created or restricted opportunities for student teachers' learning.

Case outline

My purpose in writing up the cases was to answer the questions that formed and constructed the study, and to provide thick descriptions and vivid portraits of the mentor teachers—their ideas and practices. Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen (1997), Feiman-Nemser (2001), and Dembele (1995) provided guidelines for constructing these cases. Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen presented the elements of a guided practice framework (see Chapter 1) for a more detailed description. According to this framework, goals, conceptual underpinnings, relationships and context are intersecting elements in the formation of guided practice. This framework was helpful in describing the participating mentors' ideas, goals, context and practices. Feiman-Nemser's (2001) discussions of strategies that shaped actions of an exemplary support teacher, descriptions of his/her work, and of how s/he learned to do this kind of work gave me a solid perception of mentors at work. Damebele's (1995) extensive description of two mentors at work provided me with descriptions of mentors' practices.

For each case, I created three portraits of the mentor: first, an impression of the mentor as a classroom teacher—her critical experiences and events before entering teaching, how she constructed her practices as a classroom teacher, and her ideas about teaching. Secondly, I constructed an image of the mentor summarizing her ideas of learning to teach and mentoring. This section contained descriptions of what the mentor

thought student teachers needed to learn, how she thought the learning occurred, how she thought she could help student teachers learn what they needed to learn, and how the mentor conceptualized her role. Lastly, I wrote up a vignette of how teachers acted as mentors and what opportunities they provided for student teachers' learning.

I gave each case a title that reflected a characteristic that impressed me the most about each mentor. I characterized Amal as "true to her school" because she appeared to be loyal to her school. She turned down the opportunity to be a head teacher because being a head teacher meant having to be appointed to a different school. She hated to leave her school and colleagues in the same school that she had been working in for fourteen years. I called Sarah "subject matter passionate" because she expressed a passion for the subject matter she teaches. She believes that teachers should be strong in their subjects and have a deep understanding of what they teach. I called Dana "the trainer of student teachers" because she perceived her role as a trainer of student teachers in how to teach and not just remedying their deficiency in subject matter knowledge. She believed strongly that the student teaching experience is a time for student teachers to be trained in teaching tasks.

Cross-case analysis

While I was writing up the individual cases, I kept a memo file in the Nvivo program and recorded emerging ideas and insights. I started the cross case analysis with these ideas in mind. I went back to the data, evaluating the ideas' justifications and trying to find confirming and/or contradicting evidence. I then critically examined and compared

mentors' ideas about learning to teach and mentoring, their actions, and the influence of the context on their practices. This led to a set of ideas for the cross case analysis.

I then organized these ideas according to the patterns and variations of these ideas among the cases using data from the short survey to assess their defensibility and their range among the other mentors in the study. In thinking about and examining these ideas, many issues about mentoring emerged from the study.

Generalizations

This is a study of mentors' ideas about mentoring and learning to teach, and of mentors' practices for the benefit of student teachers' learning in a particular context. The eleven mentors in this study represented the entire population of Arabic language mentors in intermediate schools, who worked with the student teachers of Kuwait University at the time of this study. Although the mentors in this study, and the context in which they worked, seem to be different from western mentors and contexts, the image of individuals and their situations are representative of other people and other contexts. This means that anyone who is involved in professional development in schools (teachers, head teachers, consultants, university faculty) needs to examine his/her own ideas and practices in relation to the people with whom they work.

Shulman (1991) pointed out that to call something a "case" is to make a theoretical claim that it is a "case of something" or an instance of a larger class of experience. The multiple cases did not represent the larger experience of mentoring, however, they brought in various perspectives and meanings to highlight the phenomenon in this study. The varied background experiences of mentors in this study, their

conceptions of their roles, their practices and their contexts, raise important questions that support or challenge our understanding of mentors' work. As Shulman (1986) indicates, the qualitative study of cases is not to determine what is universally applicable, but to bring in possibilities and alternatives that may be tested in different contexts. This study, which was conducted in a unique context, namely in Kuwait, highlights some important issues in mentoring that could be discussed and examined in other contexts.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXT AND MENTORS' IDEAS

Education in Kuwait began in the early eighteenth century in the form of private practice: Many families hired teachers for their children, and there were seminars in mosques. Education, at that time, was limited to reciting and memorizing the Koran (the holy book), as well as reading, writing, and performing simple arithmetic exercises needed for trade and exchange. Education was also restricted to boys. It was only ahe turn of the twentieth century that Kuwaiti girls began receiving some form of education, embodied mostly in memorizing and reciting some of the holy Koran.

The first school, established in Kuwait in December 1911 (Al-Misnad, 1985), was founded and financed by the people of Kuwait. The curriculum included Islamic education, Arabic language, history, and mathematics. In addition, there was also the study of some commercial skills appropriate to the needs of society at that time. Following this, a number of schools were established by individual people's efforts. In 1936, when the government established the Council of Education, formal education in Kuwait began. Thus, education became the responsibility of the government. As oil production increased in the post-World War II era, the government began investing large sums of money in social services, and education was one of its top priorities. By 1960, there were about 45,000 students enrolled in the Kuwaiti educational system, including 18,000 girls.

The constitution of 1962 stipulated that education was to be assured and promoted by the State, thus reflecting the belief that education is a fundamental right of all citizens.

Schooling was first made compulsory in 1965 and a new school ladder (four years primary, four years intermediate and four years secondary) was adopted. Today, Kuwait's education system is very large. There are currently close to 500,000 students enrolled in Kuwaiti schools, constituting approximately 30 percent of the entire population. There are three basic levels of education in Kuwait – elementary, intermediate, and secondary. Each level involves four years of study, and schooling usually begins at age six. Pre-school is available for children four to six years old, and students, who complete their basic education, can continue on to higher education. Schooling is compulsory for all children ages six to fourteen (elementary and intermediate levels) and all stages of state education, including higher education, are free.

Kuwait University is the only university in Kuwait and is the main route for higher education. It is a co-ed institution made up of five campuses in Kuwait City. Since its establishment in 1966, the university has grown from just over 400 students to nearly 18,000 men and women and has expanded from only 31 faculty members to include numerous colleges and departments.

The College of Education was established in May, 1980, and started by enrolling 399 students in September, 1981. It consists of four departments: Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Foundations, Educational Psychology, and Educational Administration and Planning.

Teacher preparation program

The student teaching program in the College of Education is designed to provide student teachers with the experience of learning how to teach at a school. It lasts twelve weeks.

To register in this program, student teachers must have completed 90 credit hours of course work in their field, in addition to completing teaching methods courses (1 & 2) according to their respective fields, and an educational technology course. This is also true for student teachers in Arabic language. In the teaching methods courses, student teachers of Arabic language learn subject-specific strategies for promoting pupils' understanding; the content area of Arabic language; and lesson planning and strategies for managing instruction. The student teaching program course is worth 10 credit hours, and student teachers spend the whole semester (twelve weeks) practice teaching in schools.

In Kuwaiti schools where student teachers are sent to do their practice teaching, all teachers are specialized in teaching one subject, even for the elementary grades. Teachers within a school are organized into groups on the basis of broad subject areas, such as mathematics, science, English, social studies, and Arabic language. A subject group is a formal organizational structure within a school. It contains teachers working within the same subject area. Every subject group or department has a head teacher who is appointed by the Ministry of Education.

In this study, I focused on mentors of Arabic language. The head teacher of Arabic language is usually the one who becomes the mentor teacher for student teachers (there are some exceptions for extenuating circumstances). S/he teaches only six periods per week and has other responsibilities such as supervising the teachers in the department and organizing weekly department meetings. Other teachers of Arabic language teach between twelve to eighteen periods per week.

Mentor teachers in this study

I interviewed eleven mentor teachers of Arabic language in intermediate schools who worked with student teachers of Kuwait University. Their teaching experiences ranged from ten to twenty-three years. All mentor teachers were Arabic language head teachers, except one who took the responsibility for mentoring student teachers after an unexpected leave of the head teacher due to a family matter just before the student teaching course began.

All of these mentors mentored either two or three student teachers, except one mentor who had only one student teacher. I noticed that the student teachers were not in the mentors' classrooms for most of the day. They were required to work in other teachers' classrooms. The other teachers did not remain in the classroom with them. This is part of the formal program and the university expectation that the student teachers are given classrooms to teach independently by the fourth week of the student teaching experience.

The center of student teaching at Kuwait University provides guidelines for the structure of the experience and expectations for mentors' work. For the structure, mentors are expected to arrange for student teachers to observe other teachers teaching and then discuss with them positive and negative points about the teaching they observed. This observation lasts for two weeks. By the third week, mentors also arrange for student teachers to observe and critique each other's teaching, presenting the strengths and the weaknesses of each other's teaching. The mentors facilitate student teachers' discussions, clarify the positive points in their teaching, and suggest ways to improve their teaching methods when necessary.

After the observation and critique stages, student teachers are given classes to teach, yet still remain under the guidance of the mentors. The mentor teachers and the university supervisors decide what class to give each student teacher. The mentor observes the student teacher's teaching at least two times a week and then meets with her after each observation to discuss her teaching.

Mentors' official duties

The official role definition and duties of the mentors as represented in the document of the Center for the Student Teaching at Kuwait University as follows:

1. Introduce the student teachers to the school and the administrators in the school.
2. Guide the student teachers to learn and help them to perform all teaching tasks that assist them in achieving the objectives of student teaching.
3. Help student teachers learn about their professional competencies and teaching performances.
4. Model teaching instruction and all teaching tasks that occur both in and out of the classroom.
5. Help student teachers develop appropriate attitudes toward the teaching profession.
6. Help student teachers gain confidence in teaching and improve themselves by overcoming their negative qualities.
7. Help student teachers to behave in congruence with the ethics of the teaching profession.
8. Guide student teachers in planning and help them plan their own lessons.
9. Use the evaluation form of the Center of Student Teaching when assessing student teachers.
10. Hold conferences with student teachers after each observation of their teaching to discuss the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching and guide them to overcome the negative points.

11. Keep a record of the observation notes and discussion during the conferences with the student teachers.

12. Arrange for student teachers to observe experienced teachers as well as each other's practice teaching and encourage them to discuss what they observe.

13. Participate in the student teachers' assessment with the university supervisor.

According to the mentor teachers' descriptions in the interviews, the student-teaching semester typically begins with the student teachers spending two weeks observing mentors and other experienced teachers, who are expected to model teaching practices for student teachers. After the two weeks of observation, the student teachers continue to observe the experienced teachers for another week, in addition to teaching one or two lessons before they are given their own classrooms to teach by the fourth week. Each class in the intermediate school has six teaching periods of Arabic language per week. Some mentors said that they gave the student teachers a whole class to teach and expected them to assume the full responsibilities of teaching the six periods per week. Other mentors said they gave the student teachers four or five teaching periods, leaving one or two teaching periods for the original classroom teacher to follow up with pupils and to review the skills they learned. I believe this latter illustration served to check out the work of the student teachers to make sure that the pupils learned what they were supposed to learn.

In the next section, in order to learn about how these mentor teachers think about their work, I turn to discuss mentors' ideas about teaching, learning to teach and mentoring.

Mentors' ideas about teaching

All mentor teachers said they believe in the integrity of the four language arts: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. his integrity is recommended by the reformed curriculum of teaching Arabic language. All mentor teachers believe that pupils should have opportunities to practice these four arts in each Arabic language classroom. Sarah, one of the mentor teachers, put it this way: "We concentrate on the reformed curriculum, which it is based on the integrity among all language arts. In every lesson there should be reading, writing, speaking and listening."

All mentor teachers said that they practice what they call the "reformed curriculum," which is based on the idea of language arts integrity and discussions of students' "individual efforts." Lectures are not used in teaching. In their view, this kind of teaching requires different teacher-pupil interaction. It also requires attending to pupils' thinking and to their academic, social, and emotional needs. Each unit is taught in four to five lessons, depending on the unit and the students' abilities. In each lesson, the teacher discusses specific aspects of the unit. In all these lessons, pupils should practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking in many different forms. For example, pupils may read a text, read their responses of their individual effort, or their findings about a topic they researched. The mentor teachers described their teaching in very much the same way. One can see striking similarities in the two mentors' descriptions below, which were also typical. Nawal said:

> The reformed curriculum way of teaching is a definite way and is the same for all units. In the first lesson of any unit, I discuss the main ideas of the literary text. In the second lesson, I discuss the detailed ideas and the difficult vocabulary in the text. For the third lesson, I discuss the grammar, aesthetic expressions, and

> spelling skills that are included in the text. And the fourth lesson contains writing composition, cursive handwriting, and pupil research. In all the lessons, reading the literary work out loud accompanies the discussion. This structure is the same for each unit.

Amal commented:

> The way of teaching the reformed curriculum is known and does not change for every unit. In the first lesson, I discuss the general ideas of the text and in the second one I discuss the detailed ideas and the vocabulary. The dictionary should be always with the pupils. In the third lesson I discuss the grammar, aesthetic expressions, and spelling skills. In the fourth lesson, I discuss pupils' writing composition, pupils' research findings and train pupils in handwriting. I may teach the unit in five lessons. This is the way I teach every unit.

For each lesson, all mentor teachers reported that the pupils are divided into three groups. The teacher gives each group an assignment, which is called "individual effort," to be done individually at home and to be discussed the next day in class. Each group assignment includes concepts and skills that are related to the unit and are intended to be discussed during the next day's lesson. Pupils in each group are not expected to collaborate in doing the assignment. Instead, each pupil is expected to do the assignment independently at home. The idea of dividing the class into three groups is to give the pupils various assignments. Manal, another mentor teacher, explained the individual effort as follows:

> In each lesson I begin with a remedial sentence to discuss a skill that the pupils need to improve. Then I start to discuss the "individual effort" assignments in which I divide the pupils into three groups and give each group different assignments. The pupils should do these assignments at home individually and I discuss these assignments with them the next day.

Sarah also said:

> If you attend any lesson, you will find that the lesson begins with the remedial sentence. Then, if the lesson, for example, is a poem, the pupils listen to it from the cassette player, and individual effort assignments will be discussed. I give pupils the assignment a day before. I divide the pupils into three groups. For example, for the first lesson in a unit, I ask the first group to write the general

> ideas of the literary text. For the second group I ask them to spell out the guiding principles and values contained in the text. For the third group, I ask them to write the important information and events that are included in the literary text. Then, I discuss every assignment with the pupils. After the discussion, I read the literary text out loud to the pupils and train them in reading it. I do not train them in reading the whole text at one lesson. But, in each lesson, I choose a passage of the literary text and train the pupils to read it with dramatization.

From the mentor teachers' descriptions, one can infer that there is a restricted way to teach all units. All units are taught within four to five lessons. For these lessons, the teacher follows the same structure and strategies of teaching. For example, Fatmah explained the first lesson of a unit as follows:

> In the first lesson of each unit, I discuss the three groups' assignments that I gave the pupils a day before, which is called "individual effort." These assignments include interpreting the main theme of the literary text and its main ideas, representing some information from the literary text, and describing some events from the text. I also train the pupils in reading the text. This is the same for each first lesson of a unit.

Nawal also reported:

> There is no other way for teaching because the reformed curriculum restricts us in terms of how to teach each lesson in a unit. We can, however, vary in our ways of assessing a lesson by using various learning aids that will attract pupils' attention and will change the routine of the lessons.

All mentors view the importance of connecting the literary works they are teaching to pupils' lives. They all try, in their teaching, to find connections to pupils' experiences. For example, Amal commented:

> Of course all the texts we teach are related to real life. It is important to find connections between literary texts and pupils' lives. Most of our texts are related to our nation, National Day, oil and pollution, and special occasions that our society celebrates. So, it is crucial to relate the text to pupils' experiences in order for them to gain an understanding.

Although the mentors feel it is crucial to connect the text to pupils' lives, Nora feels that the curriculum includes some topics that are difficult to connect to pupils' lives and experiences. She expressed her idea in this way:

> It depends if there is a connection between the text and pupils' experiences. Honestly, our curriculum is not helping in this matter. Sometimes, yes, you can relate to pupils' experiences. Like for example, a text about cooperation. We can connect to pupils' experiences during the Iraqi invasion and how the nations cooperated and formed an alliance to help Kuwait. Or, if the poem is about spring days, we try to relate to pupils' experiences to describe what they see and feel during spring. This is what we can do with the curriculum.

Mentor teachers reported, in the interviews, that their overall goals are to develop pupils' reading, writing, grammar, and oral skills. They want their pupils to be able to: (1) read a literary work correctly and expressively by dramatizing its meaning, as well as comprehending its meaning; (2) use the dictionary to look up difficult words; (3) write fluently and correctly without spelling or punctuation errors, while appropriately using their stock of words and sentence structures; (4) speak fluently and be able to express their thoughts without grammatical errors; and (5) listen carefully and comprehend what they listen to.

Mentors' ideas about learning to teach and mentoring

Mentors bring different ideas to their mentoring. These ideas can lead them to act differently in their practice, and thus open different opportunities for student teachers' learning about teaching. In this section, I discuss Kuwaiti mentors' ideas about learning to teach, student teachers, and mentoring.

Ideas about what student teachers need to learn

Kuwaiti mentors, individually, hold different ideas about what their student teachers need to learn. Such differences appear in the number and kinds of things they feel their student

teachers need to learn. However, Kuwaiti mentors, to some extent, also share several beliefs about what novices need to learn.

Learning the Arabic language objectives.

Six of the mentors believe that student teachers should learn the Arabic language teaching objectives in general and to develop behavioral objectives for the lessons that they will teach. Not only do they share this idea about their student teachers learning to teach, but also many of them agree on the reason for this idea.

Some mentors claim that learning how to develop behavioral objectives is the pillar for student teachers' learning to teach because developing these objectives is the basis for planning their lessons. As Manal pointed out:

> Knowing the objectives of the subject that they will teach the pupils is the first pillar in learning to teach both the general objectives and the behavioral objectives, which will be the basis for planning lessons.

Others assume that learning to develop good behavioral objectives will help student teachers to develop good lesson plans. When student teachers know the objectives of a lesson and what they want to accomplish in the lesson, they will use appropriate instructional strategies and will know how to assess pupils' learning of each teaching lesson. Amal commented:

> From the beginning, the student teacher should learn to develop behavioral objectives that she can accomplish in her teaching. Whenever she has the objectives clear in her mind and written in her planning notebook, she can include these objectives in her instructional strategies and assessment of pupils' learning and follow them step-by-step in her teaching.

Understanding the subject matter.

Another idea of what student teachers need to learn, is shared by six of the mentors. This idea is that student teachers need to develop an understanding of the

subject matter as represented in the national curriculum guides and textbooks. The six mentors who share this idea talked about and defined the subject differently. Two of the six mentors (Nora and Fatmah) talked about the subject as if it was confined to grammar and spelling. The other four mentors, although they included grammar and spelling in their definitions of the subject, also added other things such as, having beautiful and clear handwriting; understanding the content; reading and pronouncing correctly; reciting the Koran; and knowing how to interpret a literary text. For example, Hoda felt that a teacher should have clear and beautiful handwriting. "The most important thing for Arabic language teacher is to master the grammar, spelling skills and have a beautiful and clear handwriting."

Besides grammar and spelling, Nawal included beautiful handwriting and understanding the content well. She reported:

> The Arabic language teacher should understand her subject in terms of understanding the content that she teaches and the content that her pupils have learned in previous grades. She also should understand grammar and spelling rules and to be able to write beautifully and clearly. It is not appropriate for an Arabic language teacher to have ugly handwriting.

Sarah defined the subject as follows: "An Arabic language teacher needs to master the grammar and spelling skills. She also should read and pronounce words correctly, and be a good writer."

In her definition of the subject, Eiman included reciting the Koran and knowing how to interpret a literary text. As she reported: "The Arabic language teacher in general should be strong in grammar and spelling skills. She also should know how to recite the Koran and how to interpret any literary text."

Although these six mentors share the idea that student teachers need to develop an understanding of their subject, they defined the subject differently and emphasized different reasons for this shared idea. Some mentors assumed that developing an understanding of the subject would help student teachers be able to teach and improve their understanding about the requirement for their teaching—assuming that other things can be learned by practice and experience. Nora put it as follows:

> The first thing that constitutes a knowledge base for a student teacher is her understanding of the subject matter. There are other things that will come by experience, which I am not discussing with them yet. I am concentrating on their understanding of the subject, which is enough for helping them learn to teach.

Another teacher, Fatmah, commented: "The crucial thing for student teachers to understand is grammar and spelling skills. These two things are essential in teaching Arabic language—how can a teacher teach without an understanding of the subject?"

Some mentors hold that developing deep understanding of the subject will prevent teachers from making mistakes in front of pupils. Sarah expressed this idea in the following way: "When she [a student teacher] writes a phrase on the board, it should be free from errors. When she speaks to pupils, discusses and listens to their responses, her language should be correct. How can she correct pupils' errors if she isn't strong in the subject?"

Hoda expressed the same reason in a different way, explaining that a teacher should be a role model for pupils and should not make mistakes in front of them: "The Arabic language teacher is a role model. She should not make mistakes... pupils look to their teachers as a source of the right answers. Thus, student teachers should develop their understanding of the subject."

Other mentors thought that developing an understanding of the subject and careful study of curriculum guides and textbooks will allow student teachers to improve their understanding of important skills, the prior knowledge that pupils have learned, and what they need to learn. For example, Nawal required her novices to study not only the curriculum guides and textbooks for her grade level, but also those of all middle school grades and elementary grades. She expected that this knowledge would help novices to know what pupils have learned so she knows, for example, that this information is unknown to pupils or they already knew it and need to build on it.

While all six mentors stressed the importance of developing an understanding of the subject, they were saying different things about it –defining it differently and providing different reasons for the importance of knowing the subject.

Mentors' ideas of developing an understanding of the subject do not just reflect their ideal goal for the student teachers but also reflects their prior or/and current knowledge of student teachers as learners. All mentors who expressed the need to improve student teachers' subject matter knowledge felt that student teachers are not proficient enough in their subject matter knowledge. Thus, they felt that the student teaching course is an opportunity for student teachers to work on improving their understanding of the subject. For example, Nawal reported:

> I am talking generally about all student teachers. I noticed that many of the student teachers have a weakness in subject matter knowledge. I think the main problem is that the university does not recruit good students for an Arabic language major...my current student teachers have weaknesses in their subject. So, I advised them to seek knowledge and information outside the textbooks and to read grammar books. About the handwriting, I noticed that many of them have ugly handwriting. I advised them to participate in workshops to develop their handwriting.

Hoda's comment also was based on her experience and prior knowledge of student teachers: "Student teachers lack a lot of skills. I hope that the university pays more attention to grammar skills. That is because, from my experience with the student teachers, I noticed that they make a lot of grammar mistakes when they write on the board or in their planning notebooks."

Eiman also commented on the lack of subject matter knowledge of the student teachers based on her experience and prior knowledge of student teachers: "Student teachers come from the university with weakness in their subject matter knowledge. They make mistakes even in simple grammar and spelling skills. They also do not have the ability to speak correctly in standard Arabic in the classroom."

What is important from the above is that mentors in their ideas are guided by their ideal goals for student teachers and by their knowledge of student teachers as learners.

Learning to deal with pupils and classroom management.

Five Kuwaiti mentors also agreed that student teachers need to learn how to deal with pupils at this age and learn classroom management. Some of the mentors related this idea to the reason that pupils in middle school are at a critical age period. For example, Nawal said that pupils are at the end of childhood stage and at the beginning of the teenage stage, so teachers need to learn how to deal with pupils at this age.

Other mentors (Manal, Hoda and Dana) believe that student teachers should learn classroom management in order to be able to manage instruction without any problems or interruptions from pupils' misbehavior or noisiness. For example, Dana commented: "Student teachers should learn classroom management, have the ability to manage the classroom effectively and know how to deal with the pupils. When the student teachers

cannot manage the classroom, pupils become noisy and do not pay attention to what the teacher is saying. In this situation, the student teacher cannot manage the instruction effectively."

Learning to ask good questions.

Some mentors also emphasized that student teachers should learn how to ask good questions in their discussions with pupils. They regarded learning to ask good questions as necessary because teaching the reformed curriculum depends on pupils' individual efforts and discussions in classroom. For example, Nawal believes that learning to ask good questions will help the student teacher to interact productively with pupils and to interpret the information she gets from them. If the teacher does not know how to ask good questions in order to reach the point that she is explaining, she might stumble around asking three or four questions on one point, which might confuse pupils.

Learning to accomplish the integrity of the four language arts.

Some mentors also required that student teachers learn how to accomplish the integrity of the four language arts in their teaching. They regarded this learning as important because, according to the reformed curriculum, pupils should exercise and practice these four language arts in each lesson. So it is crucial that novices learn to accomplish the integrity of the four language arts in each lesson. This idea is new to how the novices would have experienced language arts in their own school experience.

Three other ideas come across as important for student teachers to learn. First, there is the idea of learning how to recite or read poetry and other literary works. Two mentors mentioned this idea. They regarded this learning as important because reciting and reading the literary work expressively would preserve the meaning of it. Second,

there is the idea of learning how the pupils learn to read, write, speak, and listen. Amal believes that such learning will help student teachers accomplish the four language arts in each lesson they teach and this is a goal called for within the reformed curriculum. Third, some mentors had the idea that it was important for student teachers to learn the specific way to teach the reformed curriculum. Dana reported that the student teachers might learn about the way of teaching at the University, but she believes that theory is different from practice. Thus, they need to learn in the field how to teach the reformed curriculum.

Ideas about mentoring and role conceptualization

All mentors describe themselves as a professional guide for student teachers –providing instruction, guidance, and feedback about their teaching practice. By "guide," they mean that they take initiative, instruct, and coach the student teachers. They have an active program of what they want student teachers to learn. Mentors instruct and tell student teachers how to do the tasks of teaching such as planning, managing instruction, and writing tests, showing them examples of the tasks and then letting the student teachers practice these tasks and giving them feedback on their work. Student teachers have to show their understanding by doing these tasks.

Central to mentors' thinking about mentoring is that the best teaching practice should be modeled to student teachers. Thus, in their work with student teachers, all mentors said they begin by modeling teaching either by themselves or by taking student teachers to other experienced teachers' classrooms.

However, mentors' involvement in the kind of guidance they provide is qualitatively different. For example, only a few mentors use focused observation as a

strategy for guiding student teachers' classroom experience. Shareefa believes that there are so many things going on simultaneously in a classroom that, if student teachers do not have a focus to work on, they cannot grasp anything. Thus, she often asks student teachers to notice specific aspects of teaching or gives them a question to watch for while they observed an experienced teacher teaching. For instance, she might ask a student teacher to notice things like the patterns, forms, and sequence of the teacher's questions, or she might ask them to notice how the teacher responds to pupils' answers.

Central to mentors' thinking is the idea of doing and learning from experience. After telling and showing the student teachers how to do the tasks of teaching, mentors prefer that student teachers do these tasks independently, apply what they have learned, and show their knowledge in action. For example, mentors said that they made it clear to student teachers from the beginning how to plan for: lesson objectives, individual efforts, instructional strategies, questions used in discussions and student evaluations, and how all these aspects are connected to each other and related to the objectives set for the lesson. They also showed them examples of lesson plans. It is important that the mentors see that student teachers show their knowledge of planning and design plans, and learn from experience. Thus, they let the student teachers plan independently for themselves and then the mentor looks at their planning, giving feedback and comments of positive and negative areas in their planning. For example Eiman explained:

> First I met with the student teachers to instruct them about planning and how to form their objectives. I explained to them what we mean by objectives, how to form them, and the importance of forming objectives that can be achieved within the lesson. I also gave them handouts of the verbs that can be used in forming these objectives. In this way, I described to them the objectives. However, they could not comprehend the objectives in this theoretical or conceptual way unless they practiced forming them and plan for their lessons. So I asked them to plan

every day for lessons and I looked at their lesson plans and commented on them. They need to practice and learn from my comments.

Manal's comments also showed the centrality of the idea of doing and learning from experience:

> I sat with the student teachers and told them that in every lesson they should achieve the four language arts: reading, writing, speaking and listening. I also explained to them what to address in each lesson of a unit and how to form the objectives of their lessons. I showed them examples of experienced teachers' lesson plans and had discussion with them. Then, I requested that the student teachers plan independently and I looked at their lesson plans pointing out the negative and positive aspects of their plans so they could learn from their mistakes.

Nawal also reported:

> I met with the student teachers and instructed them how to form objectives, give individual effort assignments, and discuss them in the classroom. According to my instruction they plan for lessons. I looked at their lesson plans and the questions that they prepared for classroom discussion. I provided the student teachers with comments and feedback about their planning.

Hoda's comments also emphasized the idea of learning from doing and experience. She said:

> I gave the student teachers handouts with examples of the objectives and verbs they can use when planning their lessons. I discussed these with the student teachers. I then asked them to plan, referring to the handouts for help. I followed up their planning everyday. I sat with each student teacher and discussed the positive point in her planning and provided her with what I noticed as negative areas. By practicing planning and with the help of my guidance and comments, she will learn how to plan.

However, some differences appeared among the mentors' thinking about student teachers' learning. For example, in learning to plan, only five mentors, Dana, Manal, Shareefa, Nawal, and Amal, planned jointly with student teachers at the beginning of the student teaching course. This kind of joint planning helps model teachers' ways of thinking for student teachers. Nawal, for example, believes that through helping student

teachers learn to plan, she helps them to learn how and when to use learning aids. "The way of using learning aids for teaching a poem is different from using them for teaching a text or a grammar lesson." Manal also believes that planning jointly with student teachers helps in finding out the difficulty they encounter in planning and in representing a writing lesson.

Critiquing and giving feedback of student teachers' performance is widely reported by mentor teachers. When they were asked how student teachers learned the tasks of teaching or how they helped the student teachers in their learning, their reports included critiquing and giving feedback on student teachers' performance of the teaching tasks. For example, in helping student teachers learn to write tests, all mentors mentioned that they let the student teachers write tests and then discussed with them—critiquing their tests and giving them feedback. For instance Hoda reported:

> I instructed the student teachers on how to write tests. I also gave them examples of previous tests that experienced teachers have written so they can learn from my instruction and from the examples. Then, I requested from the student teachers to write a test and I looked at it, critiqued it, and provided them with feedback.

Badreya also commented:

> I told the student teachers how to write a test and provided them with old tests to look at. I asked them [student teachers] to write a test after they studied the old tests and performed the exercises in the textbook. I reminded them to consider the skills that were included in the curriculum guide and to put the exemplary answers for the questions they asked in the test. I assessed their tests and commented on them.

Critiquing, assessing, and giving feedback on tests that student teachers wrote was reported by all eleven mentors. Mentors also reported critiquing and providing feedback when talking about student teachers' learning to manage instruction. Mentors also

observed student teachers and provided feedback about their performance in classroom. For instance, Dana said:

> When I visit the student teachers' classroom, I observe, for example, their way of discussion, allocation of the questions among the pupils, the arrangement of the board, their writing on the board, etc. Then I sit with them and critique their performance. I tell them the negative and positive areas in their teaching performances. My purpose is to guide the student teachers to improve their teaching performance. Now I am training the student teachers so my goal is to help them learn how to teach.

However, Shareefa, before she provides her critique to the student teacher, encourages a student teacher to critique her own performance in classroom. Then, Shareefa provides her critique and feedback about the student teacher's work in the classroom. As she reported:

> The first visit to the student teacher's classroom is general observation. I notice her presence, her blackboard, her self-confidence, how she deals with the students, her language, how she ask the questions, how she connects the lesson with the questions, and how she uses the learning aids. So, at first, I observe all these things in general and discuss them with her after the observation –both positive and negative points. Then, for every subsequent visit I establish a goal to concentrate on while observing the student teacher. For example, I observe how she asks questions to pupils and how she discusses the answers with them. Even when concentrating on my set goal each observation time, I still do not ignore other points. After the observation, I sit with the student teacher and discuss her teaching. First, I encourage her to critique her performance. I always try to help her learn how to critique herself and have self-awareness of her teaching performance. Student teachers usually are not able to critique their teaching because human beings always think that they reach the top in doing things. Finally, I provide the student teacher with feedback about her teaching.

All mentors reported that they observed student teachers at least two times a week throughout the semester of student teaching and they critiqued and provided feedback about their teaching performances. This conveys the idea that critiquing and giving feedback is a common role among Kuwaiti mentor teachers and one that is adopted

throughout the student teaching period. In all the teaching tasks, student teachers perform independently and the mentor teacher provides feedback.

Influences on mentors' ideas

In thinking about the ideas that mentor teachers hold, one must consider why these mentors have these particular ideas and why they talk the way they do. It seems relevant here to explore a number of possible influences on the mentors' ideas.

Mentors' own experiences

A possibility for why the mentors think and work the way they do might come from their own experiences, as students, teachers, and perhaps as mentors of previous student teachers.

When mentors were asked about what they think the source of their ideas were and how they come to think and mentor as they do, they attributed their ideas to many sources. All mentors included their experiences as teachers, their participation in workshops about teaching, visiting other teachers' classrooms within their schools or other schools, and their meetings with the supervisors of Arabic language arts. Four mentors also mentioned their previous experiences of mentoring student teachers. Another four mentors also included the student teaching guidebook as a source for their ideas about their work with student teachers. For example, Nawal commented:

> I got my ideas about the teaching methods that student teachers need to develop and how to teach from my own experience as a teacher. In terms of how to guide the student teachers, what to teach them, and how to help them in learning to teach, I benefited from the student teaching guidebook and the university meeting about mentoring student teachers.

Nora also reported:

> The university gave me the student teaching guidebook. I read it and I got to know my role and what was expected from me as a mentor. I also relied on my experience as a teacher, my knowledge of the subject, the workshops that I participated in about teaching, and my previous experience of mentoring student teachers.

Only one mentor, Shareefa, included her family experience and her history in her account of the way she came to think and act. Shareefa said:

> I have come to think the way I do because of my upbringing and my family background. My family, especially my father, gave me responsibilities and duties in the family and home. This helped me to learn to carry responsibility, be a leader, and know what to do in certain situations. All these things influenced me when the student teachers came for mentoring. I knew how to lead them in their learning. I also relied on my experience as a teacher and my visits to other schools.

Thus, mentors' personal experiences and their experiences as teachers are likely to have influences on their ideas and work as mentors.

Context

In this section, I discuss the context in relation to the ideas that mentor teachers hold. It seems that different aspects of the context have different influences and that some aspects are more relevant than others to mentors and mentoring practices.

Policy context: The influence of the national curriculum

The Kuwaiti schools have a national curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Teachers have no chance to choose content topics or resources. Textbooks are also prescribed by the Ministry of Education. For example, all pupils across the nation who are at the second intermediate grade study the same content with the same textbooks and, for most of the time, with the same sequence of curriculum topics. There is a

curriculum-based examination to check the results of pupils' learning and teachers' teaching of the curriculum. It is particularly important to know that the new reformed curriculum specifies the goals to be achieved in teaching Arabic language, the content to be taught, and the methods of teaching it. Such a curriculum and assessment context does not give the teachers autonomy in deciding the coverage and depth of teaching content and the pace of their specific lessons.

In my talks with the mentors, they all tended to emphasize in their teaching what the national curriculum specified for them, which are the goals, the content of what to teach, and the way of teaching it. However, there are many areas that are left to teachers' judgments and decision making such as, the form and sequence of questions used for the discussion in classroom, learning aids, and the form of assessment for pupils' understanding of the lesson. For example, when Sarah talked about how to teach a unit, she seemed to focus on what the national curriculum specified for teachers in terms of content, the structure of teaching it, the goals to be achieved, and skills to be learned by pupils. She said:

> I focus on the reformed curriculum, which is based on the integrity of the four language arts. Every unit is divided into four or five lessons. For example, when I teach "Emir's speech" which is in the second intermediate grade textbook, I teach the unit in five lessons. In the first lesson, I address the general ideas of the unit. In the second lesson, I address the detailed ideas, discuss the meaning of the difficult vocabularies, the way of searching for the meaning in the dictionary, finding antonyms, and the plural and the singular form of some words. In every lesson, reading the text should be included. In the third lesson, I discuss the grammar and aesthetic expressions. In the fourth, I discuss spelling skills and train pupils in reading the text. In the fifth lesson, I discuss pupils' research and writing composition. In every lesson I discuss the individual effort assignments that I have given the pupils the previous day. How to discuss the individual effort, the questions used, and its sequence, is different for each lesson. In every lesson I have goals to achieve. For example, in the first lesson the goal is to help pupils learn and be able to form general ideas about the text. So, the lesson should not pass without training the pupils on how to form general ideas. For every lesson, I

> choose the learning aid that I see suitable for what the lesson is addressing and the assessment form and questions to assess pupils understanding.

Another example is when Fatmah talked about the teaching of Arabic language. She reported:

> We, the teachers of Arabic language, teach the unit in four or five lessons. The content of the units is from the textbooks. In every lesson, we aim to discuss an area in regard to the unit... In every lesson, we are required to discuss the individual effort assignments. The teacher here should give the pupils the chance to write the right answers on the left side of their notebook. The teacher should teach the pupils how to organize their notebooks. What they write at home for individual effort assignments should be written on the right side of the notebook leaving the left side to write what is discussed in class and what is written on the board, since this is considered to be the exemplary answer for the individual effort assignment...in our teaching, we should consider the goals of teaching Arabic language as mentioned in the national curriculum. For example, in teaching a poem, we should teach the pupils how to read the poem expressively and dramatize its meaning. We also should train pupils how to use the dictionary in searching for the meaning of difficult vocabulary in order to be able to understand the meaning of the poem. However, how to approach and discuss the individual efforts, the learning aids used in each lesson, the skills chosen to be addressed in each lesson, and the form and activities used to assess pupils' understanding, are the teachers' choice.

From the description above, it can be seen that mentors emphasize the specified goals of the national curriculum; they use the specified content and a specified way of teaching it, which is based on the five-lesson cycle, the discussion of individual effort assignments, and the integrity of the four language arts. However, there are some areas where teachers need to use their own judgment and decision making such as the form of questions used for discussion in classroom, the kind of learning aids used, the specific skills to address in each lesson, and the assessment forms used to assess pupils understanding at the end of each lesson.

References to the national curriculum are pervasive in the mentors' talk. They speak as though they feel a strong duty to carry it out. For example, they all talked about

the idea of the integrity of the four language arts and the importance of achieving this integrity in each lesson. As Amal reported: "According to the Arabic language national curriculum, we, as teachers should achieve the integrity of the four language arts. This is something that I concentrate on as I guide student teachers because this idea is the pillar of teaching Arabic language."

When the mentors talked about the kinds of genres that student teachers need to understand in order to be able to teach Arabic language effectively, all mentors agreed that student teachers should understand the genres that are required by the national curriculum. Seven mentors found it is sufficient for student teachers to understand the genres that are specified in the national curriculum. Fatmah's comment is illustrative of this idea:

> They [the student teachers] need to understand genres that are in the national curriculum. It is not necessary that they read and learn outside genres. However, they must understand those that are required by the national curriculum and master them by understanding their meanings and their aesthetic expressions.

Three of the mentors preferred that student teachers try to broaden their knowledge and learn more than what is required by the national curriculum. However, only one mentor (Manal) felt that it was necessary for student teachers to know more genres than what is in the textbook. Manal reported:

> It is important that they [student teachers] understand genres prescribed by the national curriculum. But, it is necessary that they use the library and read more genres than in the textbooks. I always repeat to student teachers that their knowledge should not be similar to pupils' knowledge and they should not be a copy of the textbook, but seek to broaden their knowledge.

The mentors also made references to the national curriculum when they talked about the teaching methods that student teachers needed to learn. They referred to the

teaching method which is based on the individual efforts of the pupils. Dana's comment is illustrative:

> This way of teaching the Arabic language that we follow now is what is required by the national curriculum, which is based on the individual efforts of the pupils. We give the pupils individual effort assignments before the class and the pupils come to class prepared to participate in the discussion of these assignments.

The content, goals, and skills pupils need to develop, as specified in the curriculum, are always referred to when mentors talked about how they helped student teachers learn to do the teaching tasks. For example, Nawal talked about how she helped student teachers learn to plan:

> I sat with the student teachers and explained to them how to form objectives for their lessons and methods of teaching the lessons which include the individual's efforts. We also discussed the content of the lessons for which they plan. If I felt that the student teachers were not mastering the content, I taught it to them. I explained to them, for example, how to interpret the general ideas of the literary work and how to form these ideas in complete phrases so they can clarified them for their pupils. That was because the goal was to train pupils in interpreting general ideas of the literary work.

The national curriculum system obliges the teachers to expose pupils to a similar coverage and depth of teaching content, although the outcome of pupils' learning could vary. Under these circumstances, teachers are required to meet the standards and follow the curriculum as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the mentor teachers emphasized that student teachers learn the objectives of teaching Arabic language in general and learn also how to form objectives specific to the lessons they teach. Also, it is important to develop an understanding of the subject as represented in the national curriculum and textbooks. The business of forming objectives is important for mentors as experienced teachers, as well as for the student teachers. It is a part of their teaching work and student teachers should learn to do it.

Because of the existence of the national curriculum, mentor teachers neither expressed a concern for student teachers' learning to develop their own styles or philosophies of teaching, nor did they think of the idea of learning how to develop their own curriculum materials. Thus, they conceptualized their role as guide—helping student teachers understand the curriculum, telling and showing the student teachers how to achieve curriculum requirements, and how to do various teaching tasks as they act or perform as a critic to their work. When the mentors and student teachers worked on planning, forming objectives, the cycle of teaching lessons of any unit, and test writing they always talked about these things with regard to a current lesson or unit content. So, the curriculum is always part of the discussion.

From listening to mentors' comments about the prescribed curriculum, I was given the impression that everything is fairly well prescribed and the teachers given very little latitude in teaching. But when I went closer to the practice in observations, I found considerably more latitude. While the national curriculum does specify the content and the way of teaching it (the five lesson sequence), it still leaves teachers to make decisions about the way of teaching grammar, the kind of individual efforts to be given to pupils, the interpretative options of literature, the learning aids that are appropriate for each lesson and the type and pace of questions used for class discussions.

Similarly, mentors' talk about mentoring also suggests that there is only one way to mentor and that all mentors will proceed the same way. But, when I went closer to examine the practices I found that there is much latitude for variation. For example, some mentors like to instruct the student teachers more while others like to send them to do research about different topics. Moreover, some mentors prefer to co-plan with student

teachers at the beginning of the practicum and others do more of telling and showing how to plan. So there are some variations and latitude in mentors' practices.

Religious context: Teaching the Koran

Mentors emphasized that the holy Koran is handled and taught differently from any other piece of literature. Therefore, mentors find it is important to instruct student teachers on how to plan for and teach the holly Koran. For example, Manal said:

> This literature should be handled differently in planning and teaching. In teaching a text such as "Exercise and Health," the teachers can say and ask what information is included in the text. However, in teaching a verse of the Koran, the teacher cannot say what information the verse of the Koran includes, instead it should be said what values and meanings the verse guide us in. I instructed the student teachers to notice the differences in handling and teaching different kind of literary works.

So, the religious context influences the way that mentors think about the teaching of different kind of literature as well as the topics that needed special instructions to be given to student teachers. They considered the importance of helping student teachers learn how to teach a verse of the holy Koran.

The organizational context

The influence of mentors' status: The mentor teachers are, in fact, head teachers in the department of Arabic language. They are appointed by the Ministry of Education, considered to be competent, and have reputations as experienced teachers. They lead and supervise all teachers in the department, even experienced teachers, and serve as the experts of the department in terms of all professional matters and concerns undertaken by them. This situation leads mentors to present themselves as knowers and to conceptualize their role as one who tells and shows how to do various teaching tasks and then provides feedback to student teachers. They talked as if they knew everything, are the source of

knowledge, and their role is to transmit what they know to student teachers. Words of telling, instructing, teaching, showing, correcting, and feedback are pervasive in mentors' talk. I did not hear them talk about inquiring with student teachers. When they were asked how they helped student teachers learn to teach, all the eleven mentors reported telling, showing, and giving feedback. Six of them used the term" direct instruction" in addition to the showing and discussion of negative and positive areas in student teachers' work. As Fatmah reported:

> I helped them [student teachers] by direct instruction, especially before entering the classrooms, showing them examples of teachers' works, encouraging them to observe other teachers, and discussing the positive and negative areas after I observed their teaching works.

From talking with mentors, it seems that their role conceptions lack the ability to participate jointly in doing tasks of teaching or the role of collaborative inquiry in which they both--the mentor and the student teacher--think critically and engage in pursuing issues regarding teaching.

When mentors were asked about what (if any) they learned from mentoring student teachers, six mentors said that they did not learn from the student teachers, however, the student teachers learned and benefited from their experience and knowledge. Nawal's statement is representative and reflects the stance of knower and the one-way knowledge transmission. She said: "The learning and benefits actually are for the student teachers themselves. They learned from my knowledge and experience, and from other teachers in the department."

The other five mentors claimed that they learned from mentoring student teachers. However, their learning was limited to learning how to deal with student teachers as learners and to improving their experience in training student teachers.

The influence of mentoring more than one student teacher: Mentoring two or three student teachers makes the mentor think that the student teachers should not be in the classroom for the whole day. They should also have opportunities for seeing a range of good practices. This made the mentors think that it is important for student teachers to have experiences of observing various experienced teachers modeling teaching practices for them. Thus, student teachers will have the advantage of observing various teaching styles, activities, questions asked, and learning aids used. This situation would prevent student teachers from mimicking the mentor teacher's teaching. It is important to have the opportunity to compare teachers they observed and find the good forms of teaching activities for themselves

However, having more than one student teacher confines mentors' time in terms of attending to student teachers' needs or participating jointly in doing teaching tasks. Only two mentors felt that they adapted their schedule and time to make more room for student teachers guidance. Nine mentors mentioned time as constraint. For example Nora said:

> Time is constrained with the three student teachers that I have. I observe each one for at least two times a week, making a total of six observation sessions. In addition, I have seven teachers in my department that need to have follow-up in their work. So the increased number of student teachers is a burden on mentors.

Mentors find no time to sit and, for example, to write tests or plan jointly with each student teacher. Only five mentors reported that they sat down and planned jointly with each student teacher at the beginning of the student teaching course. Such ideas are absent from their conceptualization as to their role as mentors. They felt their role was only as a guide by telling, showing, and critiquing the student teacher performance of various teaching tasks.

Tradition and cultural context

The values, meanings, and assumptions that guide mentors' thoughts and actions may come from tradition as an established way of thinking and doing things, and from a culture of norms of accepted thoughts and behaviors. The tradition and cultural norms help shape mentors' ideas toward what the student teachers need to learn, how it is best learned, and the role mentors should play in helping student teachers learn to teach. Sarah's comment, when she talked about whether she thinks critiquing student teachers' performance is the best way to help student teachers learn to teach, is representative of the idea of the influence of tradition on mentors thoughts and practices. She stated: "This is the way we [mentors] get accustomed to and that is the way it is always done. We observe student teachers and critique their performances. If there are negative areas that need to be improved, we guide them in their learning and development."

Tradition and cultural ways of doing things may influence mentors' thoughts and ideas about mentoring and learning to teach.

Summary and conclusion

What ideas do Kuwaiti Arabic language mentors hold about teaching? What do mentors think student teachers need to learn? How do they think that learning occurs? How do the mentors conceptualize their role in helping student teachers learn to teach? Why do mentors hold these particular ideas? These questions have all been considered in this chapter, along with a number of findings.

First, all mentors believe in the idea of the integrity of the four language arts, which is recommended by the national reformed curriculum, as well as believe in the

importance of connecting the literary works they are teaching to pupils. All mentors also report that they practice teaching according to the methods suggested by the reformed curriculum, which is based on the discussion of individual efforts assignments and the five cycle of lessons in teaching each unit.

Second, there is a range of ideas that mentors hold about what student teachers need to learn. The ideas include the following: learning the general Arabic language teaching objectives and learning to develop behavioral objectives in their lesson plans; developing an understanding of the subject as represented in the national curriculum guides and textbooks; learning classroom management; learning to ask good questions during classroom discussions; and learning to accomplish the integrity of the four language arts in teaching.

Third, mentors think that learning occurs when teaching practices are modeled for student teachers. They also report that student teachers learn by experience as well as having feedback about their performance.

Fourth, all mentors conceptualize their role as professional guides for student teachers, by which they mean providing instruction, guidance and feedback about student teachers' practices. However, there are some qualitative differences in their involvement as well as the kind of guidance they provide for student teachers.

There are many possible influences and reasons as to why the mentors hold these ideas and act as they do. Some of these influences include mentors' own experiences and the context in which mentoring takes place.

It seems that mentors' ideas are most strongly influenced by the context in which they are working. The influence of the national curriculum as a policy context is highly

prevalent in mentors' ideas. References to the national curriculum and the feeling of duty to carry it out are pervasive in mentors talk. All mentors emphasize the specified goals of the national curriculum, the prescribed content, the specified ways of teaching it, and the integrity of the four language arts. The religious context influences mentors' ideas about some content issues. Menors mentioned the differ ences in teaching a piece of literature and a verse from the holy Koran. For example, in teaching a verse of the Koran, the teacher should ask about the values and meanings of what the verse is guide to, instead of asking about the included information in the verse of the Koran. Thus, mentors feel that student teachers should learn how to plan for and teach the holy Koran.

The school organizational context where mentors are working also shapes what they are saying. Since the mentors are head teachers and considered to be competent and experienced teachers they present themselves as knowers. They talk as if they are the source of knowledge and their role is to transmit what they know to student teachers. Mentors in Kuwait work with more than one student teacher who do not necessarily teach in the mentors' classroom. They work with them while they are teaching in others' classrooms. This situation shapes the kinds of interactions between mentors and student teachers. It also confines mentors' times to interact with and give feedback to student teachers.

The traditions and the cultural ways of doing things also influence mentors' ideas. Mentors mentioned that they do what they do with student teachers because this has always been the way of doing it and they get accustomed to these practices with student teachers.

Transition: Moving closer to the practice

Such findings imply that there is a particular configuration of ideas that mentors hold about mentoring and learning to teach. This finding leads one to ask the question of how mentors act upon these ideas and to closely examine mentors' practices, their enacted roles, and opportunities they create for student teachers' learning. In order to explore these issues, I chose three mentors to examine more closely. I examined their mentoring practices and their interactions with student teachers, as well as explored the opportunities they provided for student teachers' learning. I chose to study Amal, Sarah, and Dana for several reasons.

First, the three mentors hold some different ideas about the most important things student teachers need to learn and develop during the student teaching course. Sarah thinks the most important things for student teachers are to develop subject matter knowledge and learn the principles of reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching. Amal thinks that student teachers should learn to achieve the integrity of the four language arts, learn how the pupils read, write, listen, and speak, and learn to ask good questions in the right sequence. Dana thinks that it is important for student teachers to learn the Arabic language objectives, the methods of teaching the reformed curriculum and classroom management.

Second, the mentors that I chose to study have different ranges of experience in mentoring. During the semester of this study, it was the second time for Sarah to mentor student teachers. For Amal, it was the first time, but for Dana, it was the fourth time for her to mentor student teachers. So the three mentors varied in their experience of being a mentor.

Third, mentors varied in the number of the student teachers they were mentoring. Sarah had three student teachers to mentor. Amal and Dana each had two student teachers to mentor. [1]

In the next three chapters, I will examine each mentor's actual role, practices, and the opportunities they created for student teachers' learning.

[1] Shareefa was initially chosen because she had only one student teacher. However, her student teacher got sick and needed to be hospitalized for about a month. So Dana was chosen instead.

CHAPTER 4

AMAL: TRUE TO HER SCHOOL

Amal is a teacher in Towers intermediate school. She has fourteen years of teaching experience in the Arabic language. She is not the head teacher in the department of Arabic language, but she took on the responsibility of mentoring the student teachers after the head teacher left unexpectedly because of a family emergency just before the student teaching course. Thus, this was the first opportunity for her to mentor student teachers. She has two student teachers to mentor.

Critical experiences and events before entering teaching

Amal remembered that she was one of the pupils who was quiet, was a good listener, committed to going to school every day, and excelled in her studies. She reported that even if she was sick she tried to go to school. She did not like to be absent from school for any reason. Even now as a teacher, she reported, she hates to miss a school day. She did not miss any school days this year as well as in previous years, except for a few days one time when an urgent matter prevented her from going to school. She explained that the reason she was so committed to school was because of her family who valued education highly and taught her to love school.

Besides her family's encouragement for education, Amal had experienced some positive effects from being one of the excellent pupils, ever since her time in third grade:

> The thing that encouraged me to be an excellent pupil was the presents, which were rewards for pupils' achievements. When I was in elementary school, I saw that the school administrations reward the excellent pupils and gave them presents at the school assembly. After that event I asked myself why don't I be one of

> them? I liked to be honored, my name to be mentioned in front of the whole school, and to be distinguished pupil. Thus, this event motivated me to work hard and be one of the excellent pupils.

Amal recalled that she would do her homework as soon as she arrived home from school, even before she took off her school uniform. She also studied and reviewed her lessons every day.

Amal became a student in a liberal arts college, majoring in Arabic language. While in college, she was a member of the Arabic language association. She recalled that she and the other members were very active in arranging for events and activities for the students in their college. They also arranged to take students on field trips and organized workshops and entertainment events. She became well known in her college.

Amal remembered that she took advantage of every opportunity to go to the library and read. "You could see me every day in the library. I probably knew most of the books in my field. Because of my researching and reading, I knew the places of the books and where they were placed in the library shelves. I was very active, like a bee. I really felt I came to college to learn and I wanted to be ranked as excellent student."

Amal entered the liberal arts college without thinking what she would do after graduation. Then she realized that she always like teaching when she was young and had often taught her younger brother at home, helping him in his lessons. After graduation, however, she thought the ministry of education would not accept her as a teacher because she hadn't taken any education courses at college. However, she went ahead and applied for a teaching job and was accepted. She believed that her college studies in Arabic language had prepared her in terms of subject matter.

Constructing the practice: Amal as a teacher

At the very beginning of her first year of teaching, Amal reported that she had been uncertain how to teach and how to represent herself as a teacher. Therefore, she kept asking other teachers about teaching methods and how she should present herself in front of the pupils. She recalled that all the teachers in the school had helped her in some way. In addition, the head teacher had taken her to other classrooms to observe for two weeks before she began teaching in her own classroom.

> I wasn't teaching. I was only observing teachers how to teach and writing what I see as positive and negative points about their teaching. I was really writing—I liked this but didn't like that." I had my own point of views and opinions because I liked teaching but I was unclear about how to exactly do it. But when I observed teachers for two weeks and saw their planning and preparations for their lessons, I learned a lot and step-by-step I developed my performance. What was encouraging though was that I had a deep understanding of the subject.

Amal stated that she was not always happy with what she saw. However, she always read and researched new ideas in books. She recalled that she read many education books. Her sister was an education graduate and helped her to find books about planning, test writing, teachers' instruction, and classroom management. She mentioned that she still likes to read for information. When she has any questions, she goes to the library to research and read whenever she has questions about teaching methods, etc. She believes that teachers should always read and keep their information current because "reading is important for the benefit of the teacher and the pupils. By reading, a teacher can get information and essential knowledge that can be used in her teaching to make her lesson conceivable and engaging to pupils."

Besides staying current on teaching ideas, Amal reported that she likes to be mentioned by other teachers and pupils in the school as being a good teacher. Thus, she

works hard to do projects and programs for the school broadcast or any activity to distinguish herself as an involved teacher.

Amal's descriptions of her teaching methods tend to match what the reformed curriculum calls for, which is based on the integrity of the four language arts and teaching a unit in four or five lessons. Each lesson addresses the unit from a different angle. Amal, however, said that she prefers the old curriculum content to the new curriculum. She feels that the new curriculum makes the content of the subject harder for pupils. It contains much more complicated information that the pupils must apprehend in a short period of time. "The Ministry of Education should pay attention to the pupils' understanding and comprehension abilities at this age."

Amal is thinking of obtaining a masters degree in grammar. She reported that what encourages her to do that is working with her son who studied grammar to participate in a grammar and public speaking competition that was arranged by the Ministry of Education. She remarked:

> My son is in first secondary grade and he researched and studied most of the grammar books. I felt he became better than me in grammar. He would explain and discuss with me many grammar skills that I, as a college graduate, would have missed. I felt this is embarrassing. Thus, I am encouraged to continue my studies and to pursue a master's degree in grammar.

Amal turned down the opportunity to be appointed as a head teacher. She received the training she needs to be a head teacher and also passed the head teacher's test. However, she felt that being a head teacher is a big responsibility and would take her away partially from teaching responsibilities in order to supervise teachers as well. Moreover, being a head teacher means that she would be appointed to a different school. She disliked the thought of leaving her school and colleagues where she has been

working for fourteen years. What is more important to her is, "to be a good teacher helping pupils to maintain understanding and to develop my teaching performance to the highest quality."

Taking on a new role

After the Arabic language head teacher had to leave for the whole semester, Amal was asked by the supervisor of the center of student teaching at Kuwait University to take on the role of mentoring student teachers. "I was surprised because I was not a head teacher," she said. At the beginning, she felt unsure how to mentor student teachers. But, she reported that, with time she started to collect her thoughts and with the help of the center's supervisor began to understand her role guide the student teachers. She commented that she had adapted easily to the new role and liked the role of guiding student teachers.

In fact, Amal reported, she had not received any formal preparation for the role of mentor, except to attend a meeting with University personnel who told them what to expect as mentors, as well as reading the guidebook of the student teaching program. To enact her new role, she had drawn on what she had learned from the university meeting, the guidebook, her meetings and discussions with the supervisor of the student teaching center, as well as ideas she had formed from the work of her head teacher with previous student teachers in their department. She reported, "the supervisor of the center of student teaching helped me in undertaking the new role. From our meetings and discussions, I learned a lot. I also recalled what our head teacher was doing with previous student teachers we had in our department. From being in the same shared department office, I

noticed what she was doing with them and I formed ideas about the aspects that a mentor should know."

Amal's ideas about learning to teach and about student teachers

Amal reported that she felt there were four tasks that were the most important for student teachers to attain in their learning to teach semester: 1) learning to achieve the integrity of the four language arts: reading, writing, speaking and listening; 2) learning to plan lessons incorporating the three kinds of "behavioral objectives": cognitive, affective, and procedural objectives; 3) developing a habit of searching for information and knowledge regarding the lessons they teach; and 4) learning to ask good questions in an adequate sequence. In the next section, I will be elaborating on each of these learning to teach tasks.

Achieving the integrity of the four language arts

According to Amal, achieving the integrity among the four language arts in one's lessons is the first task that student teachers must develop and accomplish in learning to teach.

> For Arabic language teaching, student teachers must learn from the beginning to achieve the four language arts of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in their teaching lessons. This entails knowing how pupils learn to read, write, speak, and listen.

My sense is that for Amal, it is important to teach student teachers to accomplish the ideas which are called for in the national curriculum. Since the language arts integrity is advocated by the national curriculum, she felt it is crucial that they learn this task early on in their course of student teaching. Indeed, operating in such a system that has a centralized national curriculum, mentor teachers would be expected to achieve standards

and curriculum requirements. I also sense that it is important for Amal to help student teachers make the shift from thinking only about themselves to thinking also about pupils and their learning. As they learn to teach, student teachers should learn to think about both their learning and about their pupils' learning. Thus, it important for Amal that student teachers understand how pupils learn to read, write, speak, and listen.

Learning to plan lessons incorporating the three kinds of "behavioral objectives"

> Student teachers should learn how to plan for their lessons. In their planning, they should incorporate the three behavioral objectives: cognitive, affective, and procedural. These objectives should be achieved in every lesson and should be incorporated in their teaching strategies and evaluation of pupils' learning. I like to teach student teachers how to plan from the beginning so they understand that they can't teach unless they have complete lesson plans.

Amal stated that she feels that teaching the student teachers how to plan their lessons is her foremost task. She explained that student teachers should read the content first, then think and visualize how they would plan for this lesson. "I teach them the appropriate verbs that can be used in forming lesson objectives, also to think about the learning aids adequate for their lessons, since the learning aids are different for each lesson. I also teach them to use an adequate introduction for their lesson, to choose carefully their lesson activities, then to use evaluation in order to see what pupils have learned and whether the objectives have been accomplished in the lesson. This planning is important so student teachers can follow it step by step when they manage instruction."

Developing a habit of searching for information and knowledge

> Teachers should always search for information; even experienced teachers need to use the library. For example, if there is a new literary work the teacher will teach, the teacher should look in the library for information about this work, about the author. Or if it is from the Koran, the teacher should look at the interpretation of it. So student teachers need to learn to seek information about what they teach.

Amal believes that it is important for student teachers to stay current on information about their subject and encourages them to use available resources to achieve this. She believes that teachers, in general, should search for broader knowledge than the textbook and student teachers should also learn to do so. The best way to do this, she believes, is to go to the library and research the topic they will teach to pupils. "If the teacher lacks the adequate knowledge about the topic she teaches, this would prevent her from presenting the lesson adequately. It is also that pupils may ask questions that need broader knowledge than in the textbook; the situation will make the teacher embarrassed if she cannot answer these kinds of questions."

It is not surprising that Amal supports the idea of seeking information as an important element in learning to teach. Her own belief about the importance of reading and using the library influenced her thinking about this idea. Just as she was encouraged by her family to enjoy schooling and education and also by her own interest in reading and obtaining knowledge in her college days, so she strives to be academically encouraging to her student teachers. The context of Kuwaiti schools, where Amal teaches, also has an influence on her thinking about this idea. The existence of the national curriculum and prescribed content makes the teachers vulnerable to encountering some content topics that they may not have sufficient knowledge about. This situation requires teachers to search and seek adequate knowledge about the topics that they are teaching to pupils. And no doubt student teachers also need to develop a habit of searching and seeking information and knowledge.

Learning to ask good questions in an adequate sequence

Amal believes that the task of learning to ask good questions in an adequate sequence is related to the previous task mentioned above. She places this issue in relation to developing a good habit of seeking out new knowledge about the content student teachers are teaching. She believes that when student teachers obtain more knowledge about the topic they teach, they develop a deep understanding of the content and therefore know how to successfully lead a discussion in the classroom and ask good questions in the right sequence.

> It is important for the student teachers to read and seek knowledge about the content they teach in order to be able to discuss it successfully with the pupils. From reading the content, other resources and references, student teachers can develop an understanding of the topic and all its aspects. Here, they can easily know how to ask good questions and in the right sequence, from simple to harder questions, as well as to add some information other than what is in the textbook.

As described by Amal, the right sequence of asking questions means organizing the questions from simple to more complex kinds of questions. It also requires a deep understanding of the subject matter which student teachers should develop, by reading and researching for knowledge, according to Amal.

Amal's ideas about mentoring and role conceptualization

As stated previously, Amal was new to the role of mentoring at the beginning of the student semester and had to learn many different methods and ideas in a short period of time. This gave her the opportunity, therefore, to develop her own approach to mentoring student teachers. This approach incorporates telling, showing, analyzing teaching practices and critiquing teaching. She played the role of model, helper, guide, coach and critic.

> My goal is to teach each student teacher how to be a teacher. I mean, first to teach her to develop a teacher personality—to be self confident and prudent and to know how to represent herself in front of the pupils and how to deal with them. Then to teach her about the objectives, lesson plans and teaching strategies. Also I help her to learn how to write tests, as well as teaching her any expertise and experiences I have.... I will not let the student teachers walk away from this school unless they become real teachers.

Amal conceptualized her role as a guide for student teachers in a professional sense. She would guide student teachers experiences through the course of student teaching and in every aspect of the tasks of teaching.

Amal spent the first two weeks of the semester in planning, instructing the student teachers how to form behavioral objectives, how to introduce and represent their lessons, how to use teaching strategies, and how to model teaching using herself and other teachers as the models.

Amal believes that it is critical for student teachers to have an understanding of the importance of planning. She said that they should not enter the classroom unless they have prepared themselves well and have a full understanding of the content with good lesson plans.

Essential to Amal's thinking about mentoring is the idea of guiding student teachers in every aspect of teaching. She reported, "I guide them in the observation weeks, arranged for them to critique each others' teaching, guided them in planning, and helped them to manage instruction and write tests. When they got the responsibility to teach a classroom. I was with them as much as I can to guide and help them learn the tasks of teaching."

Amal's ways of acting in support of student teachers' learning

Overview of the work: A broad temporal and topical look at her work with student teachers

Amal reported that the main reason she spent the first two weeks of the student teaching course helping student teachers learn how to plan and manage instruction was because they would soon be responsible for teaching a class by the fourth week. The other tasks of teaching (i.e., writing tests and grading pupils' work) would come later in the course of student teaching.

During this planning phase, Amal arranged for her student teachers to observe experienced teachers' teaching. For the third week of the student teaching course, student teachers had the opportunity to teach themselves and to be observed by the teachers in the department and by other student teachers. The goal of this lesson teaching was in order to be critiqued by colleagues of teachers and student teachers. Every student teacher had the chance to critique and to be critiqued by colleagues with the guidance of the mentor teacher.

By the fourth week, student teachers began to teach in classrooms themselves, and Amal's role was to provide guidance, help, and feedback on their teaching practices. Throughout the student teaching course, student teachers' participation in teaching evolved from peripheral to full responsibility for planning and managing instruction.

I devoted the rest of this case to examining how Amal worked with student teachers during the student teaching course. I analyzed several aspects of the work in detail. Throughout the analysis I provided evidence of, or speculated on student teachers' learning.

Helping student teachers learn to plan for instruction

Amal reported that her work with the student teachers evolved from telling and modeling to assisting and providing feedback. She first told them how to form the behavioral objectives and then how to use them. She gave them handouts of how to plan for a lesson and also modeled for them how to plan a lesson. She also showed them plans used by experienced teachers, and then planned collaboratively with them. Finally, the student teachers devised their own lesson plans with Amal's assistance when they had questions and with her providing feedback when needed.

> I attended training sessions about planning and how to form the behavioral objectives, so I gave the student teachers handouts that I got from the training and told them how to plan and how to address each lesson in a unit. In addition to observing experienced teachers, they also looked at their planning and critiqued it. I encouraged them to state their opinions and whether they want to add any points to their planning... I planned with them collaboratively. In the beginning, there was always collaboration, so they know how we plan; but then they plan and I follow up by checking their lesson plans. At the beginning of their planning they were also seeking assistance from the original teachers of the classes they teach. They looked at their planning notebooks, got ideas, questions for discussions, and learning aids from them. They did this for a while. Then, I told them: "now you know how to plan, how to interpret the ideas of a unit and how to form questions for discussion. Now, you can plan individually, and when you need assistance just ask me". I followed their planning and gave them feedback about it.

Many things stand out from the way that Amal helps student teachers learn to plan. First, at the beginning of the semester, she planned jointly with student teachers—modeling for them how teachers think when they plan for lessons. Through planning collaboratively with them, Amal helped the student teachers learn to interpret the main theme of the unit and its detailed ideas; to ask good questions in the right sequence; and to discuss content-related issues.

Second, Amal gave the student teachers the opportunity to look at other teachers' planning notebooks and to critique them in addition to observing their teaching. In this manner, student teachers could relate teachers' lesson plans to their own teaching, as well as see the connection between the written plan and the actual teaching of it. This situation can help student teachers to visualize how the experienced teachers reached the objectives they stated in their lesson plans.

Third, at the beginning of their independent planning, Amal made other teachers' planning notebooks available to student teachers to look at and seek assistance from. However, when she felt that they could tackle the task independently, she requested them to be totally independent in their planning, except to ask her when they had questions or concerns. As Amal put it, "I told them, you can plan independently but when you need any assistance or have any concerns just ask me and I will assist you. I will give you, for example, ideas of how to present the lesson, your learning aids, and ways to evaluate pupils' learning." Recognizing the importance of planning, Amal continued checking student teachers' plans and providing feedback when needed.

Helping student teachers manage instruction

As it is important to learn to plan for instruction, managing instruction is also a crucial task student teachers should master. Since student teachers are responsible for teaching a class independently by the fourth week of the semester, it is important to learn how to manage instruction and reach lesson objectives. As she reported, Amal used many different ways to help student teachers how to learn to manage instruction. She used

modeling, taking student teachers to observe other teachers' teaching, and observing student teachers in a classroom and providing them with feedback.

Amal felt that by observing many teachers student teachers would be able to see various ranges of good teaching so that they could compare and choose what they wanted to do, instead of imitating only one teacher's style of teaching.

For the third week of the semester, Amal said that she created the opportunity for student teachers to observe and critique each other's teaching, as well as other teachers' instruction. Amal noticed that student teachers at the beginning of their observations found it difficult to critique others' teaching practices. They pointed out the positive points of the teaching they observed, yet found it difficult to point out the negative ones. However, bit by bit and with guidance, they learned how to pick out some of the difficult points related to teaching. As Amal put it:

> At the beginning it was difficult for them to say any negative point about a lesson they observed. But with my guidance and probing, they started to do so. For example, one time after observing me teaching, one of them gave me some suggestions to do in my lesson, and also told me I was using so many learning aids that I may have confused the pupils. I responded to her that she was right. Using so many learning aids without knowing how and when to use them will cause confusion and will not benefit the pupils. But when the teacher uses these learning aids adequately, knowing when to use each one, this will be helpful for the pupils. Here, I clarified to the student teacher whether her critique was right or wrong. She at least tried to say something.

Later in the semester, although student teachers were responsible for teaching a classroom independently, Amal would take student teachers occasionally to observe experienced teachers. This situation still allowed Amal and her student teachers to analyze instruction and learn from other teachers' practices. Below, I look at a modeling session that was demonstrated by one of the experienced teachers to provide a richer

portrait of what was happening and to illustrate how observing experienced teachers was an experience for learning to manage instruction.

Looking at an episode of helping student teachers learn to manage instruction.

This episode took place on April 30, 2001. Student teachers had been teaching classes independently for over a month by then. Amal arranged this opportunity for student teachers. The lesson was about grammar—the conditional sentence and its elements. Amal and the student teachers took places at the back of the classroom observing the teacher with her lesson. The teacher began by writing some conditional sentences on the board and started to discuss them with the pupils; asking them questions to think about and to identify the conditional instrument and the two conditional verbs in each sentence, in addition to differentiating between the conditional instrument and its meanings and usage in each sentence. She asked sequential questions, looking for answers from the pupils. One of the pupils answered the teacher's question incorrectly. She could not identify the correct answer. The teacher discussed the question with the pupil step by step until the pupil realized her error and corrected it. The teacher never left her to call on another pupil who already knew the correct answer.

After the discussions and explanations, the teacher asked the pupils what they had learned from the day's lesson. The pupils answered the teacher, and the teacher wrote on the board an assessment of the pupils' learning. She did this by writing some sentences and asking the pupils to identify the elements of a conditional sentence, the conditional instrument, and the two conditional verbs in the sentence.

I did not see Amal trying to direct the student teachers' attention to notice things during the observation. However, watching an experienced teacher was an opportunity

for student teachers' learning; after a few months of teaching independently they could easily relate to what they were seeing. From observing the experienced teacher's way of discussing and asking questions, they had the chance to learn how to ask good questions in the right sequence. Watching this lesson also gave the student teachers an opportunity for learning how to deal with pupils' misunderstanding and to help them learn and correct their mistakes, instead of just giving them the right answer. As one of the student teachers (Samya) explained:

> I learned the way of discussing a grammar lesson. I learned that the teacher should vary in her questions and ask them in the right sequence. I noticed that the teacher proceeded gradually with the pupil who made a mistake to help her to answer the question correctly. She did not give her the answer but gave her the chance to gradually recognize her mistake. This would encourage the pupil to think and to teach her how to think critically instead of giving her the answer directly.

As she observed the experienced teacher, Samya watched for the teacher's questions and pupils' reactions and answers to those questions. Samya was teaching the same grade level, so she was aware that she soon would be teaching the same content to a different set of pupils. Observing the teacher instructing the same content gave her an idea of how to approach the lesson and what to expect when she taught the lesson.

For Nada, the opportunity of observing this teacher was more productive for her. Although Nada was teaching another grade level, by observing this lesson she was given the opportunity to learn and notice things that would be beneficial for her as a teacher. She reported that she learned how to teach a grammar lesson in general, but also learned other things related to good teaching. She explained:

> I noticed how the teacher used colors to write on the board to help pupils distinguish among the verbs and among different elements of a sentence. I learned how to teach grammar, how to explain a grammar lesson, how to use the sentences to discuss a grammar lesson and apply the grammatical knowledge. I

> also learned that teachers should connect between the lesson and students' lives. I noticed that she [the experienced teacher] is teaching like acting. Her voice changed depending on the situation. Her actions, gestures, her voice everything ...she is like acting. She also gave the pupils the chance to correct their mistakes and used encouraging expressions to motivate them to participate in the discussion. She incorporates joy and gleefulness in her lesson.

Obviously, Nada observed a great deal of intrinsic values from observing the teacher in her grammar lesson, such as her way of motivating the pupils to participate in the discussion, incorporating joy in it, and varying her voice in order to attract and maintain her pupils' attention.

In helping her student teachers learn how to manage instruction, Amal also observed each student teacher at least twice a week and provided feedback about their teaching. During the observations, Amal reported that she noticed many things: 1) the student teacher's presence and personality in the classroom and whether she had self-confidence; 2) The board organization; 3) Student teacher's language and her introduction to the lesson; 4) How congruent the student teacher's planning in her notebook was with her teaching; 5) The student teacher's way of dealing with pupils, her ways of asking and allocating the questions; and 6) The student teacher's way of representing the lesson. Amal reported that she kept notes while observing a student teacher:

> While I am in the classroom observing student teachers, I write down my thinking at that time and all that I notice. For example, she did this mistake, she is weak in presenting this point, I hope that she rereads the unit more, I hope she reads this specific book before teaching this unit, and I also write down some guidance for her. So everything in my mind at the time of observing, I write it down.

It is important to note that Amal was reluctant and found it difficult to step in when a student teacher made a mistake while she was observing her. She reported that at the beginning it was very difficult to see the mistake and not know how to step in to

correct it. However, Amal mentioned that the university supervisor helped her in this matter when she observed the supervisor stepping in indirectly to call the student teacher's attention to the mistake.

> I find it difficult to stop the student teacher and tell her about her mistake. It is impossible to tell her "you made a mistake." I don't want the pupils to pay attention to the mistake. But, I learned from the university supervisor when she observes student teachers. She said to the student teacher, for example, "please teacher read this phrase again." I find this hard for me to do. I can whisper to her and tell her about the mistake.

But later in the semester, Amal was stepping in when she found student teachers made mistakes that could mislead pupils. She reported the first time she did this was when the student teacher was teaching a writing lesson and wrote a phrase on the board using a wrong conjunction to connect between two sentences. Amal stood up and, speaking to the pupils, asked them why they would use this conjunction and then explained to them that they should use another one to connect the sentences. She directed her talking and explanation to the pupils. I also witnessed many times when Amal stepped in, directing the student teachers' attention to their mistakes or asking the student teachers for more clarification to be made to the pupils.

For example, Nada wrote the plural of a word incorrectly so Amal corrected the student teacher saying the right answer out loud while she sat at the back of the classroom. Another example was when Samya asked the pupils to parse a word so that the pupils would respond that it was an absolute object. Amal then requested Samya to ask the pupils to explicate how they knew it was an absolute object and to also differentiate among absolute object, direct object, and object of reason.

Below, I have given two observation sessions in detail done by Amal for each student teacher in order to provide a richer portrait of what was happening and to

illustrate how observation was an occasion for mentored learning to manage instruction. The first episode is one of Amal observing Nada and the second is her observing Samya.

Amal's observation session of Nada

This observation took place at the tenth week of the semester. The lesson was a review of a unit. Nada gave the pupils handouts of the questions of the unit and divided the pupils into groups. Each group was responsible for responding to a question. When Amal looked at the handout, she turned to me and commented on the questions that Nada had prepared. Amal's comments were about comparing between Samya's handout and Nada's. She told me that Samya's handouts and questions were organized in a way that put the passage from the unit first, followed by the questions from comprehension and cognitive questions, vocabulary, and then grammar questions. What is important to note about the above point is that Amal's comparison between Nada and Samya was an effect of mentoring more than one student teacher at the same time. Being a mentor for two or more student teachers makes the mentor compare them and their work. However, Amal did not let the student teachers feel that she compared them. Nada once told me off-hand during a conversation that she felt Amal remained neutral. She reported that, "There are other schools where the mentor compares the student teachers. I know one student teacher who told me, my personality is different and my social and family conditions are different. So why does the mentor compare me with others?" So Nada did not have the feeling that Amal was comparing them.

Nada, in her lesson, started to discuss the response of each group. Amal noticed that one of the pupils was not paying attention to the discussion, so she told her to pay attention to the teacher. Then Amal directed Nada's attention to a word she wrote on the

board incorrectly. Nada then corrected it and continued to discuss the groups' responses. I noticed that Nada did not give the pupils the chance to read the questions; instead she read them and let the pupils answer. Nada came to a question where the pupils should mention the plural of a word (*deen* which means religion). The pupils responded incorrectly but the answer was close to the correct answer (they said *deyanat* instead of *adyan*). Nada accepted the answer and wrote it on the board. I noticed that Amal took a dictionary and looked at it to make sure of the correct plural for the word. Then, she told Nada, in front of the pupils, the correct plural of the word. This situation made a pupil in the back turn to Amal and ask her about the correct plural of a word that would be discussed soon by Nada. Amal responded to the pupil saying: "Teacher Nada will discuss this question soon. Just pay attention to the teacher."

This situation provided the student teacher the opportunity to receive some hands-on guidance and to take advantage of situational mentored learning. This is important because it is difficult to re-create the situations where there are mistakes to be corrected or confusions to be cleared up. However, stepping in to correct the student teacher's mistakes or to clear misunderstandings may undermine the student teacher's authority in the classroom. This situation actually happened when a pupil sought the correct answer from Amal instead of waiting for Nada, their teacher, to discuss the answer with them. However, I neither witnessed any undermined feeling from Nada or Samya because of Amal stepping in nor did they express discomfort with Amal's interference. This may be because of the good relationship that Amal established from the beginning with the two student teachers and the conception that she conveyed to them that her aim was to help them learn to teach. So they accepted her interference and took advantage of the

contribution of a more knowledgeable person who could help them as well as help the pupils in their understanding.

Just after the observation, Amal gave Nada feedback about the observed session. Amal started by praising Nada's way of dividing the pupils into groups so they could work collaboratively and discuss together the answers of the questions. Amal, then, directed Nada's attention to the way she displayed the questions in the handout, pointing out that the questions were not organized as well as not being in the desired sequence of understanding cognitive questions, vocabulary, grammar and then finally expressions and aesthetics. This led to the following exchange:

A: I hoped the handout contained a passage from the unit and gave the pupils the chance to read it as well as to read the questions before responding to them. In addition, there should be grammar questions in the handout.

N: No, I did not intend to review grammar in this lesson. I wanted to review it thoroughly in a separate session.

A: Your way of presenting the lesson was good but add to it grammar and aesthetics questions in order to present the unit thoroughly like the way of the test because this is a review of the unit. I hoped also that you put numbers for the questions in the handout. I noticed that the pupils lost track of the questions in the handout.

It is important to note that in the above exchange are some suggestions that Amal made for Nada. She began with a suggestion about including a passage from the unit and giving the pupils the chance to read it. This helped Nada to understand the importance of supporting the integrity of the literature (affirming the four language arts: reading, writing, listening and speaking).

In Nada's lesson, the pupils had the opportunity to speak to each other in their groups or to the whole class when they responded to the questions, as well as having the

chance to listen to the teacher or other pupils in the class. They also had the chance to write the responses in their notebooks. However, they lacked the opportunity to read out loud. Practicing the four language arts in each lesson is an important aspect of the reformed curriculum and also important in Amal's way of thinking about learning to teach.

Amal went on to suggest that the handout should resemble the test in terms of organization and the sequence of questions, because this was a review of a unit and a preparation of the pupils for the test. This suggestion provided the opportunity for Nada to learn to be more organized for the benefit of her pupils and to learn how to ask questions in an adequate sequence. Learning to ask good questions in the right sequence was one of the important tasks that Amal was working on to help student teachers to learn.

Another thing that Amal suggested to Nada was to include grammar questions in her handout. That was because the lesson was a review of a unit in preparation for a test. So Amal requested that Nada include a review of grammatical skills in the handout. Nada wanted to give grammatical skills more time and attention and to discuss them separately in another lesson. However, Amal's reason for suggesting inclusion of the grammar in the handout was to be thorough -- incorporating all aspects like a test. This explanation was not satisfying to Nada and did not help her to understand why she should not discuss the grammatical skills in a separate lesson. She pointed out:

> Every one has her own way. Amal said that reviewing grammar in separate lesson is not a good strategy. It should be incorporated with other aspects. I learned to incorporate grammar in order to train the pupils for the test. However, my way is to concentrate on grammar in a separate lesson to review each skill with pupils and then open the textbook to train them on these skills. But she [Amal] was not

convinced of my idea. What can we do? This is the reformed curriculum and this is Amal's way.

From Nada's comment, I can infer that she learned to incorporate in her review lesson all aspects of the language arts, including grammar. However, Nada was not convinced why she should do that except for preparing pupils for the test, which was not a satisfying reason to her. Nada needed more explanation and a good reason to be convinced to do such thing. Amal failed to provide Nada with such an explanation.

Amal, in her conference with Nada, seemed to present herself as knowing the best way of teaching and she wanted Nada to follow her suggestions. Nada probably needed a "joint experimentation" (Schon, 1987) in which Amal helped Nada explore ways of achieving what she wanted to achieve.

Amal's observation session of Samya

This observation session took place at the ninth week of the semester. Samya's lesson was about noise pollution and it was a listening lesson. In this kind of lesson, the teacher reads the text out loud in front of the pupils or uses a cassette player with the text. The pupils listen to the reading of the teacher. Then the teacher discusses the lesson with them to see what they learned by listening to it. They also pick up general ideas about the text and then discuss the details of the texts. In this lesson, the teacher and the pupils discuss the difficult vocabulary in the text. No assessment is given at the end of this lesson and it is not included in the test. The lesson is considered training in listening skills for pupils.

Samya began her lesson by turning on the cassette player and letting the pupils listen to the text. Then she gave the pupils a handout with questions about the text and started to discuss them. The questions were various and sequenced, starting with her

asking the pupils to interpret the main theme of the text and then moving on to the detail ideas. This was followed by a discussion of the vocabulary in the text and some grammatical skills. The pupils read the questions and responded to them.

Amal took Samya's planning notebook and started to look at it while she was observing her. I noticed that Amal did not step in during this observation session. In addition, Samya did not make big mistakes or write incorrectly on the board. This meant that Amal did not feel she had to step in unless there was a big mistake which needed to be corrected or to rescue a chaotic situation.

After the observation, Amal gave Samya feedback about the observed session. She mentioned that the lesson was good. "The questions were clear and thorough but I hoped that you would have started the listening lesson with an introductory question about the title of the lesson, so the pupils could have a view of what the lesson was about." This suggestion offered the opportunity for Samya to make a connection to students' thinking and how they learn. Since this was a listening lesson, the pupils did not read the text. So the teacher should ask a general question about the pollution and the sources of noise in order to connect them with the topic of the lesson and to attract their attention to the topic.

Another comment that Amal pointed out to Samya was that she only concentrated on the questions in the handout --as question and answer without discussion or scaffolding of these questions. In this manner, Amal helped Samya understand that she should not limit herself to the information in the textbook, but rather go broader and discuss other points that are related to the text. Amal explicated:

> The discussion does not necessarily have to be only about what is in the textbook. The teacher may go broader to discuss points that are surrounding us about noise

> in our houses or in our neighbors' houses, as well as factory noises in the industrial countries. This would help pupils interact with the teacher and know about societies other than the Kuwaiti society.
>
> When Amal was asked about the reason for more discussions, she responded:
>
> My aim is to attract pupils' attention to the lesson. I wanted the student teacher not only to present the information in the textbook, but also to go broader. If the pupils are only introduced to the information in the textbook, they would feel bored. So there should be some other information so the pupils can think and bring in information and knowledge they learned from other subjects or from their readings. This way, the lesson will be interactive and the pupils will be motivated to speak and learn.

It is not surprising that Amal requested Samya to discuss the topic in a broader manner than in the textbook. She is advocating that the student teacher should read and research knowledge about the topic that she will teach.

Helping student teachers learn to write tests

Amal helped student teachers learn to write tests by first directing their attention to the questions at the end of each unit in the textbook. She felt these questions were clear and organized which could help the student teachers in the beginning to have an idea how the questions are presented. Amal modeled for the student teachers and showed them how to write a test. Then, she coached them and finally let them write a test independently and provided them with feedback. The first test came at the fifth week of the semester—the time of forming tests for pupils. It was in the context of creating this test that Amal modeled and showed test writing and the allocating of grades among the test questions for the student teachers.

> I modeled for them [student teachers] how to write a test and showed them examples of my test and other experienced teachers' tests and we discussed them. We went through the questions and I explained to them that the questions should be organized and sequenced: understanding and cognitive, vocabulary, grammar,

> expression questions, and then writing. It is like the textbook organization of questions. It is important that they pay attention to what grade they are writing the test for. For example, first grade questions would be simple without any complexity. I also taught them to seek sequence in the questions and to begin the questions from simple to intermediate to more complex ones. The complex questions are to distinguish the excellent from the weak pupils. We also discussed the variety of the kinds of questions.

What is important from the above quotation is that Amal modeled and showed the student teachers how to write a test. She discussed with them the organization and the sequence of the questions as well as the importance of ranging the questions. This held the opportunity for learning to ask good questions in sequence and to take into account pupils' various abilities. However, she did not probe their thinking about what each question was assessing or why the test was written and organized the way it was, except that it was the textbook's organization.

When Amal sought evidence of the student teachers' learning by asking them to write tests independently, she found that they limited the questions to one way of asking these questions, and did not present the questions well.

> When they wrote tests I noticed that they lacked variation in the questions. So I showed them my test and pointed to them how it was varied in the kind of questions. I also gave them feedback about the way they asked and presented these questions. For example, one of the student teachers put the same kind of question for each unit at the grammar section. She wrote a sentence in singular manner and asked to write the same sentence in plural. So I requested her to vary the way she asked the questions—like to use fill in the blanks or multiple choice. They would learn step by step. The beginning is always difficult.

This limitation of the student teachers in writing tests helped Amal to pinpoint the state of their learning and highlight the necessary steps needed to augment their learning. Later in the semester, the student teachers drafted two other tests and Amal went over them with them --critiquing the tests and giving feedback. She was pleased with the student teachers' progress in regard to the clarity and organization of the test questions. It

was by critiquing and proving specific feedback about teaching tasks that Amal helped the student teachers to progress.

Providing critique and feedback

One of Amal's mentoring methods is to critique and provide feedback on the student teachers' independent teaching. She gave feedback on their planning, test writing, and instruction management.

It was towards the end of the semester that Amal looked at the student teachers' daily planning and provided feedback. Some of this feedback included commenting on the forms of the behavioral objectives, giving suggestions for the addition of objectives, recommending more questions for the discussions, suggesting appropriate introductions to the lesson, and commenting on the questions of the lesson assessment. For example, in looking closely at a lesson plan of Nada's, I found that Amal had commented on her planning notebook. This lesson was at the ninth week of the semester and was about plants and how to protect them. It was the third lesson in which the teacher discusses the grammar, good expressions, and spelling skills within the unit. Amal had suggested to Nada to add an objective about knowing good expressions under the cognitive kind of objectives, and she also actually wrote an objective for her under the affective kind of objectives. Nada wrote a phrase from the Koran about the creation of plants as an introduction to her lesson. However, Amal recommended that she ask a question to help the pupils connect the introduction to the lesson. This kind of feedback presented an opportunity for learning to form good objectives and ask good questions.

Amal also gave feedback on the tests that the student teachers wrote independently. I found Amal's comments and feedback on a test that Samya had written. Amal commented that the questions were clear, although she gave specific feedback on some of the questions. For example, in the grammar section, Samya asked a question requesting the pupils to parse a word in a sentence. Amal commented that the pupils still had not learned this grammatical skill yet. They would learn it next year in the third grade. This meant what Samya was asking the pupils to do something that was too complex for them. Samya had assumed, incorrectly, that the pupils were familiar with such a grammatical skill.

Samya also wrote a question asking the pupils their opinion on an expression and the effect that this expression had on the meaning. Amal scaffolded the question by adding what this expression portrayed. In the grammar section, Amal commented on a question that was repeated and suggested a different way to ask it.

I ascertained from this incident that Amal's feedback was a means of helping the student teachers learn that they should already have known what skills the pupils had in order to include the correct questions in the test and avoid including any that did not make sense to the pupils. This situation raised the issue of teachers' knowledge of pupils' prior knowledge and curriculum topics that they have learned in previous grades. This feedback directed Samya's attention to not only know the curriculum topics that she teaches, but also to have knowledge about what topics and skills within the national curriculum the pupils have already learned in previous grades. This feedback also gave the student teachers an opportunity to learn to ask good questions and scaffold them.

Throughout the student teaching semester, Amal visited the student teachers' classrooms at least twice a week and provided them with critique and feedback about their teaching.

I have recounted below one of Amal's conferences with Nada after observing her, in order to provide a richer portrait of Amal's mentoring style and to illustrate how the kind of critique and feedback was or was not an occasion for mentored learning to teach.

Looking closely at Amal's conference with Nada after observing her teaching.

This conference was held at the tenth week of the semester after Amal observed Nada teaching a unit called "Ahmad's tree." This unit was about plants and how to grow and preserve them. It was the second lesson of the unit, in which Nada discussed the detailed ideas of the text and vocabulary by discussing assignments she had given the pupils a previous day.

In this conference, Amal commented that Nada should use her time better, reducing the need to discuss a remedial phrase, and use more time to discuss the text. For example, Nada should ask the pupils which way is better for irrigating plants (by dripping or by splashing) and discuss this topic with them.

Amal continued her comments by telling Nada it was good that she had asked the pupils to use the dictionary for finding the meaning of some words but Amal had also hoped that she would ask them to compose sentences using these words. Amal noticed that Nada had read the first paragraph of the text aloud to the pupils, but was supposed to have read the second paragraph because she had already trained the pupils to read the first paragraph the day before.

Amal also remarked that Nada had not discussed the text thoroughly or asked the pupils to interpret ideas in more detail, rather asking them to choose which of the displayed ideas were adequate for being good details. Amal also mentioned to Nada that other than these few points she had remarked on, Nada's lesson had been good and complete; she used the learning aids well; her thoughts were organized until the assessment parts; and she achieved the objectives even in the assessment part. Amal's critique and feedback led to the following exchange:

N: I spent more time in discussing the remedial sentence because this lesson is short and there was enough time to spend on the remedial sentence. The longest lesson is the third lesson because it includes dictation (Spelling test).

A: This lesson, which is the second lesson, is the longest not the third one.

N: If you noticed, I incorporated the discussion of the remedial sentence with the introduction of the lesson.

A: What we aim is to reach the important point, which is training the pupils to interpret detailed ideas. You gave them some ideas and let them choose. However, we are looking to training pupils to interpret these detailed ideas as well as discuss these ideas with them. For example, whose tree was that tree? What does the tree need? What are the advantages of trees? It is important to train the pupils to interpret the ideas and to discuss these details because the second lesson is the explication lesson. If you don't explicate the details in this lesson, this means the unit is done because the next lesson would be the grammatical skills.

From the stated exchange above, Amal's feedback gave Nada an opportunity to learn many things: how to learn to manage her time and use it properly; how to learn to pay more attention to details in the text and discuss these details with the pupils (The sketchy discussion of the text would not ensure that the pupils understood the text) and; how to learn the importance of teaching the pupils to interpret the detailed ideas and express them in a correct sentence. As Amal reported: "the pupils in this grade should

learn to interpret and compose detailed ideas and express them in full sentences. So the pupils would learn to speak using correct phrases." According to Nada, this episode helped her to learn "to discuss in detail and to scaffold the questions... Amal previously mentioned this point in a discussion with me, but I tended to forget. I think today I should use learning aids that help pupils differentiate between irrigation by dripping or by splashing and discuss this topic with them."

Helping student teachers learn to facilitate the discussion in the classroom

> I observed student teachers teaching and noticed what the lack of reading and researching would cause. The pupils might ask questions that embarrass student teachers because she did not know the answers. They don't know how to deal with these kinds of situations. I told them if you encounter this kind of situation, refer the pupils to a book to read, and the most important thing for you as a teacher is to go and research.

Two things stand out from the above. First, Amal noticed that student teachers lack the habits of reading and researching that would help facilitate the discussion in the classroom. Second, the lack of reading and researching caused them to encounter situations where they could not respond to pupils' questions and became embarrassed because they did not know how to deal with the situation.

Amal laid the burden on the need for reading and researching as a way of succeeding in facilitating the discussion in the classroom. Therefore, she reported:

> I always told them [student teachers] to read and research about the topic they teach...researching is very important for student teachers in order to have a view of how to discuss the lesson. By researching, knowing the unit and understanding all its aspects, here they can put questions for each passage. They would know how to ask the questions--from simple to complex, including outside knowledge and information--so they know how to facilitate the discussion.

Besides impressing the importance of reading and researching on to the student teachers, Amal also gave them feedback about how they could lead discussions during their teaching. On many occasions, I witnessed such feedback. For example, when Samya taught a lesson about "Caliph Omar and the Persia Messenger" in the era after the prophet Mohammad, among the things that Amal reported to Samya after observing her was that she hoped she would have scaffolded the questions. Another example was when Nada taught a lesson about "Ahmad's Tree," and among the things that Amal told Nada after her observation was also that she should scaffold the questions she asked.

The kind of feedback and advice to read and research that Amal practices, gave the student teachers an opportunity to learn to facilitate discussion in the classroom. As Samya reported, "I learned from Amal that I should discuss the lesson in some details and to scaffold the questions in my discussions with pupils, as well as discuss some outside information related to the lesson."

Addressing the issue of pupils' individual differences

Addressing the issue of pupils' individual differences was one of the features of Amal's work with the student teachers. She reported,

> It is hard for them to attend to individual differences. Even in allocating the discussion questions—they tend to direct their questions to excellent pupils who know the answers. I told them they should be fair in their questions and not to concentrate on some pupils and ignore others, as well as not to ask weak students complex questions or let them read out loud a whole passage.

Amal felt that the student teachers tended to focus their questions during the whole class discussion towards the excellent pupils who could answer them easily. Therefore, she told the student teachers to try to allocate the questions to all pupils,

excellent and weak, and to avoid asking the weak pupils complex questions that they may not be able to answer, which would embarrass them in front of the class.

In addition, Amal gave the student teachers a handout that contained ways to deal with pupils' weakness and misunderstanding. She also told them to pay attention to the weak pupils—to know their weakness points, to ask them simple questions and motivate them to participate in the discussion. Also, Amal told the student teachers to consider a plan for remedying the pupils' weakness. She provided some suggestions for them. For example, if some of the pupils were struggling in reading, the student teacher might let those pupils practice reading at home and record themselves reading a passage daily. Or, if the weakness is in spelling, the student teacher could have a remedial sentence ready on a daily basis and discuss it with the class concentrating on the weaker pupils.

Amal's suggestions to the student teachers opened up an opportunity for them to learn to be aware of and pay attention to pupils' individual differences as well as learning how to attend to these differences including all pupils during their lesson discussions. I witnessed in many occasions that Amal often directed student teachers' attention to attend to individual differences, to concentrate on the weaker pupils, as well as working on including all pupils in their lessons.

Summary and discussion

This case illustrates many issues in mentoring and learning to teach. First, it illustrates that how Amal acts as a mentor reflects what she thinks student teachers need to learn. Amal's ideas of what student teachers need to learn include: 1) learning to achieve the integrity of the four language arts; 2) learning to plan for lessons; 3) developing a habit of

searching for information and knowledge; and 4) learning to ask good questions in an adequate sequence.

This case illustrates that, in her mentoring practices, Amal worked on helping student teachers learn those teachings tasks she felt they need to learn in order to become good teachers.

Second, the case highlights the influence of the context on mentoring practices. Operating in a system that has a national curriculum prescribed by the Ministry of Education influenced Amal's practices. In her practices, Amal tended to emphasize helping student teachers learn the content and curriculum goals, ideas, and requirements. For example, she emphasized achieving the integrity of the four language arts in each lesson, which is one of the important ideas within the reformed curriculum.

What this case illustrates regarding the influence of the context in mentors' ideas and practices is consistent with Wang's (2001) findings that working under certain instructional context, mentors are more likely to develop certain conceptions and practices of mentoring relevant to the context. For example, Wang (2001) found that because US schools have a varied school curriculum structure and teachers have autonomy in choosing the content and sequence of curriculum topics and resources, US mentors stressed that novices need to develop their own styles and philosophies of teaching. In their mentoring practices, US mentors spent more time in helping novices to develop specific curriculum, units and lessons. On the other hand, Chinese teachers have prescribed curriculum and assessment structures. Thus, Chinese mentors expected novices to study the centralized curriculum. In their mentoring practices, they emphasized helping novices learn to teach the required curriculum standards and content.

Third, the case highlights the influence of the definition of the learning to teach tasks and of the mentor role conceptualization as compared to what mentors actually do in their work with student teachers. Amal defined the learning to teach experience as guiding student teachers through the process of learning to teach. She conceptualized her role as a guide for student teachers. This definition and role conceptualization was reflected in her work with student teachers in which she guided them to learn the various tasks of teaching that she perceived as important. Her work with student teachers reflected the idea that in learning to teach, experience is necessary but not sufficient. Student teachers need guidance to see and recognize what they need to learn from this experience (Dembele, 1995).

Fourth, this case shows that what a mentor does has a consequence on what her student teachers learn or do not learn. For example, Amal suggested that Nada organize the questions in the handout of reviewing a unit and to include questions of grammar without providing a rationale for including grammar questions. As a consequence, Nada learned to be more organized for the benefit of the pupils and to ask questions in an adequate sequence. However, she did not learn the rationale for including grammar because Amal did not provide an explanation for it.

CHAPTER 5

SARAH, THE SUBJECT MATTER PASSIONATE

Sarah is a head teacher at Al-manar intermediate school, teaching Arabic in the fourth grade. She has taught for twenty years. In the Spring of 2001, when I was conducting my study, Sarah was mentoring for the second time, last year being the first. She has three student teachers this semester.

Influential people and critical experiences before entering teaching

> I was among the top three in the class until high school, then I was among the top five in the class. I was an excellent student. I had good relationships with my teachers. They [teachers] all liked me. I was a hard worker, energetic, and compliant to teachers' guidance.

Sarah made this statement during an interview. According to her, she paid attention to teachers' explanations in the classroom and also prepared her lessons in advance, doing her assignments, and reading the textbooks. The most influential teachers in her intermediate school, she stated, were her Arabic and English teachers: "I was intrigued by their personality, the way they treat the students, and the way they attracted students' attention to the subject they were teaching... this made me want to be a teacher."

Sarah's passion for languages started during her intermediate school years and continued throughout her high school. She decided to major in languages, but she was not sure whether to choose Arabic or English. She decided to choose Arabic because it might enable her to appear in the media and be a broadcaster.

Sarah graduated from a liberal arts college. Although she wanted to be a teacher, Sarah did not take any education courses in college. " I think my college studies prepared me for the field. The concentration was on the subject: grammar, different genres of literature, writing, and other related topics. I mastered everything related to Arabic language. I became strong in subject matter."

Constructing the practice: Sarah as a teacher

Sarah described her first year of teaching as very enjoyable. She was energetic and a hard worker. She taught additional hours, gave extra assignments to students and did extracurricular activities with students. "I wasn't like this generation who easily gets bored."

For Sarah, being in the field she loved and going through practice teaching taught her to be a good teacher. "I learned in the field how to present myself as a teacher, how to deal with students, and how to manage a classroom. All these things depend on a teacher's personality. A teacher who has sixteen years of experience, but has a weak personality may have a poor classroom."

Sarah feels that her strong personality makes her an effective classroom manager. This allows her to maintain a learning environment where things are organized, students pay attention, and are willing to participate.

Sarah observes that she developed her teaching abilities by reading, researching, and turning to references and books that were recommended by her college professors.

For Sarah, any Arabic teacher should be strong in her subject and know her subject well in order to be an effective teacher.

> Any Arabic language teacher should master grammar and writing skills in order to be able to read, pronounce and write well. When she writes a phrase on the board it should be free from grammatical errors. When she talks to students, discusses, and listens to students' responses, her language should be sound. How can she correct students if she is not competent in her subject matter?

The kind of teaching that Sarah describes matches the reformed curriculum advocated. Within this curriculum, a unit is taught in four or five lessons. The first lesson concentrates on discussing the general theme and ideas of the text and practice reading. The second lesson discusses the detailed ideas and information in the text, difficult vocabularies, and practice reading. The third lesson discusses the grammar, good expressions in the text, and practice spelling. The fourth lesson is about writing a topic related to the text and practice handwriting.

In fact, Sarah is critical of the new curriculum and its advocated way of teaching. In her twenty year of teaching she has experienced both the old curriculum and the new reformed curriculum. "The old way of teaching was different and better than today's. The Ministry of Education tried to ease in the new curriculum in a way that was not good or to the advantage of the students. In the past, the curriculum was harder, but had more information, which was to the benefit of the students."

She states that in the old curriculum, each part of the Arabic language had its own teaching period. It meant that writing, reading, literature and grammar was each taught in separate lessons and had more time to be discussed and learned. In the reformed curriculum, a lesson consists of the four language arts: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. She describes her feelings about the reformed curriculum as follows:

> I am a proponent of the old curriculum.... I advocate the integrity of language arts that the reformed curriculum called for but, I notice that within the new curriculum there is not enough attention given to writing and grammar. From my

> teaching experience, I can see students' diminishing in their competences in Arabic language. In the old curriculum, there was a separate lesson for oral expressions of thoughts before a writing lesson. At that time, the students were very expressive, but now they hardly say a full sentence.

Looking at what Sarah says reflects her passion and concern for the subject she teaches and shows that she is well prepared and strong in her knowledge.

Undertaking mentor role

Sarah reported having received no formal preparation for the role of mentor, except to attend a meeting with University personnel who outlined for them what was expected of the teachers as mentors. She was also given a guidebook of the student teaching program to read. As she reports: " I relied on what I learned from my teaching experience, as well as from my earlier experience of mentoring student teachers." In that statement, Sarah sounds like teachers who Kainan (1995) studied, who thought of their own experience, their colleagues' experience, and their own creativity as the main source of professional knowledge.

Sarah's ideas about learning to teach and about student teachers

According to Sarah, the most important things that student teachers need to learn or develop is their subject matter knowledge in terms of the four language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The other learning to teach tasks that Sarah mentions are: knowing the principles of the reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching, lesson plans, and test designs. I will elaborate on each of these learning to teach tasks.

Developing subject matter knowledge

According to Sarah, student teachers need to know their subject well.

> She [the student teacher] needs to know the Arabic language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In order to be able to speak fluently and to write correctly, the student teacher should master grammar skills and spelling skills. The most important thing to me is that the student teacher teaches grammar skills well, reads, pronounces, and writes correctly. She is a college student. I expect her to know all these things because she is a college student and this is what she needs for teaching. So when she writes a phrase on the board it should be free from errors. When she speaks to students, discusses, and listens to their responses her language should be correct. How can she correct the students if she isn't strong in the subject? For example, she should differentiate between the direct object and the absolute object in a sentence and know how to interpret the main ideas of a text.

The sense that I make of this is that for Sarah, knowing the subject well is the most important task a student teacher should accomplish before coming to the field, assuming that every other teaching task is learned in the field by practice and experience. In her view, knowing the subject is like a basis for student teacher's learning to teach tasks which will be developed in the field.

Learning the principles of the reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching

Learning the principles of the reformed curriculum, as defined by Sarah, entails knowing that this curriculum is based on the integrity of the four language arts and students' individual efforts. And any unit is taught according to the four-lesson cycle.

> For Arabic language, we [practitioners] concentrate on the reformed curriculum which serves as the basis for students' efforts and on making sure that each lesson contains reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Every unit is taught in four or five lessons. In each lesson, we teach a part of the unit. For example, in the first lesson, we discuss the general theme and general ideas of the unit and practice reading. In the second lesson, we discuss the detailed ideas and difficult vocabularies, as well as practice reading. In the third lesson, we discuss grammar, aesthetic expressions, and spelling skills. In the fourth lesson, we discuss pupils' research and writing compositions. They need to learn this way of teaching the curriculum especially if it is different from how they were taught at school.

The way Sarah talks about learning the principles of new curriculum and its way of teaching suggests that this new curriculum and the way of teaching is different from what the student teachers learned as students in school and the way they were taught. So they need to understand its principles and the way of teaching it. They need to understand that it is based on pupils' individual efforts and that pupils need to come to class prepared for their assignments and ready to discuss them in the class.

Learning to plan for their lessons

Sarah says that student teachers need to learn how to write lesson plans in their planning notebook. They should learn to develop objectives for their lessons and learn to use suitable behavioral objectives.

> Student teachers need to learn how to plan for their lessons. They need to write down in their planning notebooks behavioral objectives that are suitable for skills they are going to teach in the lesson, as well as compatible with what the teacher wants to accomplish in the lesson and with the instructional strategy. They also need to know the teaching procedure for discussing, the individual efforts of pupils, for practice reading the text, and for assessing the pupils' understanding.

According to Sarah, student teachers need to learn how to form behavioral objectives that would be accomplished in their lessons. They need to learn the procedures of teaching a lesson, starting with discussing the remedial sentence, followed by the discussion of pupils' individual efforts, training pupils on reading the text, and then assessing pupils' learning.

Learning to design tests

In Sarah's view, learning to design tests is another important task in learning to teach. She reports that student teachers should consider the objectives of the test and what they want to attain from testing the pupils. In her view,

> Teachers should have their objectives in mind when they make up test questions and connect these objectives to the questions. They should begin with questions which deal with understanding the text, followed by vocabulary and grammar questions, with a writing question at the end. The questions should be in sequence and varied.

According to Sarah, this is an important skill that student teachers need to develop. Not only must they learn to connect the objectives to the test questions, they must learn how to sequence the questions to test pupils' learning in each aspect of the language arts, as well as learning to ask various kinds of questions.

I think that what is missing from the preceding and what is related to knowledge of subject matter is the task of developing knowledge of how to represent the subject in a way that is comprehensible to each pupil. Developing such knowledge helps a teacher to connect her understanding of the subject matter to the pupils' evolving comprehension. It also helps the teacher to adjust her instruction to those pupils with different abilities and backgrounds.

This kind of knowledge is what Shulman (1986) has called "pedagogical content knowledge." According to Shulman, pedagogical content knowledge involves "for the most regularly taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representations of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations—in a word, ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (p. 9). Consequently, developing pedagogical content knowledge is a crucial task in learning to teach. However, developing this kind of knowledge depends on knowledge of subject matter and knowledge of learners, including their learning styles, thought processes, and ways of knowing. While Sarah emphasized that student teachers need to develop their subject

matter knowledge by learning the principles of the reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching, by planning for their lessons, and by learning to design tests, she did not speak about learning to represent the subject in a way that is understandable to pupils, which is an important task for the student teachers to achieve.

Sarah's ideas about mentoring and role conceptualization

Sarah conceptualized her role as a guide for student teachers—helping them learn to do teaching tasks. As she said:

> Before anything, I let them [the student teachers] know the general Arabic language objectives and the specific objectives of teaching Arabic language for intermediate grades. Then I clarify to them the principles of the reformed curriculum and ways of teaching Arabic language as recommended by the reformed curriculum, as well as explaining how to plan lessons in their notebooks and show them examples of lesson plans and good teaching methods. Then I follow the student teachers in their planning and teaching, providing them with feedback.

From the quoted passage above, it seems that the approaches Sarah uses to guide student teachers are telling, showing, and critiquing.

Sarah believes that one learns to teach by practice teaching, by making mistakes and learning from them with the help of expert's feedback and guidance.

> The head teacher has the expertise and what I most care about is their learning. They need to practice teaching and to be guided in their learning to teach. I want them to know that anyone can make a mistake but it is a shame to continue making the same mistake. One should learn from one's mistakes, from other people, and from reading.

Sarah's thinking about learning to teach by teaching, learning from mistakes, expert's feedback, and reading seems consistent with what she has said about her own way of learning to teach. She had developed herself as a teacher by reading, researching,

and learning from her mistakes. Another thing that stood out in the passage above is that Sarah said that student teachers need to be guided in their learning to teach. This means that she seems to think that it is not enough to have the experience of practicing teaching, but that they also need to be guided to see things while they are learning to teach.

Sarah conceives her role, beside telling, explaining and showing, as a critic to student teachers' performance as well as a feedback provider. In order to assess what student teachers know and use that as a basis for giving them appropriate feedback, the student teachers must perform in order to show what they understand or misunderstand. In other words, they must show or reveal their knowledge in action. This is similar to Schon's (1987) discussion of the dialogue between coach and student in learning to design. Schon (1987) discuses that the student efforts at design provide the coach with evidence from which to infer their difficulties and understandings and a basis for framing of questions, criticisms, and suggestions. Schon explains the process as:

> In their dialogue, coach and student convey messages to each other not only, or even primarily, in words but also in the medium of performance. The student tries to do what she seeks to learn and thereby reveals what she understands or misunderstands. The coach responds with advice, criticism, explanations, descriptions—but also with further performance of his own (p. 163).

Sarah was engaging in a dialogue of action, but she probably was not trying to produce a reflective practitioner. She reported that her aim was to convey her expertise to the student teachers.

> I observe the student teacher's teaching for their development—to help them learn from my teaching experience and expertise. Actually, I observe their teaching to see their competence and if there are holes in their teaching I will guide them and provide them with feedback. This is for the benefit of the student teacher and the pupils in the school.

On many occasions, Sarah emphasized the idea that mentoring and guiding student teachers is not only for the benefit and learning of student teachers, but also for the benefit of the pupils in school who are taught by the student teachers. Since the student teachers are leading the teaching instruction in classrooms, their competences as teachers will have an effect on the pupils as learners. With less teaching abilities and less competence, pupils may be misled or deprived of learning opportunities.

> I try to help student teachers to learn. But before thinking about how to benefit student teachers, I worry about the pupils and how they will be instructed by the student teachers. I feel responsible for the student teachers; they came to me to learn so I am concerned both for them and the pupils in order not to convey any wrong information.

I now turn to discussing what Sarah does as a mentor in support of student teachers' learning. I provide a picture of her practice by discussing the key features of her actions as a mentor and look closely at how she works with the student teachers, pointing out the potential for, and limitations in, fostering student teachers' learning.

Sarah's ways of acting in support of student teachers' learning

Overview of the work

> From the beginning of the semester, I sit with the student teachers and explain the elements of the reformed curriculum which is based on students' independent efforts and compatibility among the language arts. After I make sure that they learn these things, I explain to them how to form and develop lessons' objectives and instructional procedure. In addition, I show them examples of good lesson plans. Then I ask them to plan the first lesson of a unit. I see their plans and discuss their mistakes with them I then request them to plan the second lesson, etc. Every day during the observation period, I request a lesson plan from them and I correct it. I also observe their teaching three times a week.

Sarah makes this statement when she is asked what she does to help student teachers learn to plan. The statement provides a temporal and topical sketch of mentor

and student teachers work together. Sarah uses a cycle of telling, demonstration/showing and coaching/critiquing to support student teachers' learning. She goes through this cycle for each of the following essential tasks of teaching: planning for instruction, managing instruction in classrooms, and writing tests.

Sarah reports that she purposely approaches these tasks in a particular sequence--planning, then instruction managing, and finally test writing. This ordering indicates that Sarah holds the view that sequencing is an important task. It suggests that in her view learning to plan should come first, before managing instruction, because a teacher cannot manage instruction without careful planning.

Sarah says that from the first formal meeting with the student teachers, she explains to them the principles of the reformed curriculum. She tells them how to plan for instruction and how each unit should be discussed in four to five lessons. She teaches them how to form objectives for each lesson, as well as shows them examples of good lesson plans. Then, she lets them do a practice planning of a unit, lesson by lesson as she provides them with feedback. Sarah keeps doing this for the first two weeks, which are the observation weeks. When the student teachers take on the responsibility of independent classroom teaching, Sarah continues to check on the student teachers' planning and teaching, providing them with feedback.

One thing that stands out from Sarah's response is that independent practice is the main goal of student teaching which will, as shown later, shape the way she operates as a mentor to student teachers.

The response also gives us a sense of the phases of Sarah's interactions with student teachers. Looking ahead is the feature of the early part of their work together

(before student teachers' independent teaching) and looking back is the feature of their later work together, as I witnessed (with mentor observation of student teachers' classrooms). Sarah mentions that earlier interactions focused on telling, modeling, and showing tasks of teaching that student teachers will do independently. Later, I observe that Sarah leaves student teachers alone to practice teaching independently and steps into their classrooms to observe three times a week, whereby they tend to discuss lesson plans and teaching episodes that they both witness.

In what follows, I examine how Sarah works with her student teachers. I analyze several aspects of the work and provide evidence of or speculation on student teachers' learning.

Helping student teachers learn to plan

Sarah's work with student teachers on planning evolves from telling to assisting. She reports that she first tells them how to form behavioral objectives, which include cognitive objectives, affective objectives, and procedural objectives, as well as explains instructional strategies and procedures they may use in their lessons plans. Next, she shows them examples of good lesson plans. Then, they practice planning a unit lesson by lesson and Sarah provides them with feedback by commenting on each lesson plan before the student teachers proceed to the next lesson of the unit. Finally, she lets them teach on their own, providing assistance only when student teachers encounter new questions or problems. She continues critiquing their daily lesson plans and provides them with feedback.

In planning with the student teachers, Sarah explains that:

> I never plan with them. Student teachers plan and I correct their lesson plans and provide them with feedback. For almost two weeks the student teachers plan in their notebooks and I correct them. For example, I will comment to them that a certain objective is not clear or point out that one is not adequate here. Then, after ten days, I notice that my comments lessen because the student teachers have developed their own planning strategies. I guide them by correcting their errors.

At the stage where Sarah lets the teachers become more independent, they still meet sometimes in the shared department office. This gives her an opportunity to respond to any of the student teachers' questions or concerns regarding lesson plans, objectives, content, pedagogy, activities, or tasks. As Sarah puts it:

> At the time when student teachers and I are sitting in the shared department office, I follow up with them and look at their lesson plans. I will ask one of them to bring her planning notebook and sit beside me. I look at her plans to see what she has prepared for today or tomorrow's lessons. If there are any errors, I like to make sure that we correct them before she enters the classroom to teach. When I have finished with one of the student teachers, I then look at another student teacher's lesson plans. Often my checking on lesson plans is at this time. It is also a good time for the student teachers to ask me any questions or voice any concerns.

Although the time they spend in shared department office is critical for interacting, it is difficult to see how Sarah's combination of instruction and correction of errors will provide her student teachers with the opportunity to critically analyze their own practices. They also do not spend the time in the department office to plan together so Sarah can model how to plan for them. It is not enough that mentors model the actual teaching performance of teaching, it is also important for them to model the way of thinking for novices. Tatum and McWhorter (1999) emphasized the importance of modeling teachers' behavior and thinking. They pointed out: "As mentor teachers teach and interact with students, they are illustrating for the teacher candidate a way of working the craft. Mentor teachers should, however, take the modeling step further and render visible the thinking and the evolving philosophy of a teacher." (p. 26). As student

teachers need to see teachers teach they also need to see teachers plan. Through modeling how to plan, student teachers can learn how teachers think, to learn how to ask good questions in the right sequence, to assess pupils' prior knowledge, and to learn to deal with content-related issues.

Helping student teachers learn to manage instruction

In helping student teachers learn to manage instruction, Sarah uses many different ways. She uses modeling, both by herself and with other experienced teachers, letting the student teachers observe and then practice teach independently, providing them with feedback.

Sarah reports that she spent the first two weeks of the semester taking the student teachers to her class and other experienced teacher' classrooms to observe how teachers manage instruction. Then, each student teacher was given a classroom to teach. Sarah gave the student teachers five teaching periods, leaving one teaching period for the original classroom teachers.

Sarah observes student teachers three times a week to provide feedback on their teaching. Sarah reports that during the observation,

> I pay attention to each student teacher's teaching strategies, whether she demonstrates an understanding of the content, and if she makes mistakes. Then after the observation, I discuss these issues with them. However, I do not try to step in or interrupt while she is teaching.

On many occasions, I witnessed the student teacher make errors or write grammatically incorrect sentences on the board and Sarah did not step in or interrupt to correct these mistakes. When Sarah was asked why she chose not to step in when she saw the student teachers make mistakes, she responded:

> The reason was that I did not want to embarrass the student teacher or undermine her in the classroom. There were mistakes I observed, however, in discussing them with her later, I simply requested that she find a way to correct them the next day with the pupils. That is because my interference may cause frustration to the student teacher.

When Sarah is asked about her goal for observing the student teachers, she responds:

> I visit each student teacher classroom to critique both the positive and negative points, to keep an eye on the student teacher and the pupils, and to see whether the teacher teaches the way we discussed and if there are mistakes. My aim for the visit is guidance and to see whether she hs benefited from my previous feedback and applied my recommendations.

It appears that Sarah's goal is to provide feedback about the student teachers' teaching and to check whether the student teachers apply what she has suggested to them. Below, I look closely at three observation sessions and the post observation conferences held by Sarah with each student teacher in order to provide a richer portrait of what is happening. Also, I want to illustrate how observation and feedback can provide an occasion for the mentored student to learn to teach.

First episode: Sarah's observation session and conference with Aisha

This observation session took place at the seventh week of the semester. The lesson was about an Islamic hero called Abu jabber Al-Ansari. The lesson was the second one in the unit in which the teacher discusses detailed ideas and vocabulary in addition to practice reading the text. Aisha started with the remedial sentence. She dictated the sentence to the students to test their spelling skills. Sarah, at that moment, started to write in her notebook and to observe closely what Aisha was doing. Aisha then wrote the sentence on the board and gave the students time to correct their spelling errors. She started to discuss the individual effort assignments. The first assignment was to highlight

two detailed ideas from the text. Aisha started to listen to the pupils' responses and write them on the board. I noticed that Aisha was applying what Sarah had said to her in their last conference, which was to write down pupils' ideas on the board and to discuss them instead of just listening to them. Aisha then asked the pupils if one of the ideas brought up was suitable for the text and was it adequate for being considered a detailed idea? Aisha commented that it was an idea but not a detailed one. Then she started to discuss the second idea, editing it and rewriting it in a different way.

The two sentences that Aisha wrote on the board contained grammatical errors and the pupils wrote these sentences in their notebook. Sarah, though, did not interfere or try to correct what Aisa wrote on the board.

The second assignment was to search the dictionary for the meaning of some vocabulary. Aisha discussed the meaning of a word from the text, but mispronounced it. One of the students was chosen to answer, but her voice was so soft it was hard to hear her. Aisha ignored her and asked another student. She listened to many pupils who suggested different meanings for the word. Aisha appeared to struggle with finding a suitable meaning for the word, so she asked the pupils to open their dictionaries and search for the meaning. The pupils did so and started to stand up and go to the front, where Aisha was standing beside her desk, to show her the meaning in the dictionary instead of reading it aloud.

Sarah did not interfere or say anything at that time. She was only observing what was happening. Then she asked one of the pupils who sat close to her to give her the textbook. Sarah opened it to the unit, looked at it and checked how the word was written

in the text, because Aisha had pronounced it incorrectly. Also she wanted to check the context in which the word was written.

In discussing another word, one of the pupils gave a meaning of the word. Aisha said it was a wrong answer, but it was actually correct. The word had many different meanings. The meaning that the pupil indicated was right, but was not adequate for this situation or was not suitable with the whole meaning of the text.

The third assignment was to give the singular of some plural words. Aisha discussed the assignment and then read a passage from the text aloud and had the students read the text out loud as well.

After reading, Aisha discussed the text with the pupils. She asked them to find two opposite words in the text and asked them comprehension questions about the text. I noticed that Aisha was doing what Sarah had suggested to her previously, which was to discuss the text in some detail with the pupils.

Aisha started to discuss the assessment part, which was to ask the pupils to find a detailed idea from a passage she displayed on the board. The bell rang before Aisha was able to finish this part.

Sarah's conference with Aisha

It was just after the observation that Sarah met with Aisha to give her feedback about her teaching methods. Sarah started by thanking Aisha because she had applied what Sarah had told her last time and followed her guides. She also praised her for testing the pupils in spelling, listening to and discussing their ideas, and writing them on the board.

Sarah then pointed out to Aisha that she made some grammatical errors when she wrote the sentences on the board. She then taught Aisha the content of the grammar topic and explained to her the correct grammatical skills. She also asked her to do some research about the grammar topic to be discussed in another meeting.

Sarah then asked Aisha whether she understood the meaning of the word with which she had struggled. When she replied that she was uncertain about the meaning, Sarah asked Aisha to open the book and read the word. Sarah then explained the meaning and clarified for Aisha the right pronunciation of the word.

Sarah also indicated that one pupil gave a right meaning for a word, but Aisha did not accept her meaning and did not explain it. Sarah started to discuss and explain the meaning for Aisha.

Sarah complimented Aisha on what she had done in reading and discussing saying: " you did a good job in reading a passage, letting the pupils read and then discussing the text. But, in the assessment part, the time overtook you."

The observation session and Sarah's comments and feedback gave Aisha the opportunity to learn many things. These included such things as, learning the content, learning to pay more attention to what pupils say in their responses, and learning to manage the time. In what follows, I elaborate on each point.

Learning content area

When Aisha wrote two sentences on the board with grammatical errors, Sarah pointed out her mistakes. In addition, Sarah taught Aisha the content of the grammar topic and asked her to do some research on the topic and discuss it with her. What Sarah did was to give Aisha the opportunity to learn grammar content that she did not quite

understand. Sarah's feedback also gave Aisha the opportunity to realize that she had some limitations in understanding some grammar topics and skills and that she should do something to develop those skills. As Aisha reported:

> I need to review the grammar topics and to read and research about the topics that I have limitation in understanding. That is because the classroom teaching demands more than what is in the textbook. The grammar book has exercises more than explanations and I am required to clarify for the pupils these grammar topics. So I feel I should read outside the textbook.

From the above, it seems that Aisha realized and acknowledged her limitations in grammar and that she needed to do more reading to develop herself more as a teacher and to be responsive to her pupils.

Learning to pay attention to pupils' responses

Sarah's comments on what Aisha did during her teaching when she declined a correct answer without even explaining the reason, might help Aisha to learn to pay more attention to pupils' responses. Sarah clarified for Aisha that one pupil gave one right meaning for a word, but Aisha did not accept her meaning and did not explain the reason for refusing the pupil's answer. So, Aisha should not have declined the meaning, but should have explained that it was a correct meaning for the word if used in a different context. This situation presented the opportunity for Aisha, as she reported, to "learn to listen carefully to what the pupils have to say and to concentrate on pupils' responses."

Learning to manage the time

Sarah also commented on the assessment part of Aisha's lesson when she mentioned that the class time was finished before Aisha was done. This comment was more than likely directed to Aisha for the purpose of managing her time carefully. It gave the opportunity for her to learn not to spend so much time on one thing in the lesson,

forgetting about other aspects that needed to be discussed. So, learning to carefully manage the time while teaching is an important part of what a student teacher should learn.

Second episode: Sarah's observation session and conference with Samar

The observation session took place at the sixth week of the semester. The unit was a poem titled "Arab Countries" from the poet Ebraheem Kaleel Al-alaaf. This was the fifth lesson of the unit, which included writing and research.

Sarah and I entered the classroom while Samar was discussing the first individual effort assignment. The assignment had been to write about a trip the pupils had taken to one of the Arabic countries, with explanations on what they had seen and places they had visited.

The pupils, one by one, started to read aloud the essays they had written. Samar was listening to pupils while they read. She then chose one of the pupils' essays to display on the board and discuss with the pupils. She first discussed and reviewed with the pupils punctuation marks and conjunction words. Then, she started to discuss the chosen essay. The pupil had written an essay about her trip to Syria. With the help of the pupils, Samar corrected and edited some of the sentences which were incorrect.

The pupils then read the edited essay out loud. Next, they copied it into their notebooks. Samar assisted the pupils and checked their notebooks. I noticed that Samar was confident and her voice was loud and full of zeal. However, her pronunciation of vowels needed to be improved and, she also did not do a good job in correcting and editing the pupils' writing. In the first phrase, she used a wrong preposition. Sarah did not interfere or step in to correct her.

Samar then started to discuss the second assignment. The assignment had been to do some research and write a brief passage about the poet Ebraheem Kaleel Al-alaaf. Samar was listening to what the pupils had researched and written about him. The bell rang before Samar was able to give the pupils the next day's assignment.

Sarah's conference with Samar

In the conference after the observation, Sarah gave Samar feedback and commented on her teaching. Sarah started by showing Samar an example of some writing and then discussed with her the kinds of sentences and phrases she had used in discussing and editing the pupil's essay in class. She wanted to teach her how to produce good literary sentences. Sarah also told Samar that she did not explain to pupils how to organize the sentences and the phrases when writing. In addition, she pointed out that she used a wrong preposition in the first phrase of the essay and also used a conjunction in a wrong place.

Sarah then went on to critique Samar about listening to a large number of pupils about their research of the poet, which took too much time and wasted the time that could have been used in training the pupils in writing. Sarah recommended that Samar always seek to connect the ideas and link the phrases in a way that connect the whole passage. Thus, there would be a connection between one phrase and the next.

Sarah's observation and conference with Samar offered the opportunity for Samar to develop her writing skills. Showing her an example of writing and discussing with her the sentences she used in her discussion of the pupil's essay were likely to give Samar the opportunity to compare what she had done with the example of a good writing essay. As Samar put it:

> Sarah taught me how to begin and pursue teaching a writing lesson. I learned from her the importance of each sentence in writing and how to use adequate conjunctions to connect among the sentences.

This situation also helped Samar learn to use her time more wisely. Sarah directed Samar's attention to the fact that she spent so much time listening to the pupils' research, that she ran out of time to finish her lesson plan. That time, Sarah recommended, could have been used for training the pupils to write better.

Third episode: Sarah's observation session and conference with Heba

This observation session took place also at the sixth week of the semester. Heba was teaching the same lesson as Samar, but with a different group of pupils. The unit was a poem about Arab countries, and it was the fifth lesson, which included writing and research.

Heba started her lesson by discussing the first assignment, which was similar to what Samar had given her students, to write about a trip the pupils took to one of the Arabic countries with an explanation of what they saw and places they had visited. Heba displayed on the board one of the pupils' writings and started to discuss the essay. She showed how the sentences should be connected and what conjunctions and punctuation to use. Then she started to correct and edit the writing of the pupil.

I noticed that Heba sometimes used slang in her talking instead of the correct standard Arabic language. After she finished the assignment, she started to write the edited passage on the board. She then let the pupils read the edited passage aloud and corrected them as necessary.

Heba then discussed the second assignment. The assignment was to do some research and write a brief passage about the poet, Ebraheem Kaleel Al-alaaf. Heba

listened to what the pupils had written about him. She then started to check the pupils' notebooks and let them read the poem aloud. I noticed that again Sarah did not interfere or step in during Heba's teaching.

Sarah's conference with Heba

Sarah started her conference by saying to Heba that her teaching, in general, was improving. However, in this lesson, she had not discussed the sentences in more depth. Sarah suggested to Heba that she discuss the sentences in more detail, and then connect them together.

Sarah also informed Heba that she used an inappropriate conjunction, as well as using slang in the classroom. In general, Sarah mentioned to her that her performance was good, but she should discuss the sentences and phrases separately unlinking them and then using the connection instruments or conjunctions to connect them back together.

The observation session and Sarah's feedback afforded the opportunity for Heba to learn how to teach a writing lesson and to pay attention to her language when she speaks in class, because Arabic teachers should use standard Arabic language in their teaching. Since they are teaching the language, they should always model the correct usage for the pupils in the classroom. As Heba reported:

> From the feedback I realized the error I made and learned about the mistakes that I do in my teaching. I also learned how to teach writing and to write down the sentences separately and then reconnect them. I also learned to pay attention to the time, to use the correct standard Arabic language in my speaking during teaching, and to speak clearly and loudly.

From the foregoing, it seems that Sarah's feedback helped Heba realize the errors that she made during teaching. She accepted the critique of her errors so she could learn from them. As she reported, "Sarah gives me the feedback without giving me the feeling

of guilt of making the mistakes. I accept the positive and negative remarks of her feedback."

At the beginning of the student teaching course, Sarah seemed to work similarly with the three student teachers. As Sarah said:

> At the beginning of the course I instructed all the student teachers and explained to them how to plan for instruction, form objectives to be achieved in the lesson, and manage instruction. Then, if I observed a student teacher and noticed that she made a mistake in a specific thing or needed to improve a skill, I sat with her and instructed her about what she needed to do to improve herself. If I noticed a student teacher had a weakness in a specific area I dealt with her individually. However, if there were some common instructions or comments that I wanted to instruct all of the student teachers I sat with them as a group and talked to them.

I often noticed that when Sarah was working with each student teacher after observing her teaching, she pointed out specific skills and areas that needed improvement. For example, when Sarah noticed that Aisha made a mistake in an important grammar skill Sarah took the time in the conference to instruct and explain to Aisha this grammar skill. She also asked her to do some research on this specific skill and to come discuss it with her after she was done.

Helping student teachers learn to write tests and involving them in grading tests

Just as with the tasks of managing and planning for instruction, Sarah helps student teachers learn to write tests through telling, showing, coaching and then fading out so that they can do it independently.

> For test writing, I sit with the student teachers and explain to them how to design a test. I tell them that they should pay attention to the objectives so that the questions remain connected to them I let the student teachers know that they should sequence the questions beginning with understanding the questions, then the vocabulary, the grammar, and finally the writing. I make it clear to them that they should vary the questions. Then, I give them examples of a test to look at it to guide them to see how the questions are arranged, varied, and connected to the

> objectives. Then, I ask them to design a test and I look at it. I discuss with them the negative and positive points in their tests and request them to correct their tests after my feedback.

The task of writing tests is an important aspect of teachers' work and Sarah specifically set up this event in order for the student teachers to practice designing and understanding test objectives. The mentor and the student teachers could also get together to work on the authentic task of writing a test to be administered—it would allow on-the-spot consultation and also help both student teachers and mentors make their thinking visible to each other. As Dembele (1995) puts it:

> For novices, having access to his or her mentor's thinking in context is critical for learning to think like a teacher. For the mentor, having access to the novice's thinking helps to assess where he or she is in his or her learning and to adjust assistance accordingly (p. 153-154).

Later in the semester, I saw Sarah explaining to the student teachers how to grade tests and then she let them grade the actual test that had been administered to students. She made herself available to the student teachers while they were grading the test in case they had questions or concerns.

Helping student teachers learn to lead classroom discussion

In helping student teachers learn to lead the classroom discussion, Sarah reported that she devoted the first two weeks of the semester in arranging for the student teachers to observe experienced teachers' teaching and lead classroom discussion, including hers. These teachers showed the student teachers how to teach the reformed curriculum and how to model discussing independent efforts by pupils, and the text. When Sarah was asked how student teachers learned to lead the discussion in their classrooms, she responded that student teachers, during the observation weeks, observed experienced

teachers teaching and leading the discussion in their classrooms. Student teachers, in turn wrote notes about their observation. Sarah felt that from their observation and with her guidance, student teachers learned how to lead discussions adequately in their classrooms. In addition, she reported that she also observed and provided the student teachers with feedback about their classroom discussion after their teaching efforts. She said:

> During my observation to student teachers, I observe whether their discussions is adequate, whether they take too much time in discussing one aspect while neglecting others, and whether the sequence of the questions is adequate. Then, I provide them with comments and feedback about their classroom discussions.

Sarah continued to take the student teachers to observe experienced teacher during the semester. Usually this happened during the time of the staff weekly meetings, since all Arabic language teachers have a weekly meeting time when all the teachers are free from teaching during a specific period of the day. They meet together, get guidance d feedback from the head teacher, or discuss curriculum and teaching with each other. This weekly staff meeting time was sometimes used to exchange classroom visitation. For example, one teacher would change her teaching period to be at the meeting and then all the other teachers would be free at this time to visit her classroom and observe her teaching. These kinds of observations were occasions for student teachers to learn how to lead classroom discussions. In what follows, I look closely at one of the observation sessions that was an occasion for the student teachers to observe an experienced teacher teaching and leading classroom discussions. It was also an occasion for other teachers in the department to critique her teaching.

Student teachers' observation session of an experienced teacher

The unit was on prophet traditions, which included Muslims and their rights and duties toward other people. It was the fourth lesson in which the teacher discussed writing composition and handwriting.

Sarah, the student teachers, the teachers in the Arabic department, and I all went to observe the teacher teaching. Before we went to observe the teacher, the head teacher (Sarah) gave us a sheet on which we would express our opinions and critique the teacher. This sheet included some elements to pay attention to, such as the teacher's discussion of the individual assignment and writing composition, students' responses, and the teacher's effort to encourage the pupils to participate in the discussion. Also observed were the achievement of the reading and writing in her lesson, the organization of the board, the learning aids used, time arrangement, and the range of the achievement of the lesson objectives. In addition, there was a space for commenting on her teaching.

The teacher started to discuss the handwriting phrase, which was on the board, and asked the pupils to bring words that have a specific letter (vowel) that comes in the middle of the word. The teacher then started to discuss the writing composition topic with the pupils. She displayed and read one of the pupils' writing passages. She discussed the pupil's ideas and the organization of her writing. She asked sequential questions and asked pupils to participate in the discussion. Then, she started to edit the pupil's writing by asking the pupils questions about the logic of the argument, the phrases, the words, the prepositions used, and the clarity of the ideas.

Sarah was sitting close to the three student teachers. I noticed that one of the student teachers asked Sarah whether a word written on the board was spelled correctly. I

also noticed that Sarah talked to the student teachers about things that the experienced teacher was doing during her teaching. She was guiding the student teachers to see and pay attention to things while the teacher was teaching. When the teacher was done, the other teachers thanked her and gave her some remarks about her teaching. They then turned their critique sheets in to Sarah.

Observing this kind of lesson offered the student teachers the opportunity to learn how to teach a writing lesson. It also presented the opportunity to learn how to lead a discussion in the classroom, how to ask sequential questions, and how to scaffold them in order to explore their ideas about the writing. As Samar expressed about her learning:

> I learned how to teach composition writing and how to discuss pupils' writings. I learned how to form, sequence the questions to be asked, and to lead the classroom discussion. The way that the teacher discusses and edits pupils' writings involves the teacher's competence. Honestly, discussing writing is a very difficult thing.

These kinds of observations give an opportunity for student teachers to see the practice of teaching by an experienced teacher while they assume the responsibility for classroom teaching. In this manner, they will have a classroom experience to relate to and discuss with the mentor or other teachers. Sarah continued to observe the student teachers until the end of the semester and provided them with feedback about their teaching and about how they lead discussion in the classroom.

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, I described Sarah's ideas about mentoring and student teachers' learning to teach. In addition, I examined her mentoring practice as well as opportunities she provided for student teachers' learning. The analysis in this chapter suggests many things

about mentoring and learning to teach. First, the case illustrates that how Sarah acts as a mentor reflects what she thinks student teachers need to learn. She thinks that student teachers need to develop their subject matter knowledge, learn the principles of the reformed curriculum and its way of teaching, plan for their lessons, manage classroom instruction; and design good tests. The case illustrates that her mentoring practices reflect her ideas about how student teachers need to learn. Sarah worked with the student teachers on helping them learn to accomplish all these tasks.

Secondly, the case illustrates that Sarah enacted her role and her practices according to how she thinks learning occurs. Her practices with the student teachers involved telling them how to do the tasks of teaching, showing them how to do them, coaching them in doing these tasks, and finally providing them with feedback on their independent performance of these tasks.

Thirdly, the case highlights the complexity of learning to teach in ways that are responsive to pupils and attentive to the integrity of the subject matter. Sarah seemed to be concerned about the pupils' learning, the benefit for the student teachers and concern about the subject matter at hand. When a student teacher made a mistake while she was teaching, Sarah seemed to be concerned about the subject at hand and that the pupils would not be misled. However, she chose not to interrupt to correct the student teacher mistakes. She did not want to undermine student teachers' authority or cause any feelings of frustration. However, at the same time, she felt responsible for the student teachers' learning.

Fourthly, this case highlights the influence of the existing national curriculum and its ways of teaching on what mentors do in their work with student teachers. Kuwait has a

national content, textbooks, and curriculum goals prescribed by the Ministry of Education. It also has a specific way of teaching Arabic language. In her mentoring practices, Sarah seemed to concentrate on helping student teachers learn the content, the principles and goals of the national curriculum and the way of teaching it.

CHAPTER 6

DANA: A TRAINER OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Dana is a teacher in Al-noor intermediate school. She has been teaching for fifteen years and is the head teacher of the Arabic Language Department. This is the fourth time she is mentoring student teachers. She began mentoring in 1995. At the time of this study she was mentoring two student teachers.

Dana's memories before entering teaching

Dana remembers that she was a good pupil and that her relationship with her teachers was excellent. She was always participating in school activities and competitions and had good relationships with other pupils in the school. "We liked each other, studied together and cooperated with each other in doing school works."

Dana reports that her teachers played a critical role in giving her confidence and success in school because of "their caring for all pupils and for teaching us extra hours in the morning, even before exams."

Dana was a student in the liberal arts college majoring in Arabic language. She recalls that she was committed to her studies and outside readings. She reported, "I was committed to attending classes and reading outside of my classes. I learned not only from my classes but also from outside readings. My college studies prepared me in terms of the subject matter, but for educational and teaching matters, I learned them in the field as well as by my readiness to work as a teacher."

As with the other teachers featured in my study, Dana had no formal preparation for being a teacher. She had always wanted to be a teacher, but never received any formal training while in college. That was because, at that time, she felt that the liberal arts college could prepare her better in terms of subject matter knowledge.

Dana as a teacher

Dana remembers that her first year of teaching was hard. Perhaps it was understandable since she had had no education courses in college and, thus, had to work hard and learn to teach in the field. She reported that "the first year of teaching was hard. Everything was hard in the beginning. That year of teaching took much effort from me. I developed my competence as a beginning teacher. That was by the endorsement of the head teacher and school supervisor at the time."

She reported that she developed as a teacher by attending to the teacher's guidebook and learning from her mistakes, as well as from other teachers' experiences. This means that she learned how to teach by practice and from observing experienced teachers. Dana feels that professional knowledge is the result of her own and her colleagues' experiences. This conception of professional knowledge is reminiscent of what Kainan (1995) discovered about Israeli teachers' conceptions of their professional knowledge. They said their professional knowledge was comprised of their own knowledge, their colleagues' experiences, and their creativity (Kainan, 1995).

Dana's description of her teaching largely matches the philosophy of the reformed curriculum, which is based on the integrity of the four language arts: reading, writing,

speaking and listening. She also reports that her teaching is based on individual effort and discussion in the class. She reports:

> My strategy of teaching is by discussion and interaction. Lecturing has become an old method of teaching. Now, the reformed curriculum depends on individual effort and discussion. For example, I give the pupils an assignment to do at home and they return to class ready to participate in a discussion. Of course, too, there is the assessment part which assesses pupil learning and reveals if they have gained the necessary skills.

Dana mentions that teaching through discussion and interaction is essential in her teaching. Dialogue and exchange of information and ideas, she says, gives the pupils the opportunity to interpret the ideas and to secure their understanding.

Dana also reports that this year, following the recommendation of the ministry of education, they are using outside assessment for their lessons to determine whether or not pupils have mastered the intended skills. This means that the pupils practice a skill using the normal and usual classroom materials. To assess mastery of the skill, the teacher brings in materials similar to those used in class, but which the pupils have not seen before. For example, the teacher may give the pupils an outside passage and ask them comprehension questions or ask them to interpret the main idea.

> This year we are following the recommendations and adopting the idea of outside assessment. This is because the reformed curriculum is based on skills training and the teacher acts as a trainer. So when we want to measure pupils' skills and understanding of the lesson, we give them an outside passage and ask them questions related to lesson objectives. For example, we may request them to interpret the main idea of the passage or ask them a comprehension question about the passage.

Besides achieving the integrity of the four language arts, Dana says that it is important for her to seek a connection between the lesson and pupils' lives and

experiences. She feels that when she relates the lesson to pupils' experiences, the lesson will be more beneficial and understandable for pupils. As she say:

> In the second grade, we have a poem about "the sleepless mother" who waits for her absent son to come home safely. This poem can be connected to the mothers of Kuwaiti prisoners of war who are waiting for their sons for more than 10 years.

She feels that many pupils have relatives that are still captive in Iraqi prisons. So, pupils have experiences with concerned mothers who worry about and wait for their sons to return safely from captivity. Thus, connecting the poem to what pupils have experienced is very beneficial, she reports, for pupils' understanding.

Dana likes the ways of teaching found in the reformed curriculum in terms of teaching the content in all aspects of sequenced lessons and in achieving the integrity of the four language arts in each lesson. However, she reports that the old curriculum is better in terms of the content and information it included in its units, especially in grammar.

Undertaking the mentor role

Like other mentors in this study, Dana reports having no formal preparation for the role of mentoring. She only attended a meeting held at the university that presented what was expected from mentors. She primarily learned on the job and relied on her experience as a teacher and as a mentor. She reports:

> In the first year of being a mentor, I struggled and proceeded with great effort to work with student teachers. I was with them in the classroom, observing and guiding for most of the time. I also held many conferences with them. I made strenuous efforts to help the student teachers. I primarily relied on my experiences in teaching.

Over the years, she states that she developed a set of ideas about what student teachers need to learn and clarified her role as a mentor to act in support of student teachers' learning.

Dana's ideas about learning to teach and about student teachers

According to Dana, the most important things that student teachers need to learn are: 1) the general Arabic language objectives and the behavioral objectives; 2) the way of teaching the reformed curriculum; and 3) managing the classroom. In what follows, I elaborate on each of these learning to teach tasks.

Learning the Arabic language objectives

Dana reports that an important task of learning to teach is learning the Arabic language objectives. This refers to knowing the general Arabic language objectives, the objectives of the grade level, and the behavioral objectives of each lesson. The general Arabic objectives and the grade level objectives concern knowledge about the goals of teaching the Arabic language and what the pupils are expected to learn. The behavioral objectives concern the goals that are intended to be achieved in every lesson and how these kinds of objectives depend on subject matter and content knowledge. She reports that student teachers should learn these objectives from the teachers' guidebook during the observation period (the first two weeks of the student teaching semester). She feels that this period is very important for student teachers because it introduces them to learning how to teach. In addition to learning the general objectives, she also feels it is

crucial for them to learn how to form behavioral objectives for each lesson they will teach. She says:

> By reading the teacher's guidebook, seeing examples of lesson plans and looking at experienced teachers' planning books, the student teachers form an idea of these objectives. Then, I teach them about the behavioral objectives and how to differentiate among the cognitive, affective, and procedural objectives. In addition I teach them that the objectives should be real and can be achieved in the lesson.

According to Dana, student teachers should be clear about the three kinds of objectives and not to be confused among them when forming these objectives for their lessons. This learning should be settled or established at the beginning of the student teachers' semester. Additionally, they need to recognize that the objectives should not be at such a high level or degree that they cannot be achieved in one lesson.

Learning the way of teaching the reformed curriculum

Learning to teach the reformed curriculum and to manage instruction according to its principles is an important task in learning to teach as reported by Dana:

> They [student teachers] should learn how to teach the reform curriculum. They might learn about it at the university. However, learning the theory is different from the actual practice. This period of student teaching serves as a preparation for them before they get the job of teaching. In this period they start to observe experienced teachers' teaching, exchange classroom visits, critique each other's teaching practices and get guidance and feedback. This will develop their teaching practices.

This means that Dana values classroom experience in learning to teach to the extent that it helps student teachers make connections between what they learned at the university and the realities of classroom life.

Learning to manage the classroom

According to Dana, one thing that is crucial for student teachers to learn is how to manage and have a confident presence in the classroom. She says that they should have the ability to deal with the pupils and to facilitate the whole class discussion. In fact,

> [The] student teacher's personality is an essential factor. I had a previous experience with a student teacher who had a weak personality. She could not control her class. So the class was always noisy and the pupils did not pay attention.

This means that Dana places importance on a student teacher's personality in managing the classroom. It seems that this idea has an influence on what Dana thinks she can and should do as a mentor. She reports that she can train the student teachers on specific skills on classroom management, however there will still be a point that depends on a student teacher's personality that she cannot change or do any thing about it. As she puts it:

> Classroom management depends mostly on a student teacher's personality. I can instruct and train her on how to manage the classroom. However, there is still a thing related to her personality that I cannot do anything about. For example, if I have a student teacher who is so quiet I try to take her out of her quietness and hope that by training she will improve. I will train her to learn to be more active, to motivate all pupils to participate in classroom discussions, to attract pupils' attention by using learning aids, and instruct her to have a confident presence in the classroom.

Although Dana feels that all these things depend on a student teacher's personality, she believes that by training they can make progress and learn how to manage their classroom.

Dana's ideas about mentoring and role conceptualization

Dana conceptualizes her role as a professional guide for student teachers. She says that throughout the semester of student teaching, she is guiding and helping student teachers learn all the teaching tasks. Her goal is, she says, is

> .... to train them to be teachers. This means I guide them from the beginning to the end of the semester to learn how to plan for their lessons, manage the classroom, manage instruction, learn teaching procedures, and write comprehensive tests. Every task a teacher does, I train her to do during the period of student teaching.

The approaches that Dana uses to guide student teachers, as she recalls, are telling, showing, coaching and providing feedback. In her work with student teachers and for every task of teaching, Dana begins by telling them how to do the task, showing them examples of these tasks, coaching them when they do these tasks independently, and finally by giving feedback on tasks done by student teachers.

Dana says that she believes student teachers need to be guided to recognize things and learn every aspect of teaching practice instead of just having the experience of student teaching. In Dana's own words:

> Student teachers come to the course of student teaching to gain experience and to be trained in teaching. However, during this training, they need someone to train them and guide them to recognize things, as well as direct their attention to notice specific aspects of teaching practices. For example, in teaching a verse of the Koran, the teacher should not ask about the general and detailed ideas. That is because they are 'god' words and one cannot fragment them. Instead, the teacher should ask about what guidance the verse is providing. There are some things that need a specific approach in order to tackle them. Thus, student teachers here need to be guided to notice these points.

Dana thinks that the purpose of the student teaching experience is to learn to be a teacher. She conceives her role as training one how to teach and not being responsible for remedying deficiencies in their subject matter knowledge, especially grammar.

> Student teachers come to the practicum to practice teaching and learn how to teach not for increasing their subject matter proficiency. So I train them how to teach. The level of subject matter knowledge is different from student teacher to another. There are excellent student teachers and others are less competent in their subject matter knowledge. This is the thing that a mentor cannot provide for student teachers. This is because they come to be trained in teaching practices and I cannot leave the training and request them to do research in grammar, for example, because they made a mistake in it.

Dana says she believes that student teachers should certainly have good knowledge of their subject matter. However, she thinks this learning should be at the university, and that they are college students who come to her just for training in teaching. She mentions that when a student teacher does make a mistake in grammar, for example, she directs her attention to the mistake, but does not request her to go and do research on the topic. However, she reports, if the student teacher is a good student she will go and do the research herself.

The sense I make from what Dana reports is that she views the student teaching semester as a period of practice teaching and training for student teachers to learn to do the tasks that teachers typically do. I notice that she has mentioned the word "training" on many different occasions. When she was asked about how the student teachers learned to do tasks of teaching and how she helped them learn these tasks, she used the word train/training many times in her responses. For example, she used the word training five times when she talked about how she helped the student teachers learn to plan.

In addition to using the term train/training as a way to help student teachers learn teaching tasks, she also uses it when she talks about the goal of the student teaching practicum and her role in helping student teachers learn to teach instead of remedying their deficiency in subject matter knowledge. She mentions that the practicum is for

training student teachers how to teach and she trains them in ways and methods of teaching and doing teaching tasks. When she talks about the student teachers, she often refers to them as trainees. So, I infer that she conceives her role as a trainer for student teachers to learn to do teaching tasks.

In my view, what is missing from the foregoing is the lack of helping student teachers think like a teacher. Dana believes her role is to train student teachers to successfully do the performative aspects of teaching tasks, ignoring the thinking aspects. This point will be checked when analyzing the mentoring practices enacted by Dana as she helps the student teachers learn to teach.

Dana's ways of acting in support of student teachers' learning

Overview of the work: a broad temporal and topical look at her work with student teachers

In the first two weeks of the semester, Dana reports that she arranged for student teachers to observe experienced teachers' teaching. Student teachers were not given classrooms to teach during this time. Instead they only observe teachers' classrooms. In addition, during these two weeks, Dana helped student teachers to learn how to plan--preparing them to plan for their classroom teaching that would come in the fourth week.

By the third week, every student teacher had completed a teaching lesson that was critiqued by another student teacher. By the fourth week, student teachers were given classrooms in which to teach. Dana's role was to provide guidance, help, and feedback on their planning, teaching practices, and other teaching tasks. However, student teachers were not given all six periods per week to teach. They were given only four teaching periods, leaving the other two for the assigned classroom teacher. When Dana is asked

about the reason for giving only four periods of teaching to student teachers she responds: "The reason is to create a connection and communication between the student teacher and the original classroom teacher. It is also for student teachers not to feel the burden of the work. When the classroom teacher shares the teaching with the student teacher, this lightens the load for the student teachers and helps in exchanging information and discussing classroom/teaching matters."

In what follows, I examine how Dana worked with student teachers during the semester—analyzing several aspects of the work in details and providing evidence of, or speculation on, student teachers' learning.

Helping student teachers learn to plan for instruction

In helping student teachers learn to plan for instruction, Dana reported that she first asked them to read the teacher's guidebook, which contains examples of lesson plans. Then, as she pointed out, she *trained* them how to form lesson objectives, clarifying for them that they should write objectives that can be accomplished during their teaching. In addition, she warned them not to write objectives that they cannot achieve in a lesson.

Besides her clarification, Dana showed student teachers examples of experienced teachers' lesson plans and co-planned with them, to help them learn how to plan. After that, she let them plan, coaching them and providing feedback on their lesson plans. All this happened during the first three weeks of the semester and before they were given the responsibility of teaching a classroom.

> First, I trained the student teachers to plan by examining the suggested lesson plans in the teacher's guidebook. Then, I trained them how to form objectives. I

> clarified for them that any objective they write should be doable and informed them to not to write any objectives which they could not achieve in their lesson. They should write only what they can accomplish within a lesson. I also trained them to vary the objectives, using various behavioral verbs and sequencing the objectives from easy to difficult ones: mention, explain, compare, interpret, etc. in addition, they should accomplish the integrity of the four language arts in each lesson. So the student teachers are trained to do all these things. I also co-planned with them. Then, came the planning on their part and the coaching and feedback provided on my part. I trained them on lesson planning before they have their classrooms. They planned and I corrected for them. So they had a good start when they began teaching.

It is obvious from the above description that Dana used a cycle of telling, showing, coaching and feedback, providing help for student teachers to plan and directing their attention to specific points regarding forming lesson objectives. However, I noticed that Dana concentrated on lesson objectives, leaving teaching strategies, questions used for discussions, individual efforts, and learning aids out of the discussion.

Dana followed up on student teachers' lesson plans—checking them and providing feedback before they enter their classroom to teach—especially at the beginning of their independent teaching. As Amaney pointed out: "When I started teaching, Dana was reviewing and checking my lesson plans every day, before I entered the classroom for teaching." Dana continued to review student teachers' lesson plans at least two times a week until the end of the semester and provided feedback when needed. She also wrote comments on the margins on their planning notebooks. For example, I saw her comments in Bedour's planning notebook in which she suggested that she form an objective in an adequate way. In another example, from Amaney's notebook, Dana indicated to her to scaffold the discussion questions and she suggested some questions for her to consider.

Helping student teachers learn to manage instruction

Dana's work with student teachers on managing instruction took many forms. As she reported, she first took student teachers to observe experienced teachers' classroom, showing them how these teachers manage instruction. This observation took place in the first two weeks of the semester. Then, in the third week of the semester, Dana arranged for every student teacher to teach a lesson and let another student teacher critique her teaching.

For the remainder of the semester, student teachers were given classes to teach. Dana's role was to observe student teachers two times a week and provide feedback on their teaching. The kinds of things which Dana paid attention to while observing student teachers' teaching was varied. As she reported, she watched how the lesson was going. For example, she observed the introduction of the lesson—whether the student teacher started with a remedial phrase to remedy pupils' weakness in specific spelling or grammar skill—and how well she introduced her lesson. Dana also noticed how the student teacher facilitated the whole class discussions, whether she scaffolded the questions and allocated these questions among pupils. For example, the student teachers should not only ask the excellent pupils during a lesson, but to encourage the other pupils to participate as well. In addition, Dana noticed whether the student teacher wrote correctly on the board. Dana stated that her aim from the observation was to guide student teachers in their learning to teach and to help them learn to manage instruction and perform lessons properly. She pointed out:

> I am training the student teachers on how to teach, so while I am observing them, I am thinking about how they perform the teaching and manage instruction. I

> don't observe to assess them but to guide their learning. Before observing them, I instruct them on how they should perform the work of teaching. By observing them I see whether they apply these things in their teaching. If not, I direct their attention to these points and make clear what they should do. The aim of observation is to guide them in learning to teach.

Whenever she observed a student teacher, Dana would take notes of anything she wanted to discuss (e.g., her way of facilitating the discussion, classroom management, and issues of pedagogy), as well as what she noticed as negative and positive aspects in her teaching.

I witnessed both Dana's observations of student teachers' classrooms and her conferences with them after each observation. I noticed that Dana rarely stepped in while the student teacher was teaching, and if she did, it was usually to praise a struggling pupil who answered a question successfully or for adding more clarification. I did not witness Dana stepping in to correct a mistake made by a student teacher. When she was asked why she did not step in to correct a mistake made by a student teacher, she responded:

> I did not step in because I did not want to cause embarrassment for the student teacher in front of the pupils. If I corrected the mistake the pupils may recognize that their teacher misled them. In addition, she is still young and new to the field of teaching. I did not want to frustrate her. I did correct her after the class and requested her to find a way to correct the mistake with the pupils and in their notebooks.

However, she mentioned to me that she did step in one time to correct a mistake made by a student teacher. That was when a student teacher put a card on the board with an incorrect meaning to a word. So Dana stepped in and told the pupils: "You did not pay attention. Your teacher and I agreed to test you and give the incorrect meaning to see whether you were paying attention or not." Dana explained:

> The teacher and the pupils corrected the mistake. So the pupils did not feel that their teacher had made a mistake and the teacher did not get embarrassed. So, the

> stepping in could be done indirectly and in a way that would not undermine the teacher.

It seems that the personal is important in Dana's vision of teaching and learning to teach. As discussed earlier, she places importance on a student teacher's personality in classroom management. She also seems to be sensitive to people's feelings. As she was sensitive to pupils' feelings, she also was sensitive to student teachers' feelings. One example of her sensitivity to a pupil's feelings was when she advised Amaney not to let the pupils come to the front of the class to read a question and answer it. That was because they may not know the answer and would get embarrassed. She advised Amaney to just let the pupils read the question and choose a peer who wanted to answer it. As Dana explained:

> In the assessment part, Amaney displayed a board with pockets containing questions. Amaney asked the pupils to come and pick a question to answer it. The pupil would be scared and discouraged to come in front of the class because she may not know the answer of the question so she would be embarrassed. I told Amaney to let the pupil take the role of the teacher in terms of reading the question and choosing one of her peers who wanted to answer the question. This would encourage all the pupils to participate.

From the above example, it seems that Dana is sensitive to pupils' feelings. This supports the idea of how the personal is important in her vision of teaching and learning to teach. For the student teachers, she avoided stepping in when student teachers made mistakes during their teaching. She did not want to cause any embarrassment for them in front of the class. However, she told them about their mistakes after the observation and encouraged the student teachers to correct these mistakes with the pupils during their next class period. For instance, Dana and I were observing Amaney teaching and she phrased a word as an adjective and the right answer was an adverb. Dana did not step in to correct the mistake even thought the pupils wrote it down in their notebooks. However, Dana

directed Amaney's attention to the mistake after the class and requested that she correct it with the pupils.

Dana explains that her role is as a guide to student teachers and she feels that in order to guide student teachers in their learning, a mentor should establish a good relationship with them, so they accept her instruction and guidance. As Dana put it:

> I fostered the student teachers and let them feel safe in working with me. I let them feel comfortable with the department and me so they don't feel there is a barrier between us. I also expressed a belief in their ability so that they accept my instructions and guidance and learn from me. Now, I noticed that they ask me whatever questions they want. They don't feel too embarrassed to ask me any simple question on the subject or the curriculum that they need to understand.

From the above, it seems that Dana's vision of the importance of relationships between her and the student teachers influences how she constructs her role and practices as a mentor.

After each observation Dana made of a student teacher's classroom, she provided the student teacher with specific feedback about her teaching and ways of managing instruction. In order to provide a richer portrait of what was happening between Dana and the student teachers and to illustrate how Dana's observations and conferences with student teachers were occasions for learning to manage instruction, I looked closely at two of the observation sessions and conferences done by Dana with each student teacher.

Dana's observation and conference with Amaney

This observation session took place at the ninth week of the semester. The unit was a prose text called "Attention... pollution invades your home." Amaney was teaching the third lesson of the unit in which she discussed grammar, aesthetic expressions, and trained pupils in reading.

Amaney was discussing the remedial phrase and explaining why a word was spelled this way. At this point, Dana added some clarification to make the point understandable to pupils. Then she dictated the phrase to the pupils to write in their notebooks to see whether or not they could spell well. Amaney wrote the phrase on the board so pupils could see their errors and correct them.

Amaney then discussed the first individual effort assignment in which she had asked the pupils to analyze some sentences grammatically. The second assignment was to link each sentence on one side with what was suitable, in terms of words phrasing, from the other side. One of the sentences was in question form and Amaney forgot to put a question mark at the end of it. Dana turned to me and said that Amaney forgot to put a question mark. But she did not interrupt Amaney to correct the mistake. This situation supports the idea of Dana's sensitivity to student teachers' feelings and her relationships with them where she does not want to embarrass them by pointing out their errors in front of the pupils.

The third assignment requested that the pupils express their opinion about a literary expression. Amaney discussed the assignment with pupils and then started to discuss some details in the text to check pupils' understanding of the content.

After the discussion, Amaney read a passage from the text and chose some pupils to read it aloud. Then, she asked grammar questions about the verbs in the text, and to parse and analyze grammatically some sentences.

For assessing pupils' understanding of the lesson, Amaney displayed a board with pockets containing cards with questions. One pupil at a time came to the board to get a question to read it aloud and answer it in front of the class. When one of the pupils was

reading the question, Dana asked her to raise her voice because she could not hear her. Amaney continued to discuss the assessment questions, however, she did not write the right answers on the board. I noticed that she praised a struggling pupil because she participated in the discussion more than once in that day's lesson.

Just after the observation, Dana met with Amaney to analyze her teaching and to give her feedback about what she had observed. Dana started her feedback with what she observed about the remedial phrase. She told Amaney that she should ask the pupils when a word is usually spelled like this (with a vowel at the end) and to review the spelling skill with them instead of just telling them why the word on the board was spelled the way it was.

Dana then directed Amaney's attention to the fact that she forgot to put a question mark after writing the question. And, she also suggested to her that it was preferable to discuss other related grammar skills within the second assignment task by asking the pupils about the various objects (e.g., direct object, object of reason and absolute object) and when to use each one.

Dana also remarked to Amaney that, in the assessment part, when a pupil came to pick a question from the board, she should let the pupil take the role of the teacher and choose a pupil to answer instead of reading and answering the question. That is because the pupil may be embarrassed to come to the front of the class to read a question and then find she cannot respond to it. This situation may cause other pupils to turn away from participating in order to not to encounter such a situation and embarrassment. In addition, Dana suggested to Amaney that she write the sentences that contained the questions and

the right answers on the board when she discussed the assessment part, in order for the pupils to see these answers and write them correctly in their notebooks.

Dana's observation and feedback presented the opportunity for Amaney to learn many things. This included such things as expanding the discussion and scaffolding the questions, focusing and thinking about pupils' learning, and assessing pupils' prior knowledge. In what follows, I elaborate on each of the above points.

Expanding the discussion and scaffolding the question

Within the second assignment task, there had been questions of a grammatical nature. Dana suggested to Amaney that she discuss other related grammatical skills within the second assignment task (e.g., direct object, object of reason and absolute object). Since the skill was related to other grammatical skills, Dana suggested it was beneficial for the pupils that Amaney expand the discussion to include these related skills. Amaney reported that

> Dana has an influence on my growth as a teacher. I feel I developed because of Dana's guidance and feedback. From her feedback and suggestions I learned to take advantage of every word and skill in the grammar discussion to discuss other connected skills and to secure pupils' understanding of these skills. I also realized that I should extend the discussion and scaffold the question in order to review with the pupils and elicit from them what they have been learning.

It appears that Dana's suggestion offered the opportunity for Amaney to learn not to pass over the grammar questions. Instead, she should discuss the skills thoroughly and scaffold the questions to include discussions of other related skills to elicit pupils' learning.

Focusing and thinking about pupils and their learning

Dana's specific feedback to Amaney about the feelings of the pupils if they have to come up front to get a question and can not answer it and also about writing the sentences and answers on the board, offered the opportunity for Amaney to focus on pupils and their learning and to recognize the need and difficulty for her to think like intermediate school pupils. Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1986) called this idea shifting to pedagogical thinking, pointing out the difficulty for novices to make the shift from themselves to thinking about pupils and their needs.

> Pedagogical thinking is strategic, imaginative, and grounded in knowledge of self, children, and subject matter. Perhaps most difficult for the novice is the shift of attention from self or subject matter alone to what needs explaining to children (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986, p. 238).

Taking responsibility for teaching presents an opportunity for student teachers to think about pupils and their learning. However, student teachers may not be able to shift their attention from self to pupils' learning without guidance. This kind of discussion and feedback gave Amaney the chance to recognize the point of pedagogical thinking and to think about pupils' learning. As Amaney reported,

> I learned that it is better for the pupils to see the answers on the board instead of just saying them orally. It is good also to give the pupils confidence to come to the front of the classroom to read a question and to choose another pupil to answer it. There are many things that I recognized about the pupils' nature. If the pupils are inactive I can take action to motivate them by using, for instance, attractive learning aids or let them act as a teacher and ask others questions. So the pupils can be motivated and they will then look forward to the next lesson.

In the next day's lesson, I noticed that Amaney applied Dana's suggestions. I witnessed Amaney letting the pupils read a question and choose another pupil to answer it and the pupils were excited to do that. Also, Amaney was writing the correct answers on the

board so all pupils could see the answers and copy them correctly in their notebooks. This means that Amaney benefited from Dana's suggestions and feedback.

Assessing pupils' prior knowledge

When Amaney tried to discuss the remedial phrase and the skill incorporated in it, she basically told the pupils why the word was spelled the way it was. She did not ask the pupils some questions to see who mastered the skill and who needed more help to grasp the skill. In addition, she did not discuss the skill broadly and why a word is usually written this way. The purpose of the remedial phrase in each lesson is to help struggling pupils grasp the skills that they do not comprehend. So, when Dana suggested to Amaney to ask the pupils why a word is usually written this way instead of just telling them, this situation gave Amaney the opportunity to learn to assess pupils' prior knowledge in order to know which pupils knew the skill and which needed to still master it. Now, let's look closely at Dana's observation and conference with Bedour.

Dana's observation and conference with Bedour

The observation session took place during the eighth week of the semester. The unit was a poem about a nightingale, which is a thrush or warbler. The poet's name is Ahmad Qandeel. This unit was for third intermediate grade and was the second lesson in this unit. The teacher's goal is to discuss the detailed ideas about the lesson, the new vocabulary and aesthetic expression in the poem, as well as train pupils to read the poem.

Bedour brought many learning aids to her lesson: an actual nightingale in a cage, a recorder with a tape of the singing of a nightingale, some pictures of it, and a board with the poem written on it. She started her lesson by discussing the day's remedial

sentence. The goal of such sentence was to remedy any grammatical skills in which the pupils were weak or needed to improve.

Bedour discussed individual effort assignment with pupils. This was an assignment given to pupils to be done by themselves at home and was related to the next day's lesson. But first, she referred to the caged nightingale and let the pupils listen to the sound of it from the audiotape. Then, she asked the pupils what they felt when they saw and listened to the warble of a nightingale. Next, she asked the pupils to respond to the following: the nightingale has an emotional effect on human beings. Explain how the poet expresses this meaning in his poem.

Bedour discussed with the students their detailed ideas about the poem and the meaning of difficult vocabulary that the poem includes. The pupils were each asked to look in the dictionary for the meanings of these words. Then, she asked the pupils to use these words in sentences. To explain the meaning of some words, Bedour used learning aids. For example, in order to define a word which means to flow or proceed smoothly, she used an overhead projector and transparency with a brook drawn on it. In addition, she used a moving device over the transparency that gave the look of a flowing brook. She asked the pupils to describe what they were seeing. The pupils then understood the meaning of the word. One of the other words that she discussed was the word *Al-Wahey*, which means inspiration in English. To further explain the meaning, Bedour mentioned that there is a difference between the inspiration of a poet to write poetry and the divine inspiration of prophets. Here, Dana turned to me and said that Bedour should explain that difference to the pupils.

The pupils read the poem aloud and then Bedour asked them to notice the plural and the singular of some words in the poems. After reading the poem, Bedour started to assess the pupils' understanding of the lesson. Since the lesson was for training the pupils to notice detailed ideas about a paragraph, Bedour read a paragraph and asked the pupils to form some ideas about it. She then discussed their ideas and gave them an individual assignment for the next day's lesson.

I noticed that Bedour was confident and did not look at Dana to get reassurance from her. It seems that Bedour knew what she was doing and had prepared her lesson well. Bedour also put some pictures of nightingales on a board with the poem written on it, but she did not use these learning aids or refer to them in her lesson.

After Bedour taught her lesson, Dana sat with her and gave her feedback and comments on the lesson observed. Dana told Bedour that her lesson went well. Her learning aids were very productive. She discussed the new vocabularies, the individual assignment, and the use of new vocabulary in complete sentences. But, Dana notified her that she noticed that she did not use some of her learning aids which she had brought to classroom. She did not use the board of the written poem and the pictures of nightingales and she did not even refer to them in her lesson. Dana also commented that Bedour did not differentiate between the divine inspiration of prophets and the inspiration of poets.

It was obvious that Dana was pleased with Bedour's teaching. On many occasions, Dana praised Bedour's teaching performance. For example, Dana mentioned: "Bedour likes teaching and the subject of language arts. She is very creative. All these learning aids she did by herself. She conducted herself well and showed her ability to manage a classroom very well."

In this conference, however, she directed Bedour's attention to two negative points in her lesson. Dana's feedback offered the opportunity for Bedour to learn to take advantage of every learning aid that she had brought to class for the benefit of pupils' understanding. As Bedour put it:

> Dana directed my attention to the points that I ignored in my teaching, such as the learning aids. I realized that I should have used all the learning aids in my lesson and to take advantage of them for the benefit of the pupils' understanding.

However, Dana did not justify for Bedour the reason for her point. When Dana asked what she wanted Bedour to learn from her comment, she responded:

> I wanted her to use and point to all the learning aids she brought to class. She pointed to the voice of nightingale but she did not point to the pictures of it and the board of the written poem. She might have pointed to the appearance of the nightingale by referring to the pictures she had brought and she might have read or let the pupils read the poem from the board. In addition, the pupils might also have brought in pictures of nightingales. So, when she ignored pointing these aids out to them, the pupils might be disappointed. Thus, whatever learning aids are available to a teacher she should benefit from them.

Dana also suggested to Bedour to clarify the difference between poets' inspiration and prophets' divine inspiration since she mentioned that they are different. When Dana was asked for the reason of this clarification she pointed out:

> Because she [Bedour] indicated that there is a difference but she did not clarify this difference for pupils. She should say that divine inspiration comes from God to the prophets, which is different from a poet's inspiration for writing a poem. So Bedour should clarify this for the pupils and not leave them confused about the difference.

This suggestion gives Bedour the opportunity to learn to avoid misinterpreting what the pupils know and understand from what she means.

These two examples of Dana's observation and conferences with Amaney and Bedour were typical in Dana's work with the student teachers. She was observing each of

the student teachers two times a week, conferencing with them after observation, and providing specific feedback and comments about their teaching.

I noticed that at the beginning of the student teaching semester, Dana worked similarly with the two different student teachers. She instructed and showed the two student teachers how to do the tasks of teaching. She sat with them and told them how to plan, how to manage instruction, and how to write tests. However, differences in working with the student teachers appeared when each student teacher took on the responsibility to do the tasks of teaching independently. For instance, when each student teacher planned her lessons, Dana's comments and feedback were different for each student teacher. These remarks depended on each student teacher's quality of work and the areas in which they seemed to be weak. As Dana reported:

> At the beginning my guidance and instructions were common for the two student teachers. When I felt one of them needed specific instruction or feedback I worked with her individually. And this was usually after I observed her teaching or looking at her lesson plans.

Dana mentioned that Amaney needed more encouragement and more feedback on her work because she was quiet and hesitant to figure things out, to try new activities or make creative learning aids. However, after Dana's encouragement, instructions, and intensive feedback, she improved. As Dana said: "Amaney was quiet and took a long time in the classroom to call on a pupil to answer a question during the discussion. She was like someone who was restrained or tied up. However, now she is active and lively. I encouraged her to try things out. I told her not to worry about making mistakes but just to try."

I noticed that Dana worked with Amaney to develop her skills in classroom discussion. She talked about this idea as follows:

> I always directed Amaney to scaffold the questions when she discussed in the classroom. I wanted the discussion to be interactive. This means that the teacher should not only ask questions and take answers from the pupils. There should be interactions, clarifications, sub-questions and broader discussion. At the beginning Amaney only asked a question by question and took the answer from the pupils. However, now she had improved magnificently in leading classroom discussion.

For Bedour, it seems that she improved increasingly during the semester of student teaching and that Dana was pleased with her improvement. Many times I witnessed Dana praising Bedour's work. For instance, after Dana and I observed Bedour teaching a unit about palms trees, she praised her for her teaching and the learning aids she had used in the lesson. On another occasion, Dana complimented Bedour's lesson plans for that day. On a third occasion, after we observed Bedour teaching, Dana expressed that "Bedour enjoys teaching. She makes all these learning aids by hand and her handwriting is beautiful. She also knows what to do in certain situations. Today, she needed a classroom with curtains because she wanted to use a slide projector to display pictures. She did not come to ask me what to do. However, she directly went to the administrator and asked to change the room for her lesson."

Helping student teachers learn to write tests

Dana, in helping student teachers learn to write tests, started with telling them how to develop test questions, including the sequence, and the variety of these questions. Then, she showed them examples of tests. Finally, she let the student teachers write tests independently and provided them with feedback and comments. As Dana reported:

> In a meeting, I explained to student teachers how to write tests. I clarified to them that the questions should be varied, addressing specific skills, sequenced from simple to more complex, in correct form and not have the potential for more than one answer. The question should be adequate for the test time, and arranged as in the textbook. All these aspects were discussed with them and I also showed them examples of tests and then requested them to write tests. Even if they did not administer these tests, it was training for them on test writing. I provided them with feedback and comments, and clarified their errors.

I inferred from this description that Dana, in an effort to assess student teachers' ability to ask good, varied, and sequenced questions, requested them to write tests. This means they should display their understanding and learning of test writing by doing it independently. In this manner, being able to write a test, incorporating all suggested aspects and with minimum errors, is evidence, for Dana, of student teachers' learning to write tests.

Writing tests in the context of Dana's instructions and suggestions presented the opportunity for student teachers to learn to ask good sequenced test questions that are arranged in an adequate manner, have various forms, and are easy for pupils to understand.

Helping student teachers learn how to deal with struggling pupils

One thing that Dana helped student teachers learn was how to deal with struggling pupils who have weaknesses in many aspects of the language arts. She reported that student teachers could recognize the struggling pupils during whole class discussion, from the standardized dictation and from her communication with the assigned classroom teacher.

> I told them that, for instance, that a pupil who is struggling in reading should be allowed to read out loud in class. However the pupil should not be given a long passage to read in order to minimize her making mistakes that might make her

> feel embarrassed. For the pupils who are weak in dictation and spelling skills, I instructed the student teachers to pay more attention to them when they write in class and to clarify for them their mistakes. In the discussion part, I asked the student teachers to encourage the weak pupils to participate in the discussion and to ask them simple questions that they could answer. I also suggested that they might assign them extra activities to do in a notebook that they (the student teacher) could follow up with them later. In addition, I held a meeting to discuss the status of struggling pupils and I instructed them on how to deal with them.

As suggested by the above, Dana guided student teacher to attend to struggling pupils. She shared with them her knowledge of how to handle the weaker pupils and address their needs. Dana kept giving the student teachers feedback about how they could deal with struggling pupils during their teaching. I witnessed during many of Dana's conferences with the student teachers that she reinforced the idea of dealing with struggling pupils. For example, in one of Amaney's teaching lessons, she called on a pupil to answer a question, but the pupil could not answer it. So, Amaney left the pupil and called on another one who answered the question, and then she moved on in her discussion. In the conference after the observation, Dana addressed this issue with Amaney saying that she should not move on without making sure that the struggling pupil knows the answer for the question. She should let the pupil reiterate the answer to make sure she learned it correctly. When I asked Dana what it was she wanted Amaney to learn when she addressed the issue of struggling pupils, she responded:

> I instructed Amaney that when a pupil fails to answer a question, this pupil should know and reiterate the answer before she sits down. If the teacher ignores this pupil and lets another pupil answer it, the struggling pupil may not listen to the right answer and therefore will not learn it...I wanted Amaney to learn to make sure that all pupils listened to the right answer and knew it. The reiteration of the right answer was for the assurance that all pupils recognized it.

Student teachers followed up on Dana's suggestions. I witnessed, on many occasions, that they used Dana's suggestions while they were teaching. For example, I

saw Amaney motivating struggling pupils to participate in the discussion by giving them more time to think about and try to answer the questions. She also praised a pupil because she participated in the discussion many times during a lesson.

Summary and conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed Dana's ideas about teaching, student teachers and mentoring, as well as her practices as a mentor and the opportunities she created for student teachers' learning. This analysis of Dana's case illustrates several issues in mentoring and learning to teach.

First, the case highlights that how the mentor thinks the learning occurs influence her role enactment. The case illustrates that Dana placed an importance on the idea of training and used the term often when she talked about how she helped student teachers learn to teach. She emphasized that, by training student teachers to do the teaching tasks, they would learn to do them. Her thinking about how learning occurs by training had influenced her role definition and enactment. She tended to define her role, besides being a guide, as a trainer of student teachers in doing teaching tasks. She also acted as a coach—training the student teachers to form lesson objectives, plan for their lessons, manage instruction, write tests and deal with struggling pupils. This led to an emphasis on the performance aspects of teaching tasks, more than the thinking aspects of teaching.

Second, the case shows the importance of establishing good caring relationships between the mentor and her student teachers in order for them to accept a mentor's role as trainer. Dana established caring and fostering relationships with the student teachers and seemed to be sensitive to their feelings. As she herself said, this helped the student

teachers to accept her instruction, guidance, feedback and critiques. This idea is consonant with what Hawkey's (1997) found when cordial relationships were established between mentors and student teachers and were characterized by growing trust and respect on both personal and professional levels, the mentors acting as instructors and critics, instilling confidence as student teachers go through inevitable doubt and uncertainty.

Third, the case illustrates the influence of the national curriculum ideas and its ways of teaching on what mentors do in their work with student teachers. In her role as mentor Dana tended to emphasize helping the student teachers learn to form objectives to be accomplished in their lessons. These objectives related to the curriculum content area, and curriculum goals and requirements. She also helped the student teachers learn to manage instruction according to the methods of teaching that are recommended by the national curriculum which is based on pupils' individual efforts and the integrity of the four language arts.

CHAPTER 7

PATTERNS AND VARIATIONS IN MENTORING

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss patterns and variations between and among the three cases described in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. I will discuss the patterns first, illustrating them with examples and evidence from the cases, and I will explore how common these patterns are among all of the eleven mentors, and what implications they carry. Then, I will turn to discussing the variations among the cases and their implications for student teachers' learning.

Patterns in mentors' thinking and practice

I found several patterns in the mentors' thinking and practices. All of the mentor teachers think about *student teaching as a guided experience*, therefore, they feel they have an important and central role to play. There is much evidence that *mentors' practices, in fact, are adapted to suit student teachers' characteristics and the situations that occur.* Therefore, mentors are *responsive to student teachers' needs.* Mentors also *adopt the stance of experts and knowers* and this seems to reduce a sense of inquiry with student teachers, so that opportunities for additional learning may be lost. Mentors' practices *focus on helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching*, therefore, mentors help student teachers learn to meet the standards that are required for teachers. Below, I explicate each pattern.

Mentors regard student teaching as a guided experience

The first pattern is that mentors think about student teaching as a guided experience instead of just a brief period of monitoring practice teaching. The way that mentors think about mentoring and act as mentors is connected to a view of student teachers as *learning* teachers, and to the belief that experience must be guided for it to be educational.

This point raises the issue of the role of experience in learning to teach. According to the three mentors I studied, they all value the student teaching experience and its importance to learning to teach because it helps student teachers make the connections between what they are told or what they read and the realities of classroom life. However, they think of experience as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for learning. For them, student teachers need help making sense of whatever experience they have. Therefore, other people, such as mentors, are essential for learning to teach.

Mentors' views reflect the complex nature of learning to teach and carry a caveat about the commonly held view that experience is the best teacher. Student teachers can learn from experience, but they need help in directing this learning into more productive ways than if they were left on their own. This idea is reminiscent to what Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) call the "pitfalls of experience" in teacher preparation. They argue that field experience, at its best, can at least help in learning some important aspects of the job of teaching. However, there are many instances that can occur which are inappropriate to any teaching situation and could be reinforced by further unanalyzed experiences on the job. Therefore, they suggest:

> Teacher education students need help in seeing how understanding can clarify and shape ways of doing. They also need instruction in judging ways of doing and in

> adapting them to particular settings as well as to their own capacities... If classrooms are to become settings for learning to teach that go beyond adaptation and unreflective imitation, purposes of learning to teach cannot automatically be subordinated to the goal of pupil learning. Teachers also must see themselves as teacher educators willing to plan for the learning of a novice (p. 64).

The idea of a "guide" appeared frequently in the mentors' talk and I found myself analyzing what it might mean in their thinking and practice. Mentors think that they have an active role in helping student teachers learn to teach. They take initiatives for instructing, teaching, telling, showing, and coaching student teachers in various teaching tasks, and that is what they mean by "guide."

The three mentors structured their mentoring practice experience for student teachers. They began with two weeks of observation in experienced teachers' classrooms, in addition to helping the student teachers learn to plan before they assumed the responsibility for classroom teaching. Then, the student teachers continued the observation during the third week and the mentors gave them a chance to conduct a lesson or two in order to be critiqued by the mentor and other student teachers. By the fourth week, the student teachers were given classes to teach, which included the coaching and feedback of mentor teachers, until the end of the semester. During this period, mentor teachers also helped student teachers learn to write tests, analyze instruction, deal with pupils' individual differences, and learn to lead discussion in the classroom.

Mentors view and act as mentors according to the belief that experience must be guided, however, their guidance, in some respects, is qualitatively different. These differences will be discussed later in this chapter.

The other eight mentors also reported that they regard the student teaching as a guided experience. They all mentioned that they structure the experience for the student teachers and guide student teachers in learning to do teaching tasks, such as planning, managing instruction, and writing tests. For example, Nawal said:

> Student teachers need to be guided to learn to do teaching tasks. I guided them in their learning of managing instructions according to the methods recommended by the reformed curriculum. I also helped them learn to plan, form objectives for their lessons, and choose the learning aids that are appropriate for each unit. I helped them learn how to deal with the differences in pupils, how to write tests and grade them. Student teachers need guidance in learning to do all these tasks.

Although the student teachers' experiences are guided and structured by the mentors, some mentors' practices seem to be more of a response to a situation and an adaptation to the characteristics of the student teachers. This idea leads to the next pattern.

Mentors are responsive to situations and adaptive to the characteristics of student teachers

The mentor teachers' practices are not enacted in a social vacuum. The role that they play requires it to be a complementary role with that of the student teacher and sometimes initiator roles from the student teachers. If the mentor is a critic, the student teacher is a performer; if a coach, then the student teacher is a player; and if a guide, the student teacher is a follower. It seems that the mentors have structured the experience for the student teachers.

When the student teachers came to the schools, the mentor teachers provided them with what they thought they needed to learn. However, during the course of student teaching and through interaction between mentor and student teachers, there are other

things that mentors did because student teachers, intentionally or unintentionally, pushed the mentor to do them, as a response to a situation or action from the student teacher. There are questions, behaviors, or speech from the student teachers that shape what happened. For example, when a mentor noticed a student teacher did not know a specific thing or needed to develop a specific aspect of teaching, this situation encouraged the mentor to do things in response to the student teachers' needs. In this manner, the practices of mentors were as an adaptation to student teachers' characteristics and needs. In every case, there are evidences and examples that the mentors were adaptive to student teachers' characteristics and were responsive to situations—thus the student teachers, in a way, elicited a response from the mentor. For instance, Aisha did the same grammatical error twice at one of the lessons. She wrote two sentences on the board making errors in the same grammatical skill, while Sarah was observing her teaching. After observation, I saw Sarah sit with Aisha and teach her the grammar lesson, explaining to her in detail every aspect of that grammatical skill. What Aisha did pushed Sarah to teach Aisha the grammar lesson during which she had made the mistakes and Sarah's practice, then, was adaptive to the situation.

In another example, Amal found that the student teachers did not attend to pupils' individual differences. During classroom discussion, student teachers attended only to pupils who were raising their hands. Those were the excellent pupils, who knew the answers, and then, the weak pupils were ignored. This situation elicited a response from Amal to hold a meeting with the student teachers and have a discussion about individual differences. Amal gave the student teachers a handout about how to deal with the pupils' weaknesses—explaining to them that they should include all pupils in the discussion,

excellent and weak. She also told the student teachers to ask weak pupils simple questions and motivate them to participate in the discussion, as well as suggest some ideas to remedy pupils' weakness.

A third example came from Dana's practices. Dana noticed that Amaney was strict in asking questions to get answers during classroom discussions. She did not scaffold the questions or interact with the pupils during the discussion. Dana responded to this situation by meeting with Amaney and talking to her about this matter. Dana instructed Amaney about how the discussion should be. It should include interactions, clarifications, and sub questions that encourage the pupilo interact w ithin the discussion. Thus, it is crucial for the mentor to be attentive and responsive to student teachers' needs and thus create opportunities for student teachers' learning.

From talking with the eleven mentors, it seemed that this pattern was common to all eleven mentors. All of them had structured the student teaching experience for their student teachers. All eleven mentors frequently mentioned that they helped student teachers learn the teaching tasks—plan for instruction, manage instruction, and write tests. However, when a situation arose in which student teachers needed more help or when they asked specific questions, it seemed that all of the mentors were responsive to the situation and adaptive to student teachers characteristics and needs. All mentors talked about this point and mentioned examples. For instance, Fatmah said:

> When I was observing a student teacher teaching a writing lesson, I noticed that she was not doing a good job in presenting the lesson and discussing the writing piece. So, I met with her and instructed her on how to discuss a writing passage with the pupils. Then, I took her to observe a competent experienced teacher to see how she would deal with and discuss a writing passage.

Another example was when Manal talked about a student teacher who did not use Arabic standards in her speaking in the classroom. When Manal noticed this weakness, she instructed her not to use slang in her talking and discussing in class and encouraged her to use Arabic standards. Manal mentioned that she kept observing the student teacher—concentrating on helping her to improve her language in class.

Mentors adopt the stance of experts and knowers

Little (1990) indicates that mentoring relationships are asymmetrical. The mentor is usually older, more knowledgeable, and experienced than the novice. Both the mentor and the novice seem to acknowledge this difference in their relationship. "The relationship required of Mentor a full measure of wisdom, integrity, and personal investment...The relationship between mentor and protégé was profoundly personal and mutually respectful, even though it was essentially asymmetrical" (Little, 1990, p. 298). Little continues to say, " Implicit in the title of mentor, advisor, consulting teacher, or master teacher is the presumption of wisdom—accumulated knowledge that can serve as the basis of sensitive observation, astute commentary, sound advice, and constructive leadership. Demonstrated knowledge and skill are the essential ground on which the role and title of mentor are founded" (p.316).

In western countries, including the United States, the emphasis on teacher autonomy and personal style in teaching leaves mentors and supervisors uncertain about the goals of their work with teachers and their roles in that work. As Little (1990) expressed, "Mentor roles achieve special significance (and are rendered specially problematic) in an occupation that is constrained by norms of equal status and autonomy,

is flat in its career profile, and in which an agreed upon body of professions knowledge and practice is absent" (p. 319). In reporting on Teacher Advisor Project in California, Little indicated that advisors were hesitant to set themselves up as experts. They rarely gave direct instruction and advice in their face-to-face conferences with the teachers. The possible reasons for this reticence, Little indicated, are that advisors sometimes felt that they did not know much about the teacher's intentions to give useful advice; that they were concerned that they might undermine the teacher's own analyses or aspirations; and that they perceived that advice giving is against the professional etiquette of teachers.

Unlike western countries, in this study, mentors' relationships with their student teachers were asymmetrical in status based on assumed differences in expertise in teaching, since the mentors are also head teachers who are supervisors of other teachers in the department. Amal, Dana, and Sarah all expressed that they have the expertise in teaching and want to help the student teachers who are less competent learn how to teach. In Kuwait, there are traditions in the teaching profession about giving and receiving professional support during and after the student teaching stage. All of the mentors, since they are head teachers, described themselves as supervisors and professional support personnel for all teachers within the same department. Thus, these mentors acted on the assumption that there was a connection or correspondence between expertise and status, an assumption that was shared by people in their context. They represent a view of mentors as experts in teaching, helping student teachers learn to teach.

In the context of expert-novice interactions among musicians, architects, and psychotherapist, Schon (1987) has identified three ways in which experts teach novices. The first is "follow me" in which the expert provides an image of performance—

demonstrates and describes the aspects and then assists the novice in imitating the behavior. "The invitation to imitate is also, in its way, an invitation to experiment; for in order to "follow," the student must construct in her own performance what she takes to be the essential features of the coach's demonstration" (p. 214). The second model is "joint experimentation" in which the expert helps the novice formulate the qualities one wants to achieve and then, by demonstration and description, explore different ways of producing them. The expert leads the novice into a search for suitable means of achieving the desired objective. The third model is "the hall of mirrors" in which experts help the novice see her efforts and performance as an object from which she can examine, reflect and learn.

Since the concept of status was closely intertwined with the concept of expertise, it seems that mentors in Kuwait are more likely to use the first model, which is the "follow me" model. I saw no evidence that these mentors were using either the second or the third model that Schon mentioned. Mentors want student teachers to follow their example and images of performance that are shown to them, as well as instructions and suggestions because they feel they are the experts and should transmit their knowledge and expertise to student teachers. In all tasks of teaching, mentors use the cycle of telling, showing, and then letting the student teachers perform these tasks with coaching and feedback provided to help them learn to do these tasks.

Thus, mentors who saw themselves as knowledgeable experts wanted their student teachers to be followers of the example shown them as well as follow their guidance and instruction. On many occasions, mentors stated that student teachers were working to teach like the good teaching modeling demonstrated and accepted their

mentors' suggestions and instruction. For example, when Sarah was asked her impression about her student teachers, she reported:

> They are energetic, active, enthusiastic for teaching, have confidence and work to follow good teaching examples. They also welcome and accept instructions and suggestions.

Amal also expressed that student teachers were trying to follow the images of performance that she showed them, and that, at the beginning, she had the fear that student teachers would not follow her instruction and not accept being critiqued. But, she found out that her student teachers have "big hearts" and they tolerated and accepted her critiquing and instruction. Dana reported, too, that her student teachers followed the examples of teaching tasks that she showed them and were willing to follow her instruction and suggestions.

Because they take the stance of being experts and knowers towards helping student teachers learn to teach, mentors tend to transmit their knowledge and expertise to student teachers mostly by direct instruction, showing, and providing feedback. All mentors showed and demonstrated the kind of teaching tasks they wanted student teachers to learn. A demonstration from any person denotes that the demonstrator knows how to perform something better than the one who learns from the demonstration. When the time comes for student teacher to perform, the mentor tends to focus on their mistakes. For example, Sarah reported:

> When I visit student teachers' classrooms, I observe the negative and positive points they make in their teaching. I also observe whether they follow the right steps of conducting the lesson and whether there are mistakes that the student teachers did. My goal is to guide them in their learning to teach.

Statements like Sarah's suggest that mentors have a view of teaching towards which their student teachers need to strive. They have determined the curriculum that

they are going to teach their student teachers. They seem to care most that their student teachers learning their particular view of teaching, curriculum requirements, and subject matter. None of the mentors were likely to encourage the student teachers to evaluate the object of their learning and their own efforts toward learning it, which Schon (1987) refers to as the "hall of mirrors." They did not seem to invite the student teachers to develop their capacity to assess their own learning or clarify the problems and make decisions about what to do. They were likely to concentrate more on transmitting their own expertise than enabling the student teachers develop their own. As Dana said:

> Everything I know about teaching I tell them [student teachers] and provide them with experience from the field. If they have questions, they ask me. Also, anything that comes to my mind about teaching, during the semester, I will instruct them in it and give them handouts that will help them. For example, for the remedial sentence, I give them a handout that has all the spelling skills to be discussed and various sentences that they can use in class. I instruct them in everything about teaching, and I don't assess them on things that I do not instruct them about.

Amal reported:

> I feel that I should direct their attention to their mistakes and give them guidance toward doing what they missed in their teaching. This is after I give them the needed knowledge about teaching and instruct them about doing the tasks of teaching...everything I have from experience I teach it to them.

Sarah also expressed the same idea about transmitting knowledge to student teachers:

> I want student teachers to benefit from my experience and expertise. I visit student teachers' classrooms to see their teaching and if there are "holes" I call their attention to them.

In such a context where status and expertise are intertwined, the mentors may think that they have a body of knowledge about teaching, which the student teachers need to learn from them, rather than have an experimental stance towards the work of teaching.

Thus, no joint inquiry appeared in mentors' practices with student teachers. This situation might also have been created because of the policy context in which mentors have been given a status as experienced and competent teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education.

There is evidence that the ideas of mentors seeing themselves as knowledge professionals is common among the eleven mentors. All mentors expressed, in one way or another, that they have the knowledge and expertise in teaching and that they are working on transmitting what they know to student teachers in order to help them learn to teach. For instance, Hoda said:

> At the beginning of the student teaching, I explain to the student teachers all the teaching tasks and the skills needed to improve their teaching. I also give the curriculum of the grade level that they will teach and the important skills they need to develop in pupils. I request from them not to modify anything unless they confirm it with me, because I have the experience and the expertise ...I do not want them to make mistakes.

Shareefa expressed the idea of having the expertise in a different way. She reported:

> The student teachers lack the expertise, which is gained by practice and experience. Since I have the necessary teaching expertise, I will help the student teachers in their learning to teach and in gaining the expertise they need to develop.

In addition to describing themselves as having the knowledge and expertise in teaching, all eleven mentors frequently mentioned that they tell, instruct, show, and provide feedback in helping student teachers learn to do teaching tasks.

Mentors focused on helping student teachers learn the curriculum's requirements and ways of teaching it

Another pattern found is that mentors' actions and practices emphasized curriculum requirements. From the cases presented, it is apparent that mentors focus on helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching this curriculum.

In their ideas about what student teachers need to learn, mentors in the three presentation cases included a focus on things that are related to curriculum, its philosophy, and its ways of teaching. Sarah's ideas about what student teachers need to learn were: 1) learning the principles of the reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching; 2) developing subject matter knowledge; 3) learning to plan for their lessons; and 4) learning to design tests.

According to Amal, student teachers need to learn: 1) achieving the integrity of the four language arts; 2) learning to plan lessons incorporating the three kinds of behavioral objectives; 3) developing a habit of searching for information and knowledge; and 4) learning to ask good questions in an adequate sequence.

Dana's ideas include: 1) learning the general Arabic language objectives and behavioral objectives; 2) learning the way of teaching the reformed curriculum; and 3) learning to manage the classroom.

As shown from mentor's lists of what student teachers need to learn, they tend to focus on student teachers' learning the reformed curriculum and its ways of teaching. The cases showed that mentors, in their practices, also focused on helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching. Among their practices, they

tended to help student teachers learn the objectives and the philosophy of the reformed curriculum while they guided them in how to plan. All mentors emphasized, in their practices, that student teachers need to learn to achieve the integrity of the four language arts in their lessons, as this is one of the most important ideas in the philosophy of the reformed curriculum. Mentors' practices with student teachers also focused on helping student teachers learn the curriculum content and how to present their lessons, as well as managing instruction, and using the individual effort method and discussion to achieve the intended objectives. This way of teaching is advocated by the reformed curriculum.

Mentors' focus on helping the student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching is an influence of the existence of the national curriculum and prescribed textbooks. The national curriculum system requires teachers to embrace the curriculum philosophy and to expose pupils to a similar content. Under these circumstances, teachers are required to meet the standards and follow the curriculum and ways of teaching it as prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Thus, Kuwaiti mentors' practices with student teachers emphasized helping them learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching the curriculum, as well as meeting the required standards.

It appears that this pattern is common among all of the eleven mentors in the study. All eleven mentors frequently mentioned that they were helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching. In addition, they all reported that in their mentoring practices they focused on assisting student teachers learn curriculum content and plans for teaching it, curriculum ideas and requirements, and managing instruction, according to the reformed curriculum recommendations.

Both the three cases in the study and the interviews with the other mentors suggested that mentors emphasized helping student teachers to learn curriculum requirements and it way of teaching because of the influence of the policy context.

Variability in mentors' thinking and practice

The case studies provide rich descriptions of how three Kuwaiti mentors enacted their roles as mentors. The patterns provide a portrait of the three mentors' practices. The purpose of this section is to describe the variability among the mentors' practices. Such an examination can help teacher educators and policy makers see how individuals, who work in the same context differ, and how these differences might influence prospective teachers' learning.

Dana differs from Sarah and Amal in dealing with student teachers' lack of subject matter knowledge

Typically, novices have difficulty with the content, the subject matter knowledge, and representing the content to the pupils. All the three mentors were aware of the student teachers' lack of content and subject matter knowledge and they saw addressing it as one of their responsibilities. However, each one had a different way of addressing this lack of preparedness. There is evidence that Sarah and Amal were more likely to request student teachers to read outside the text book and to do research, especially when they made mistakes related to subject matter or appeared to have difficulty in subject matter knowledge. For example, Sarah noticed that a student teacher wrote a sentence on the board with a grammatical error in the direct object. Sarah then understood that this student teacher had difficulty in this specific grammar topic. So, she asked the student

teacher to do research in this topic. She also gave her a passage and asked her to identify the direct objects in the passage and then analyze them grammatically. As Sarah reported:

> During my observation and following up with the student teachers, I felt that they needed more development in some topic related to subject matter and content. So, I asked them to do research about these topics and then discuss them during our weekly department meetings or at a time when most of the teachers were in the shared department room. Any topic I feel that the student teachers have lack of knowledge in, I request from them to do a research about it.

Amal also responded to student teachers lack of subject matter knowledge by referring them to specific books that she recommended or asking them to go to the library and read about the topic. She mentioned:

> I always tell my student teachers to read and research for information. I refer them to books to look at and read. This is to help them learn about these topics and to prevent them from repeating the same mistakes.

On the other hand, Dana differed in her dealing with the student teachers lack of subject matter knowledge. She only reported to the student teacher the mistakes and errors they made in their planning or teaching of the content, and corrected them. She never asked the student teachers to do extra research about the topic on which they lacked the necessary knowledge. She said:

> Student teachers come to the practicum to practice teaching and learn how to teach, not to increase their subject matter proficiency. So, I train them on how to teach. The level of subject matter knowledge is different from one student teacher to another. There are excellent student teachers and there are those who are less competent in their subject matter knowledge. This is the thing that a mentor cannot provide for student teachers. This is because they have come to be trained in practice teaching, so I cannot leave the training and request them to do research, for example, in grammar, because she made a mistake in it.

According to Dana, student teachers needed to be helped to learn how to teach. For the lack of student teachers' subject matter knowledge, her view is to direct their attention to their deficiency and correct their mistakes, but not request them to do

research. However, "if she is a good student teacher and committed to learning, she will go by herself and read about the topic of her deficiency," she reported.

Of the other eight mentors, only two mentioned that they requested the student teachers to do research and discuss it with them to improve their subject matter knowledge. Three of the eight mentors reported that they only recommended that student teachers to read and research and the other three said that they instructed and explained to the student teachers the content and areas of the subject in which they have a lack of knowledge.

Dana probably was saving time and focusing on what needed to be done. However, understanding the subject matter is essential in teaching; to help pupils learn worthwhile content, teachers have to know the content. Many beginning teachers have not had adequate opportunities for learning their teaching subjects before they begin teaching in the field, and, thus, they need assistance to do so while they are in the field (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1990). Since the student teachers are still making errors, they still need to learn the subject. The student teaching period is a time for them to learn their subject matter and to learn how to present it to pupils; they need assistance from the mentors to do so. I am not claiming that referring student teachers to do research about a topic is the most productive way to learn about subject matter, but it is one way that mentors can choose to assist them. To accomplish any task of teaching, teachers bring together knowledge of the subject with knowledge of pupils, curriculum, pedagogy and context. Mentors should help student teachers understand the importance of the knowledge of the subject and the importance of this connection. As Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1990) suggest, "being explicit about the connections might increase the educative

power of the advice by helping novices see how different kinds of knowledge come together in decisions about what to do in particular situations" (p. 42).

Amal is more likely to step in directly than Sarah and Dana, when student teachers make mistakes

In contrast to Sarah and Dana, Amal stepped in when observing student teachers in their classrooms. On many occasions, I witnessed Amal stepping in directly—requesting or instructing the student teacher-- to correct a mistake a student teacher made during her teaching or to ask the student teacher to clarify a point for pupils. She would not leave any mistake a student teacher did or a situation that she felt needed rectification without stepping in and providing a correction or clarification. For example, when Nada was teaching a lesson called Ahmad's tree, Amal stepped in and requested from Nada to ask the pupils to bring in detailed ideas about the texts in full, correct sentences, instead of just filling in the blanks of sentences that she discussed with the pupils. Amal's reason for stepping in was that pupils needed to be trained to form detailed ideas in a full sentence and to "learn to speak in correct standard grammar and to choose appropriate words that express the meaning." She was also committed to guiding student teachers to learn how to teach. As she said:

> I am committed to helping them [student teachers] learn how to plan for a lesson, how to present the lesson, and how to represent the content to the pupils. I should instruct them on how to do all these things in its right way.

However, Sarah and Dana did not prefer to step in when the student teacher was teaching. For Dana, as the case showed, she reported that she did step in one time to correct a mistake that a student teacher made. However, her stepping in was indirect when she told the pupils that she and the student teacher had agreed to test them by

putting the incorrect word meaning to see if they were paying attention or not. Dana's remarks to the pupils was a clever way to remind the teacher to correct the mistake. In other situations, I never saw Dana stepping in while the student teacher was teaching. When Dana was asked about the reason for not stepping in, she indicated that she did not want to cause any embarrassment for the student teacher in front of the pupils, as this can potentially undermine the student teachers' authority in the classroom.

Sarah, like Dana, did not prefer to step in the classroom of the student teacher either. I witnessed many times the student teacher writing words on the board incorrectly or making an error, but Sarah did not step in to correct her. Sarah reported that the reason for not stepping in was because: "I don't want to embarrass them [student teachers] in the classroom. If they make errors, I request them to find a way to correct them next day."

The way that mentors acted in response to student teachers' mistakes reflected how every mentor chose to manage one of the dilemmas that pervades mentoring practices, which is mentors' responsibility toward pupils' learning versus responsibility toward student teachers' learning. Balancing this dual responsibility is not an easy task, especially when the student teacher is leading the teaching in the classroom. This is one of the dilemmas that must be managed. How a mentor decides to manage the dilemmas of the mentoring work can constrain or facilitate the student teachers' learning opportunities that are available in the context.

Amal has found a way to balance her responsibility to the pupils and to student teachers at the same time. Seeing the university supervisor stepping in while the student teachers are teaching and by establishing good relationships with the student teachers, it became okay to step in now and then and Amal treated it like an ordinary matter. At the

same time she did not make her student teachers upset from stepping in. Nada mentioned that Amal often said things or provided clarification in class to help her. I witnessed that Samya often looked at Amal when she needed help in the classroom while she was teaching. Amal even mentioned to me that Samya asked her many times in class about what to do in specific situations when she was leading the teaching in class. This means that the student teachers did not find Amal's stepping in as uncomfortable. Thus, Amal had an option for resolving this dilemma about pupils' learning and student teachers' learning. She managed to find a way to act to the benefit of both the student teachers and the pupils at the same time.

Amal was not the only mentor who managed to find a way to step in to the benefit of the pupils and the student teachers. Of the other eight mentors, five of them mentioned that they stepped in tactfully when they found student teachers making mistakes or needing help while they were teaching. This means that mentors can find a way to manage this dilemma.

Amal and Dana are more likely to do co-planning. Sarah, however, likes to tell, show, and critique

During the first two or three weeks of the student teaching, Amal and Dana reported that they co-planned with student teachers in order to help them learn to plan. Besides taking the role of telling, showing, and providing feedback in helping student teachers learn to plan, they also co-planned with them, especially at the beginning of the semester. For Dana, she reported that she collaborated with the student teachers in order to help them learn to plan. As she reported:

> In order to help student teacher learn to plan, we collaborated in planning. For example, one of the student teachers did not know how to form an objective or

she needed help in coming up with more objectives or activities, I collaborated with her in forming these objectives and guided her in how to do that.

Amal also reported that she planed collaboratively with student teachers at the beginning of the student teacher semester. As she pointed out:

> At the beginning of the semester I collaborated with student teachers in planning for lessons to help them learn to do this task. Also, they sometimes collaborated with the original teacher of the classroom. Then they planned and I followed up with feedback.

In contrast, Sarah mentioned that she did not co-plan with the student teachers. She only instructed them on how to plan, showed them examples of lesson plans, and then critiqued their planning. When she was asked whether she co-planned with student teachers she responded:

> No, the student teachers planned and I corrected their planning and provided them with feedback. It was almost two weeks that they planned and I critiqued their planning until they progressed in their planning.

Sarah took the role of telling, showing, and critiquing for helping student teachers learn to plan. Only five mentors of the eleven reported that they planned jointly with the student teachers. Such joint planning between mentors and student teachers allowed for on-the-spot consultation and gave both the student teacher and the mentor an opportunity to make their thinking visible to each other. It is important for student teachers to see the conceptual aspects and the thinking behind any teaching task, as well as its performative aspects. For a student teacher, having access to her mentor's thinking in context is critical for learning to think like a teacher (Dembele, 1995; Tatum and AcWhorter, 1999).

Understanding mentors' actions

The cases supported my early impression, discussed in chapter 3, that the context influences mentors' ideas and practices with student teachers.

The policy context, including the national curriculum, influenced mentors' practices more strongly than other aspects of the context. From the cases, it appeared that mentors in their practices emphasized helping student teachers learn the curriculum's requirements and prescribed ways of teaching. They tended to help student teachers learn the objectives and the philosophy of the reform curriculum. They also focused on helping student teachers learn to plan for the five-lesson sequence unit, and to achieve the integrity of the four language arts. All these practices were a consequence of the existence of the national curriculum and mentors' feeling of duty to follow it.

In their mentoring practice, mentors also paid careful attention to helping student teachers learn how to teach the holy Koran. They emphasized to the student teachers that there was a difference between teaching any piece of literature and teaching the Koran. So they guided the student teachers in learning how to plan for and manage instruction the Koran. These practices were influenced by the religious context in which the mentors work.

School organizational context, including the status of mentors, also appeared to affect their practices. The mentors focused on guiding student teachers in learning the tasks of teaching. They took an active role with student teachers and structured the experience for the student teachers. They also took initiatives to instruct, tell, show, coach, and provide feedback to student teachers.

In all of this activity, the status of mentors and experts led the mentors to take the stance of knowers. The cases described how the mentors tend to transmit their knowledge and expertise to student teachers mostly by instructing, showing, and providing feedback. Therefore, mentors' practices with student teachers lacked the concept of mentoring as joint inquiry.

Summary of chapter

This chapter provides a cross-case analysis, showing patterns and variability across the cases. There are four patterns across the cases that I think are significant in regard to opportunities for student teachers' learning. First, all mentors regard student teaching as a guided experience, therefore, they see a central role for themselves in helping student teachers learn to teach. Second, all mentors plan for their mentoring practices as well as are adaptive to the characteristics of the student teachers and responsive to spontaneous situations. Third, it is common among the mentors that they adopt the stance of experts and knowers in their practices and this seems to reduce the sense of inquiry with the student teachers. Fourth, mentors focus on helping student teachers learn curriculum requirements and ways of teaching them, therefore, mentors help student teachers to meet the standards and requirements of the curriculum.

There also are significant variations in mentors' practices across the cases. First, mentors differ in their way of dealing with student teachers' lack of subject matter knowledge. This variation leads one to think about the importance of paying attention to student teachers' subject matter knowledge and to find productive ways in helping student teachers gain subject matter knowledge. Second, mentors differ in choosing

whether or not to step in while student teachers are teaching. This situation leads one to think that it is possible for mentors to find a way to be subtle and tactfully step in to correct a mistake or provide clarifications, if this is for the benefit of both the student teacher and the pupils. Third, mentors differ in their procedures for helping student teachers learn to plan. Amal and Dana co-planned with student teachers, while Sarah did not. This variation leads one to think about the significance of mentor's co-planning with student teachers, as it allows on-the-spot consultation and provides student teachers access to the mentor's thinking. This might help student teachers learn to think like teachers.

The context in which mentors work appears to influence their practices. Mentors' focusing on helping student teachers learn and follow the national curriculum requirements is a result of having the national curriculum and the feeling of duty to follow it. Mentors' taking the stance of being an expert and transmitting knowledge to student teachers with no joint inquiry is a consequence of the mentors' status as head teacher and experts in the department. The school organization in Kuwait isolates mentors from each other. Because there is only one head teacher in each department, each school has only one mentor for each subject. This creates a form of mentor isolation.

These findings suggest some implications and recommendations for mentoring and support of mentors. In the next chapter, I lay out some issues that have emerged from the study and then discuss implications for mentoring in Kuwait and other contexts.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this study I have described mentors' ideas and practices in a particular context, namely that of Kuwait. My purpose has been to try to understand mentors' ideas about mentoring and learning to teach, how they act as mentors, and what opportunities they create for student teachers' learning. I believe that this work can help research participants in this study to reflect on their ideas and practices as mentors. It can also help the teacher educators in choosing, recruiting, and preparing mentors for their role as well as help educators in different contexts understand and consider many issues in mentoring practices. In this chapter, I first discuss issues in mentoring that have emerged from the study. Second, I discuss implications for mentoring in Kuwait. Finally, I discuss implications for other audiences interested in the issue of mentoring practices.

Issues in mentoring

In enacting their role as mentors, many issues inherent in the work of mentoring emerged. These issues included the dual responsibility of the mentors, mentors' concentrating on the performative aspects more than the conceptual ones, and the status of mentors as experts and knowers.

I chose to concentrate on these issues because, from the outset of this study, I was aware of the dual responsibility of the mentors and the tension that mentors experience in attending to both classroom pupils and student teachers—especially when the student teachers are leading the classroom teaching. I saw differences among the mentors in

dealing with this issue. It appeared from the study that it was a crucial issue and, how the mentor chose to deal with the issue, constrained or facilitated student teachers' learning opportunities.

Student teachers need to learn the performative aspects of teaching as well as the conceptual aspects of teachers' work. They need to learn to think like teachers and this would be by mentors rendering visible their thinking as teachers to student teachers. I was struck by the prominence of the modeling and showing the performative aspects of teaching tasks and the absence of the conceptual aspects in mentoring practices. This leads me to highlight and discuss the issue of concentrating on performative more than conceptual aspects in mentoring practices.

In trying to understand why mentors adopt the stance of knowers and experts—transmitting knowledge to student teachers- it became clear to me that they operated from their status as head teachers, who are considered to be experts and competent teachers. I found the notion of the status of mentors as experts and knowers helpful for capturing and describing the issue. Below, I explicate and discuss these issues of mentoring that need to be considered by teacher educators in the field.

The dual responsibility of mentors

Mentors have dual responsibility toward student teacher's and pupils' learning. Mentors at pre-service are first classroom teachers and their prime responsibility is to promote their pupils' learning. In the context of sharing or giving student teachers classes to teach, mentors also must operate to promote student teachers' learning. Balancing this dual responsibility is not an easy task for mentors, particularly when a student teacher is

leading the teaching. What does a mentor do when the student teacher makes mistakes, writes on the board or says things that have problematic effects on pupils learning; when there is a need for clarification of perplexing point; when one has something to add and contribute to the lesson; or when there is noise or misbehavior of pupils? Should the mentor step in to correct a mistake, to add or clarify a point, or to help in facilitating classroom order and management?

It is not easy to answer these questions or respond to these situations while the student teacher is leading the teaching in the classroom. Any kind of response to these situations holds the potential for undermining the student teacher's authority and credibility in the classroom and risks relational tension between the mentor and the student teacher. This is a complicated issue in mentoring and a predicament that permeates mentoring practices. How a mentor chooses to deal with and manage this predicament in mentoring has the potential to limit or facilitate the mentor's role enactment and the student teachers' learning (Dembele, 1995). Amal's case is interesting because she seemingly has resolved the problem and has more options as a result of it. She has managed to find a way to act on the learning of the student teachers and the pupils. Accepting mentors' stepping in while student teachers are teaching seems to depend on how it is done, the understanding that is established before-hand, as well as the relationship between the mentors and their student teachers. The issue raises the question of whether there can be conditions in which that can happen so that the mentors have more options for resolving the dilemma of the duty to both student teachers and to pupils.

Concentrating on performative more than conceptual aspects in mentoring practices

The work of mentoring student teachers occurred in the context of schools and is arranged because of the connection to classroom life, where performance and actions rather than contemplation, seem to be more convenient and/or useful. The student teachers need to see models of good teaching, to be guided to appropriate strategies of teaching, and to experience teaching in concrete forms. On the other hand, the mentors need to assess their student teachers' learning, both for themselves and for other audiences (e.g. supervisors, university people, etc.). These tensions are more likely to focus mentors' attentions and actions on helping their student teachers learn particular management techniques, instructional strategies and ways of doing teaching tasks rather than developing a principled understanding of teaching (Little, 1987, 1990) and developing the tools for reflecting on and studying teaching (Feims-Nemser, 2000).

Dewey (1904) argued in opposition to concentrating on technical competence in the education of pre-service teachers for the reason that "immediate skills may be got at the cost of the power to go on growing" (p.320). Feiman-Nemser and parker (1993) maintained that a similar emphasis in the work of mentors makes them function as "local guides" who explain to novices school policies and practices and help them solve their immediate practical problems, rather than act as "educational companions" who help novices inquire into the existing models of learning and teaching and help them develop sound reasons for their actions.

In the context of mentoring, to justify the investment of their time and to assess novices learning, mentors will have to provide demonstrable evidence of novices'

learning as a consequence of their work. Apparently, it is difficult to present such evidence for the development of principled understanding of teaching that Little (1987, 1990) discusses or developing the tools for inquiring into teaching that Feiman-Nemser (2000) calls for as a result of mentoring. Mentors tend to focus on the technical and performative aspects of teaching in their mentoring practices. Without the ability to assess when to use a particular strategy, what its strengths and limitations are, and to develop sound reasons for their actions, novices will not be sufficiently equipped for making sound professional judgment and for an ongoing study of teaching. Consequently, Feiman-Nemser (2000) argues for helping pre-service teachers develop the tools to inquire into and study teaching. She pointed out that "pre-service preparation is a time to begin forming habits and skills necessary for the ongoing study of teaching in the company of colleagues" (p. 11).

There were many aspects of the mentors' thinking and practices in this study that could be encouraged in order to get more emphasis on the conceptual aspects of teaching tasks. For example, some mentors planned jointly with student teachers. This kind of joint participation in doing tasks of teaching could be encouraged so mentors and student teachers could participate jointly in preparing for instruction, writing tests, and grading them. Cooperation in task accomplishment allows mentors to model for student teachers their ways of thinking and acting, as well as to engage with them in experimentation and inquiry.

Another example is that mentors took student teachers to observe experienced teachers. It is helpful if the mentors arrange for experienced teachers to talk to student teachers before the class about the lesson they will observe, what the experienced teacher

is going to do and how, as well as verbalize the outcomes she hopes to accomplish as she and the pupils work through the lesson. This type of talking and information would help student teachers to watch the lesson and think about how the lesson and the teaching approach evolve.

Status of mentors as experts and knowers

> The relationship required of Mentor a full measure of wisdom, integrity, and personal investment. It required that Telemachus, as protégé, honor the differences in maturity and circumstances that separated them. (Little, 1990, p. 298).

Little infers that mentoring arrangements draw their images of mentoring from the tradition of mentor and protégé and from business. In both of the traditions, the relationship is asymmetrical. The mentor is usually older, more experienced, and knowledgeable than the novice. In this context, both the mentor and the protégé seem to acknowledge this difference. In mentoring student teachers, it seems that the relationships are also asymmetrical, based on assumed differences in expertise in teaching. However, in western countries, there is a paradox regarding mentors' expertise as professional expertise is both demanded by the role of mentor and denied by history and circumstances (Little, 1990). The inherited traditions in teaching in western countries include norms of equal status and autonomy. As Little (1990) expressed regarding the expert status among teachers, "within the culture of teachers, informal acknowledgements are common, but formal expert status is suspect" (p. 319). This situation would create a conflict between norms of equal status and the implication of mentor role.

In Kuwait, however, there are traditions of status and expertise in teaching. Experienced teachers, especially the head teachers, hold a status of expert in the department and responsibility for supervising other teachers in the department. This situation, unlike in western countries, creates the conditions and circumstances for the development of the mentor role. However, in some contexts, like in this study, this difference in expertise and status makes the mentors represent themselves as knowers—giving and transmitting the knowledge to student teachers and developing the stance of "follow me" (Schon, 1987). This situation is more likely to prevent or obviate mentors to reflect on and be a critical user of this knowledge.

When knowledge and knowers are treated as inseparable, a person with expertise would have credence of her knowledge and take it as true and this can confine further learning. Also, when mentors present themselves as knowers and experts--transmitting knowledge as true-- novices are more likely to learn to take this knowledge uncritically. When student teachers' faith in their mentors as the guides of their learning experiences is uncritically extended to the knowledge that is associated with the mentors, there is a risk of acknowledging that knowledge to be true for all places and situations. This situation could limit their development as independent learners and thinkers.

In a context where status and expertise are correlated, it is a challenge for mentors to look critically at their knowledge and to help student teachers to learn to do so. The mentors in this study did not help student teachers to question the knowledge the mentors represented.

Mentors, with their status and expertise, looked at their knowledge as authentic knowledge and neglected alternative perspectives that may come from student teachers.

Instead of stepping into the "indeterminate zones of practice" (Schon, 1987) where both knowledge and expertise could be questioned and discussed, they fell back on the familiar ground of thinking, talking and acting in their mentoring practices. How and when mentors separate their knowledge from the person who holds that knowledge and reflect and look critically at their knowledge is a challenge for all mentors.

However, there are many things in mentors' thinking and in their situations that might be encouraged or strengthened so that they could work in ways that are more likely to develop a critical and curious stance in student teachers. For instance, Amal expressed that the thing she liked best was when a student teacher thinks for herself --to think about why it should be that way and not the other way, as well as asking the reason behind adopting one idea and not another. Amal's report carries evidence that in her thinking she admires inquiry. Therefore, if this could be encouraged and strengthened, she would work in ways that are more likely to develop critical stance in student teachers. Shareefa also reported that she gave the student teachers the opportunity to critique her teaching. If mentors were encouraged to arrange for student teachers to critique their teaching and other's teaching more often, this kind of work is more likely to develop a critical stance in student teachers.

Implications for mentoring in Kuwait

The findings of this study have many implications for the context of Kuwaiti mentoring. They suggest that mentors in Kuwait are in need of creating a discourse community where mentors share and discuss issues about learning to teach and mentoring, of conceptualizing mentoring as joint inquiry, and of preparing mentors. I will elaborate on each of these points.

Creating a discourse community among Kuwaiti mentors

Mentors in Kuwaiti schools are head teachers of each department. This means that in each school there is only one mentor of each subject matter. Thus, mentors in Kuwaiti schools are isolated. This situation suggests the need for creating a discourse community among mentors where they can share common language, exchange knowledge and ideas about helping student teachers learn to teach, and discuss problems and concerns about mentoring. This recommendation is a consequence of the organizational context and policy context in which only the head teacher is appointed to be a mentor for student teachers. This situation created the isolation among mentors who mentor student teachers within the same subject area.

Just like teaching, in the role of mentor, mentors practicing in isolation are more likely to solidify erroneous activity and provide little opportunity for conceptual clarification that allows mentors to make sense of their cumulative experience. Just like teaching, as it is argued, for the importance of creating networks and a professional community among teachers (Pennell and Firestone, 1996; Lieberman and Grolnick, 1996; Gomez, 1988), it is also very crucial to create such a network and community among mentors.

One way to develop this discourse community is that the student teaching center at Kuwait University provide mentors with occasions to meet where they can share approaches, materials, insights, and concerns. In this developed discourse community, mentors can bring experiences from their mentoring practices to the community of mentors to build a larger base of shared understanding about visions for helping student teachers learn to teach.

Providing mentors with occasions to meet and talk about their mentoring experience needs a facilitator who would lead the discussion of mentors and direct them to systemically study and discuss their mentoring practices, otherwise their meetings might likely include talking and exchanging mentoring stories.

It is more likely that a faculty of teacher education could take the role of facilitator of this discourse community. Clearly, mentors' talking about their experiences and concerns would not be sufficient in helping mentors to develop in their work as mentors. Mentors also need other opportunities such as, analyzing videotaped conferences of mentors and student teachers, sharing and studying mentoring practices with other mentors, engaging in joint problem solving and exploring new ideas and giving and receiving feedback on mentoring practices and conferences with student teachers. In this manner, this discourse community could help mentors share ideas, success stories, discuss problems, mentoring practices, and help each other with suggestions for dealing with particular challenges.

Conceptualizing mentoring as joint inquiry

The Kuwaiti mentors see themselves as knowers—transmitting knowledge to student teachers. In order to improve mentors' practices, the mentoring relationship of transmitting and receiving need to be conceptualized in a different way. The Kuwaiti mentors need to see and conceptualize mentoring as joint inquiry in which mentors, while they help student teachers investigate questions about teaching, also inquire about how best to help student teachers learn to teach. This inquiry may include investigating what student teachers are learning, how they are learning it, what supports or inhibits their

learning, and what the mentors could do to promote the conditions for student teachers' learning. The school organizational context plays a part in this recommendation. Since the Kuwaiti mentors are head teachers and considered having a high status of experienced competent teachers, they tend to see themselves as knowers instead of inquirers.

The Kuwaiti mentors would have much to benefit if they conceptualize mentoring as a practice of joint inquiry. The mentors would not have the need to present themselves as a source of knowledge for student teachers. They would be more likely to investigate areas in which they need to develop expertise. Mentoring, as joint inquiry, would help mentors see mentoring as an ongoing process that involves systematic inquiry and reflection. This inquiry stance could foster the development of an attitude that valued knowledge from any source, even from what a pupil said in class, and at the same time, it could help develop a critical stance toward knowledge from all sources. For example, Adkins (1999), when she found her student teachers held very different beliefs about pedagogy, started to examine her own practice and the choices she made for her pupils. She learned that she could never take for granted that what she thought she knew about her pupils and her practice was always best. Developing such an inquiry stance is important for mentors. Healan and Wilbourne (1999) described an inquiry project into teaching that involved a mentor teacher, student teacher and their pupils. They both investigated whether the Applied Communication curriculum was accomplishing what it was supposed to do. By inquiring together, the mentor teacher reported that she benefited from this inquiry. Besides the affirmation of the effectiveness of the applied classroom for pupils, she also reported "the most important benefit for me has been the opportunity to get to know my students well" (p. 108).

With the intersection between the mentor teachers as organizational context and the required curriculum, one can think that everything is given within the national curriculum. But, when I went closer to the practice of mentors I found that there is latitude for mentor teachers and this latitude provides a ground for joint inquiry. There are many things and topics left for mentors to talk about as joint inquiry among mentors and between mentors and student teachers. For example, not all topics are equally prescribed. There is less said about grammar—so there is a topic that is open for discussion about how to teach it in an interesting way for the pupils. Another thing that can be inquired about are the learning aids that are appropriate to a specific lesson. A third topic for joint inquiry is about how to make a lesson more engaging for the pupils. Even if the content topic is prescribed and the five day sequence is described, there is still room to inquire how the teacher can engage pupils in a substantial way. There is also room for inquiring about what kind of questions are appropriate for assessment that really clarifies pupils' understanding. Furthermore, mentors have the latitude to inquire about the kind of individual efforts assignment that would engage pupils and motivate them as well as would get them to do the kind of work that is useful in the following discussion.

By engaging in mentoring as inquiry and presenting themselves as inquirers rather than knowers, mentors could model the kind of life-long learning that is important for student teachers to learn to engage in and help student teachers to form a well-developed teacher research mind-set that shapes their thinking about what constitutes good classroom research and inquiry (Healan and Wilbourne, 1999).

The question of how an inquiring stance can be adopted by mentors is a challenging one. One idea for addressing this question is to provide mentors with preparation for their mentoring role.

Mentors' preparation

In order to achieve the development of mentors' inquiring stance, mentors should be involved actively in professional development work prior to and during their service as mentors. Thus, mentors need preparation. This preparation can provide the necessary foundation and structure for mentor growth.

University faculty are more likely to have had the experience of mentoring students, or observing such mentoring. They were probably also mentored in university settings at the doctoral level, where the more common model of supporting people's learning is to encourage investigating one's own questions and exploration of ideas rather than imposing one's ideas on another. Moreover, their education has more than likely prepared them to consider different views about issues in education and to develop investigation, examination and analytical abilities. All these aspects would help them to be more confident in what they could learn through inquiry and to be the best for taking on the role of preparing mentors. In fact, the university faculty are considered to be the best ones to take on the role of preparing mentors and to helping construct a discourse community among mentors.

The university faculty could work with prospective mentors, showing them how to work with student teachers and also how to reflect on that experience. The content/activities of the preparation would focus on the following: providing

opportunities for prospective mentors to observe and analyze the practice of student teachers; focusing on community and resolving conflict; fostering productive conversations about teaching and learning; helping prospective mentors understand student teachers' developments and their needs and concerns; helping them study their own teaching and helping the student teachers learn from these processes; providing them with mentoring strategies and practices to support and challenge novices to learn at their maximal level; providing opportunity to reflect on their own experiences as novices; teaching them to analyze and reflect on classroom teaching and learning experiences, as well as mentor/novice interactions; and practicing problem solving simulated in actual mentor and student teacher learning situations.

All of these activities would help prospective mentors learn to analyze and reflect on their mentoring practices. When the preparation of mentors is an institutional commitment, a mentoring program could be developed to model the kind of desired mentoring practices. The university faculty and prospective mentors could establish relationships, negotiate goals, and engage in the kind of practices that they would like the prospective mentors to practice when they work with student teachers.

Implications for other contexts and further questions

This study of mentor's ideas and practices raises some important questions, which need to be further investigated in other contexts. For example, the question of what constituted mentors' purpose and what they considered to be important for helping student teachers learn needs to be investigated in other contexts. The Kuwaiti mentors drew their purpose from Kuwait university program goals and what was expected from them during student

teaching period and curriculum requirements, in addition to their experiences as teachers in a system with a national curriculum. They were mainly committed to particular ideas presented in the Kuwait university program and the ministry of education. The university program required mentors to assess student teachers according to specific competences. So, mentors helped student teachers learn these skills. The ministry of education also has specific ideas regarding the teaching of Arabic language and curriculum requirements that mentors are committed to help student teachers learn. Mentors, in other contexts, will have different institutional, ideological, and personal affiliations. So, it is likely that individual or institutional perspectives about what the student teachers in a particular context need to learn will be different in another context. Who should then decide what the student teachers will learn and on what basis? How should mentors enact their role to most benefit student teachers in helping them learn to teach? How would mentors determine where to invest their efforts as mentors? These are important questions.

One could argue that one way to address these questions is to consider the different contexts of mentoring practices, emphasizing the context driven nature of mentors' work (Wang, 2001). In other words, maintain the idea that mentors should be guided by the contexts of their works. Yet, mentors would still need some agreed upon measures for interpreting these contexts. The various results of mentoring practices (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1993, Borko and Mayfield, 1995, Martin, 1997) support the argument for defining the role of mentors and for the development of professional standards to guide and evaluate the work of mentors. The practices of mentors, such as the Kuwaiti mentors, contribute to the definitions of mentors' roles and practices. The role that Kuwaiti mentors play is as guides—guiding student teachers through all

teaching tasks. The cases in this study support the idea that novices do not necessarily learn key aspects of teaching from first-hand experiences alone. Rather, they need guidance to notice and understand what needs to be learned (Dembele, 1995).

This study demonstrated that teachers taking on mentoring need support and help in learning that mentoring is a professional practice that can be cultivated. Mentors in this study enacted their role as mentors without thinking about reflecting on their mentoring practices. They enacted their role as they perceived it to be. However, they did not look at their mentoring work as a professional practice, similar to teaching, in which one can learn and grow while doing it. Mentoring is usually defined as a new social role for experienced teachers. However, mentoring is more than a social role; it is also a professional practice that should be cultivated. Therefore, mentors in any context need help in understanding that mentoring is a professional practice and mentors need support to learn to enact their role. Role definitions do not help mentors visualize what they are supposed to do. Mentors need clear descriptions of purpose connected to descriptions of specific mentoring practices in context. This situation raises questions about the kinds of support that mentors need, who will provide it, and what techniques could be developed to make it available to them.

This study revealed that one area in which mentors need support is in thinking critically and reflecting on their mentoring practices. This finding suggests two points regarding mentoring in any context. First, it suggests that mentoring and learning to mentor is an ongoing process that involves reflection. Second, it suggests that, like teachers who need opportunities to reflect and think critically about their teaching practice in order to make needed changes, mentors need opportunities to inquire and

reflect on mentoring practices. This study provides images of mentors in action that could provoke other mentors in any context to not only reflect on and critique their own ways of acting, but also to act differently.

In this study, the connection of status and expertise seemed to affect the way that mentors helped student teachers learn to teach. They tended to take a knower's stance, as one who transmits knowledge to student teachers. In contexts that are less hierarchical or have norms of equal status, there may not be a stance of knower and a transmission of knowledge. However, it raises questions about what kind of knowledge has more credibility and who has the authority to decide what and how people should learn and teach. These questions have political, ideological, and epistemological dimensions, which need to be addressed in an appropriate context.

CODA

My journey to the conclusions of this study

In this study, I have reached conclusions that, as a Kuwaiti teacher only a few years ago, I would have found difficult to understand or accept. Perhaps some of my colleagues in Kuwait will also find them difficult to understand or accept. I have been away from home a long time, and do not want to be too much of a stranger when I return. Therefore, as a complement to the arguments made in the study proper, I offer here an account of my intellectual journey from teaching school in Kuwait through the study that has been presented in this volume.

My learning on the job and experiences of teaching

When I found myself alone in the classroom on my first day as a teacher, I felt responsible and accountable for student learning and covering the curriculum. At that early stage of my teaching, I was always concerned about how to provide good instruction to students. As a novice teacher, I focused on the curriculum, covering the material on time and managing the classroom. Despite my planning, I was always uncertain about how the lesson would go. I mechanically went on with my teaching. I never asked myself if what I was doing was meaningful. I never asked why I did what I did. I did not connect what I learned in my undergraduate education to my teaching. But then, later in my teaching career, I began asking questions and connecting subsequent professional development experiences to my teaching.

Acting on ideas offered in a symposium

One day I learned about a professional development symposium offered for novice teachers. I thought it would be a good idea if I attended so I could learn and improve my practice. The theme of the symposium was the possibilities of caring. The speakers were experienced teachers and counselors. I left the symposium feeling in my heart that to be really effective, teaching had to begin with a teacher's care and concern for students. I realized that if I could establish a caring and interpersonal relationship with my students, they would be willing to follow what the teacher said and would be motivated to work harder to gain the blessing of the teacher.

I wanted to try these ideas out in my classroom. I decided to begin with one girl in my class who had great difficulty in learning to read. I devoted special attention to her and tried to encourage her by showing her more caring. I engaged her in different kinds of activities, such as handing out materials and being responsible for arranging the bookshelves. In terms of reading I tended to give her extra time to prepare herself to read a paragraph. After many students read the text aloud I gave her the chance to read it again and she succeeded. I was impressed that the caring environment made a difference.

This experience taught me a lot about teaching. I realized that not only does subject matter knowledge make someone a teacher but creating a classroom with a caring environment can enhance students' learning. I began to understand the role of the teacher was not always positive. Teachers can strengthen and improve their students' abilities and they can also ruin them. I realized that a teacher should convince students that they are important to her and to all class members. Each student should feel that she is a part of the group. I tried to emphasized dialogue, sharing, and discussing issues with my

students. Through dialogue students reveal their concerns and the teacher can provide support and nurturing.

By this time, my belief about the teacher's role had changed. I tended to believe that the teacher's role is more than planning the lesson and providing classroom instruction. Teachers play an important role in supporting and nurturing their students. The teacher's role is to create an environment in which all students feel as if they are a part of the group, encouraging them to try, convincing them that making mistakes are normal and that we all learn by trying, correcting, and trying again. This kind of environment enhances students' self-worth and facilitates their learning.

My mentor teachers

At that time, I started to think about my learning to teach and the kind of head teacher that I had as a mentor. She did not help me or instruct me how to plan for lessons or how to represent the lesson to pupils. She only acted as a critic and assessor—assessing my planning and teaching at that time. From my point of view, she was not a supportive person during my learning to teach.

When the head of the department of Arabic language retired, I had the good fortune of having another department head who I thought was a wonderful and experienced teacher and mentor. Miss Mona was very supportive. She offered herself any time to help teachers. She always expressed her willingness to provide assistance to me on whatever I needed. She let me feel that she was there for me whenever I needed to consult or discuss a difficulty that I faced. She organized a staff meeting every week to discuss our teaching concerns and questions regarding the curriculum and practice. The conversations that occurred encouraged me to bring my questions into the dialogue. She

built a trust between her and other teachers in the department. For example, she organized a plan for the staff to visit each other's classrooms and then to share those experiences, reflect on each other's teaching practices and learn from each other.

Learning from colleagues

Our educational system in Kuwait is structured in a way that makes us responsible for the students only for a part of the day. The school day is divided into six teaching sessions for different subjects. Every teaching session is forty-five minutes long. Students learn a different subject in each session with a different teacher. Teachers teach three or four sessions per day, which are usually separated from each other. They then return to the staff room where they meet with other teachers. This flexible schedule enables the teachers to arrange their schedules to visit each other's classrooms.

When we visited one of our fellow teachers in her sixth grade classroom, she was teaching a poem about the happiness and joy of childhood. The poem described how one plays, dances, and does not care about anything except having fun and recreation. It went on to describe having a playful time in nature with the plants and flowers and running after birds and butterflies. Then the teacher discussed the meaning of some difficult words in the poem, which she had had asked students to look up in the dictionary. She asked about the meaning of the words and then asked the students to form sentences that included the discussed word. The teacher asked about the meaning of a word, "Al-safeer" in Arabic, that actually has two very different meanings. The word means "messenger" and also means "fallen leaves from trees." The meaning depends on the context of the sentence.

One of the students, Hanna, looked in the dictionary and took the first meaning, which is "messenger." She did not notice the other one. She stated that the meaning of the word was messenger. I expected that the teacher would reply that Hanna's answer was wrong because the poem did not include the meaning of messenger. Other students refused Hanna's answer and insisted on the other meaning. But the teacher was wise and announced that Hanna's answer was correct. The answer matched the meaning in the dictionary. And the teacher accepted Hanna's answer as a valid description of the dictionary meaning. But the teacher then asked Hanna whether the meaning of messenger would be suitable to the sentence and the context of the poem. Hanna replied "No." Then the teacher asked Hanna whether she had another explanation for the word. But when Hanna did not, the teacher asked the whole class to find a suitable meaning. The teacher then explained how one word has many different meanings depending on the context and the sentence in which the word is used.

I learned from this experience that as teachers we shouldn't give students the impression that there is only one answer to a question, but should be open to different interpretations. My schooling experiences as a student gave me the perception that every question had only one acceptable answer and interpretation. From this experience, with Hanna, I came to understand that if the teacher had insisted that Hanna's answer was wrong, she might undermine Hanna's trust in the dictionary. She told students that the two answers were both right, but that we should be careful to consider what is appropriate for the context. She avoided the conflict and, instead of seeing one right answer, she managed to convince the students that there were different interpretations according to

the context. In addition, the teacher used Hanna's response as an opportunity to give the students a little practice in identifying meaning by looking at the context.

Learning from students

The context of my teaching shaped my practice as a teacher. In planning instruction I dealt with mandated content on what should be taught and decisions of how it should be taught. Those mandates can become complicated in the classroom when they are influenced by students' questions and interests.

For example, one afternoon I had a reading lesson. The text was about the geography of Kuwait. Students were supposed to read the text, which touched a bit on the countries surrounding Kuwait. I had the official document and curriculum guide for what I was to teach and what students were to study. I noticed that the students' focus shifted to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. I saw my well-planned lesson suddenly disappear. The thoughts and ideas of students focused on the topic of the invasion, how people in Kuwait suffered, and how they managed to survive. I was surprised that they brought ideas, personal experiences, and other texts and stories about the invasion that they wanted to share. This was a source of annoyance and anxiety for me because I had already planned for the lesson.

I realized that things are always happening that are not included in a teacher's planning. I was uncertain how to deal with this situation. Was I to ignore what the students wanted to explore and discuss or did I follow them in their inquiry and interest? At that time, my uncertainty became persistent. I wondered how I could meet the unexpected. If I followed my students' inquiries I would be taking a risk of not concentrating on the mandated content. And if I ignored what the students were interested

in and excited to learn, I deprived them of the opportunity for engaging and learning. I knew my decision would entail both kinds of risks.

I was challenged to respond to the demands of the situation. I decided to respond to the instant situation. I responded to its benefit as I became involved and did what I saw as beneficial, according to my responsibility and personality. I reacted to students' questions, concerns, and interests by devoting time from the subject under study to share and discuss these current and vital questions. I wanted the students to be involved and to provide them with justified experiences. From this experience I discovered that education often means grasping valuable ideas that are not in the teacher's plan for the day. On this day students learned valuable ideas because they were engaged. The original lesson would still be there for the next class meeting.

A turning point

After this experience, I asked myself many questions. In what ways did students' inquiries and interests affect the teacher's instructional decisions? What factors influenced the teacher's decisions? And how did the teacher explain these instructional decisions? From this particular experience I realized that teachers not only plan instruction, but also can alter their teaching plans in response to classroom interaction. When teachers want to take advantage of a teachable situation and follow their students' questions and concerns, they need flexibility in working with the mandated content and curriculum. So teachers may learn from colleagues, from students, from personal experiences, and from their practices in the classroom.

One day, the Minister of Education and his staff visited my school. He wanted to visit a classroom, so the principal offered him mine. I did not expect that and did not

know her reason for choosing my classroom. Fifteen people stepped into my classroom--the minister and his staff, the principal, the head teacher and other teachers. I used my lesson plan, knowing the activities and the material were excellent. I presented a successful lesson. All the visitors appreciated my work. But, I still had some hidden feelings of uncertainty and fear of failure. Even though I thought the lesson and the materials were good, and even though the visitors said kind things about the lesson, I still felt somewhat alone and somewhat uncertain about what was right in my teaching methods. At that time, I thought I ought to be certain. That situation gave me the motivation to look into ways of providing support for learning to teach. From that day on I thought about how I could contribute to the process of learning to teach and how I could help novice teachers learn to teach and become effective teachers.

I realized that, as a teacher, my chances to make such a contribution would be limited. So I made a big decision -- to pursue my education in the United States and "seek knowledge even if it is in China," as the ancient Arabic proverb says. I applied for a scholarship from Kuwait University and was accepted. I have been sponsored by Kuwait University to earn both masters and doctoral degrees. The terms of sponsorship are that I will return to join the education faculty of Kuwait University. I aim to instruct the new generation of teachers to be flexible and creative, and to develop their teaching. I hope to give them the confidence to do what is best for their students. I also want to contribute to the preparation and professional development of mentor teachers.

New perspectives on learning

From my course work and the readings at Michigan State University I have concluded that reflection is an essential tool for teachers in order to be able to consider their progress in the classroom and to understand what might be going there, to ponder effective teaching strategies and activities, and to be able to think on their feet as they teach.

In Kuwaiti schools, there is a widespread conception of teaching and learning as the transmitting and receiving of knowledge. The teacher and the textbook are the source of that knowledge. In my graduate studies, I became aware of a view of learning that says that learning involves the learner's construction of meaning, and that construction is based on perspectives that the learner brings to a particular experience. This view of learning-- social constructivism—is grounded in the premise that people understand and act upon the world by interacting with others. According to this view of learning, meaning is constructed and in constant evolution and development, and involves a continual process where learners re-define knowledge as they are influenced by past and present experiences, their context, and interactions with other individuals. At the beginning, I was fascinated with this new idea of learning because it is so different from the transmission view of learning. There is a sharp difference between an image of transmitting knowledge and an image of pupils constructing knowledge.

I came to be persuaded by the idea of learning as construction. But, when I started to think about my obligation as a teacher in Kuwait –teaching the national curriculum— and when I noticed that different pupils construct different meanings of the same lesson, I

faced the question of the validity of the meanings that the pupils constructed and what the teacher can do about that.

Constructing knowledge in collaboration with others

The idea that knowing and coming to know are active constructive processes, strongly challenged my ideas that knowledge is passively acquired as a result of being shown or told. The idea that coming to know always involves an active constructive process, in which new information must be brought into relationship with what is already known, was both novel and engaging. Central to this idea is the cultural/social context within which development occurs. The cultural/social context, then, influences what and how an individual learns. Vygotsky explained the relationship between the individual and the social context. According to Vygotsky (1978, 1987) the relationship between the individual and the culture of which he or she is a member is one of interdependence; in the interaction, each shapes and is shaped by the other. In the course of my graduate studies, I constructed what was for me a new conception of knowing and how to learn. I constructed a view that the capacities for learning, thinking, and communicating depend on cultural practices and artifacts and on interaction with others, through which they are appropriated and mastered in the course of goal-oriented, joint activity. Such practices and artifacts could include language, modes of visual presentation, scientific theories, textbooks, and institutions of education, of law, and of religious societies.

Traditionally, in Kuwait, attention has been given mainly to textbooks and works of references. They often are treated as if they were actually repositories of knowledge that can be mastered simply by reading, or being told, and by memorizing. During my graduate studies, I came to believe that in order genuinely to learn and master the

knowledge associated with the desired object to be learned, novices must actively participate in the activities in which the knowledge is used, construct their own understanding of it, and be assisted and guided by others in learning how to do so.

Taking into account these insights from the work of Vygotsky and those who have extended his work about knowledge, I arrived at a very different understanding of knowledge and learning from the one that I had before coming to MSU. Knowledge is not fixed, autonomous, and independent, as proponents of the knowledge transmission conception of education seem to believe. Rather, knowledge is constructed and reconstructed between participants in specific situations, using the cultural resources available to them, as they work toward the collaborative achievement of goals that emerge in the course of their activity. In this manner, knowledge is only truly known when it is being used by particular individuals in the course of solving specific problems; and then it is open to modification and development as it is reconstructed to meet the actual demands of the situation.

Constructivism and the Koran

I have gone far enough in my studies of constructivism to recognize that its application to the teaching and learning of the Holy Koran might be both complex and problematic. To date, I have made what I believe to be an essential distinction: The claim that human beings learn by constructing knowledge is not also a claim about the validity of that knowledge. Humans can and do construct errors and mistaken ideas. My current understanding is that, for the purpose of exploring the processes of learning, constructivists assume that valid knowledge is whatever a given society holds it to be, for reasons that that society holds to be good. Thus, I am thinking that a Muslim

constructivist can, reasonably and respectfully, speak of children constructing knowledge of a holy text that their society holds to be a direct revelation of literal truth. That is because the process of learning by construction and the validity of the knowledge constructed are different, if related, matters. Thus, a teacher of the Koran can, reasonably and respectfully, set the aim of helping students to construct valid knowledge of the Koran. Recognizing this matter's complexity and difficulty, I intend to explore it carefully with the greater resources that will be available to me at the University of Kuwait.

Constructivism and mentoring

Considering the implications of this view of knowledge and learning, two things become clear to me about mentoring. First, in helping student teachers learn to teach, the curriculum and content of mentoring is not decontextualized knowledge to be given consideration for its own purpose. Rather, the curriculum of mentoring includes problems and questions that are likely to be significant to student teachers as they try to understand and act effectively while they are learning to teach.

Second, in learning to teach, student teachers should not be thought of as solitary individuals, each working independently of others. According to the social constructivism view, any achievement is always made possible by one being able to take over and use resources created by others. Collaboration and joint inquiry seem to be the most powerful approach to problem solving, and it is equally effective as the basis for learning. From reading Vygotsky (1987), I learned that language is fundamental to thinking; it is through talk with others that the means for higher-level thinking can be appropriated and constructed as a personal resource. In applying Vygotsky's ideas to mentoring, it seems

that exploring issues, questions, and concerns which surface during mentoring student teachers and discussing them with other mentors would provide opportunities for mentors to collaboratively develop a useful understanding of these issues. For the same reasons, I have come to think that mentors should engage in joint inquiry with student teachers in order to guide them to actively participate in the activities in which the knowledge of teaching is used and to construct their own understanding of teaching and learning in their journey of learning to teach.

From these ideas, I have come to believe that mentors in Kuwait would be more effective if they understand and conceptualize mentoring as joint inquiry instead of just transmitting knowledge to student teachers. In arguing for an approach to mentoring that is organized in terms of questions and inquiry, I need to make two further points. First, for a question to be real, the student teacher must really care about finding an answer to it. However, it does not follow that only real questions are ones that are first asked by student teachers. Mentors' suggested questions could become equally real if they are related to an existing interest and/or concern or challenge and awaken a wondering on the part of student teachers.

The second point is that inquiry does not have to start with a clearly formulated question. Some of the most engaging questions arise only after some preliminary work on the topic or work has been carried out. The aim of pursuing inquiry is to foster an inquiry disposition that influences the way in which all activities and teaching tasks are approached and that is generative in the formation of student teachers' identities. For this to happen, I believe, inquiry must become a central feature of mentoring. I have learned that regular meetings with student teachers can play a significant role in this respect.

Also, university-inspired initiatives can encourage the increasing number of inquiries carried out by mentors and student teachers. But ultimately, each mentor has to discover how to proceed in her own specific situation and in collaboration with student teachers with whom she is working. It is for this reason that mentors themselves need to be inquirers, and they can do this most effectively when they belong to a community of mentors with similar concerns.

Planning my work in Kuwait

As I contemplate returning to Kuwait, I anticipate that one kind of work that I will be doing is to provide mentors with guidance on how to work with student teachers. From my position at Kuwait University, I would like to help in creating a professional learning community for mentors by organizing seminars and providing the mentors with regular opportunities for ongoing conversations about how to help student teachers, as well as to share ideas, success stories, and discuss problems. At times, I would also like to provide creative problem-solving sessions that will allow mentors to pool their collective wisdom of practice, helping one anther with suggestions for dealing with particular challenges.

For the seminar sessions, I would like to use some activities that can help mentors discuss, reflect, and analyze their mentoring practices. These activities would include mentors' observing and analyzing the practices of student teachers together, analyzing mentoring strategies and practices to support and challenge student teachers to learn at the maximal level, and discussing practices and problems. These kinds of discussions would help mentors articulate their knowledge, clarify their beliefs, develop a shared language, and construct an understanding of their role. I also would like to offer the mentors the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences as novices, analyze and

reflect on mentor/student teacher's interactions, receive feedback on mentoring practices, and share and study mentoring practices with other mentors.

Now, acting on these ideas will be complicated because my study findings suggest that mentors in Kuwait tend to see themselves as knowledgeable experts transmitting their knowledge and their experiences to student teachers. But, there are reasons to think that the mentors in Kuwait might see a need for improving their mentoring practices, and would engage in regular discussions about mentoring practices if approached in a particular way. In the cases of Amal, Sarah, and Dana, there are indications that this view could work. When I asked them whether they think that their mentoring practices like telling, showing, observing, and giving feedback are the best way to help student teachers learn to teach, they all said that these are the ways that have been used and this is what they know. They asked me if I have or know other practices and said that they would welcome new ideas. This means that the mentors could accept new ideas and have the desire to improve their mentoring practices. However, they need guidance to do so. The starting point that mentors in Kuwait need is to help them look at themselves as intentional learners. The crucial thing is that it has to apply to mentors as well as student teachers. This starting point looks at teachers, at any point of their careers, as mutual takers and givers. In other words, mentors need help to see themselves simultaneously as learners and as sources of knowledge for others.

The other thing that I would do at Kuwait University is to teach student teachers of Arabic language. I will be responsible for teaching a course of instruction of Arabic language. It seems to me that my studies could bring several worthwhile refinements to the course as I recall it (I recognize that it might have changed while I have been away).

For example, the instruction of the Arabic language course will be encompassing topics that are central to the teaching of Arabic language. The content of the course would include unit planning, the writing process, responding to pupils' work, structuring individual efforts, teaching literature, and grammar. For each major area of Arabic language, the course would introduce both frameworks for thinking about teaching the subject and practical strategies and ideas for the classroom. For example, in the area of writing, the term "writing process" would be introduced in terms of drafting, revising, and editing. During the course, the student teachers would engage in hands-on activities, such as working on a group writing assignment, responding to pupils' papers, and writing lesson plans and developing a unit of instruction designed around a particular class in which they would like to teach, as well as discussing potential difficulties pupils face in the writing process, literature interpretation, and grammar understanding.

I would try to encourage student teachers to think about the rationale for classroom practices in relation to the teaching of grammar. They would be encouraged to think about why they are teaching grammar and how it can be taught in useful and interesting ways. The student teachers would be encouraged also to collaborate on assignments and to share ideas and activities. They would be encouraged to see each other as resources in the process of learning to teach. In this manner, the course would transmit norms of professional collegiality.

In this course, I would also introduce the terms of the integrity of the language arts and individual efforts. These kinds of terms would serve as a form of technical language and provide school teachers, student teacher supervisors, and mentors a common vocabulary in which to talk about the teaching and learning of the Arabic

language. Consequently, the course would provide student teachers with both a technical language and a specialized body of knowledge concerning the teaching of Arabic.

As my studies progress I see the need to expand my education even farther. I have discovered new horizons while here at the United States. Every new door that has opened has shown many more paths to follow on my road to a more perfect understanding of the field of mentoring. I am returning to Kuwait with as broad an education background as possible to begin the mission that awaits me there.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview with mentor teachers

Opening Question

1- Tell me about your initial impression of your student teachers.

About learning to teach

2- What are some of the most important things that your student teachers need to learn about teaching Arabic language and literature? Why is that important? (*If not volunteered, I would ask how these ideas related to the national curriculum*)?

3- What are some of the most difficult things to learn about how to teach Arabic literature?

4- What genres must a student teacher understand to teach Arabic literature? *[Poetry, short stories, essays, sections of Koran]*

5- What kinds of teaching methods do you think a student teacher needs to develop for teaching different kinds of literary works?

6- How can you guide a student teacher to learn to plan for lessons for different genres of literature?

7- How can a student teacher best learn to lead a classroom discussion in analyzing a literary text? *(If not volunteered, I would ask how a student teacher best learn to help pupils find personal connections to the text?)*

8- What does a student teacher need to learn about students' individual differences and the differences in their learning styles? *(Probe: learn alternative ways for structuring a lesson, use various teaching strategies, use various teaching activities)*

9- What can you do to help a student teacher learn ways to invite pupils to express their thoughts and feelings about a character or event in a literary work, and learn how to guide them through analyzing a text?

10- How do you think a student teacher can learn to design a test to evaluate pupils' understanding of a piece of literature and to grade pupils' literary works? And what do you do to help the student teacher learn these things?

About mentoring

11- How did you come to think as you do and to mentor as you do?

12- In trying to help student teachers learn to teach literature, how do you relate to them, since they are younger persons --less experienced in teaching?

13- On what experiences do you draw to do your work as a mentor? *(If not volunteered, I will ask about experiences and roles outside of school).*

14- Do you and the student teacher ever plan together? If so, what do you discuss? What are you thinking about when you do the planning together? Do you always do it in this way?

15- When the student teacher teaches a piece of literature, what are you doing and thinking? *(The sort of actions and behaviors the mentor pays attention to)*

16- How do you respond to each student teacher's needs and to specific areas of teaching literature each one needs to work on?

17- Can you tell me what you do when a student teacher works in other teachers' classrooms? What is your role in this situation?

18- What do you do when you and your student teachers are not teaching? How do you spend the time when you and your student teachers are in the shared department office? What sorts of things you discuss, if any?

19- How do you decide what to talk about with your student teacher? *(This is a common probe for lots of questions)*

20- How do you assess your student teachers' learning? What signs of progress or trouble do you look for?

21- What difficulties or dilemmas do you encounter in mentoring student teachers who are learning to teach literature?

22- What can you do to resolve these difficulties?

23- Is there anything that you want to say to help me understand your work with student teachers?

APPENDIX B

جامعة الكويت
كلية التربية

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
استبانه عن التربيه العمليه وأثرها
على الطلبه المتدربين

يمثل المعلم فى أى نظام تعليمى ركيزة أساسية , ذلك أن الآثار التى تترتب على مستوى و نوعية إعداد المعلم تمتد نتائجها لتنعكس على أغلى ما تملكه اى أمه ألا و هو العنصر البشرى المتمثل فى أجيالها المتعاقبة , و الذين هم ذخيرتها و وسيلتها فى استمرار الحياة و تطورها و الإرتفاع بمستواها . لذلك تسعى المجتمعات للإرتفاع بمستوى أداء معلميها , و زيادة مهاراتهم و فاعليتها . و أصبحت عملية متابعة و تقويم برامج إعداد المعلم على أسس علمية من الأمور ذات الأهمية البالغة التي تخطط له الدول وترصد له الجهود وتوفر له أسباب النجاح و التطور . لذلك تأتي هذه الدراسة انطلاقا من إيمان الباحثة بأهمية الدور الذي بلغه المعلم فى العملية التربوية من ناحية ، و أهمية برنامج التربية العملية و دوره الأساسي في اعداد المعلم من ناحية أخرى ، حتى يمكن التعرف على كفاءة برنامج التربية العملية و أثره فى اكساب الطلبة المعلمين الكفايات التعليمية .
إن تفضلكم بالمشاركة فى هذه الدراسة سوف يكون له أثر بالغ فى تمكين المسؤولين بكلية التربية من العمل على تطوير مناهجها بما يتفق مع الواقع المهني و احتياجات مهنة التدريس .

و لكم جزيل الشكر و العرفان.

1. من وجهة نظرك ماذا تعلمت الطالبات المتدربات خلال فترة التربية العملية ؟

2. هل تعتقدين انك استطعت توصيل كل ماترغبين تعليمه لهن ؟ و لماذا ؟

3. ماالوسائل أو الطرق التي استعنت بها في تدريب الطالبات المعلمات ؟ (بطريقة مباشرة عن طريق توجيهها مباشرة لما يجب عليها عمله , أو مناقشة و تحليل نواحي القصور عندها , أو دعوتها بصورة غير مباشرة للتفكير و عرض أفكارها في الأمور التي تخص التدريس)؟ (فصلي في ذلك مع ضرب أمثلة)

4. من وجهة نظرك أيهما يؤدي إلى نتائج أفضل في تدريب الطالبات المعلمات : وجود منهج موحد من قبل وزارة التربية أم ترك مجال لمدرسة الفصل لاختيار الموضوعات؟ و لماذا ؟

5. برأيك ما تأثير وجود طريقة المنهج المطور على طريقة التوجيه والإشراف على طالبات التربية العملية ؟

6. ما مدى استفادة الطالبة المعلمة من الوقت الذى تقضيه بقسم اللغة العربية ؟ و كيف ؟

7. برأيك كيف استفادت الطالبة المعلمة من بقية المدرسات في القسم ؟

8. ما تأثير طبيعة العلاقة بينك و بين الطالبة المعلمة على الدور الذي تقومين به كمشرفة وعلى ما يمكن للطالبة المعلمة أن تتعلمه خلال فترة التربية العملية ؟

9. ما مدى تأثير عدد الطالبات المتدربات على طريقة الإشراف عليهن وعلى مدى استفادتهن خلال فترة التربية العملية ؟

10. كيف استطعت ايصال ما ترغبين تعليمه للطالبات المعلمات ؟

11. هل تعتقدين أن كثرة ما يجب تعلمه و كثافة المنهج و قصر فترة التربية العملية تقلل من الحوار و المناقشة بين المدرسة الاولى و الطالبة المعلمة ؟ و كيف ؟

12. هل كان للتفكير و الحوار و المناقشة دور بينك و بين الطالبة المتدربة ؟ و إذا كانت الاجابة بنعم ,اضربى أمثلة ؟

13. ماذا استفدت من الإشراف على طالبات التربية العملية ؟

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abukalila, H., & Awad, F. (1990). Maham almushref altarbawey wa mada tahekekha fe barnamej altarbeya al amaleya. Majalat kulat altarbeya, 14(3), 73-115.

Adkins, C. (1999). Growing from a teacher candidate challenge: A teacher researcher stance in response to tension. In P. Graham, S. Hudson-Ross, C. Adkins, P. McWhorter, & J. Stewart (Eds.), Teacher/Mentor: A dialogue for collaborative learning (pp. 53-62). New York: Teachers College Press.

Al-Misnad, S. (1985). The Development of Modern Education in the Gulf. London: Ithacha Press.

Alhashel, S., & Muhammad, M. (1990). Taquweem athar al tarbiya al amalya fe eksab el taleb el muaalem al kefayat al taaleemeya. Kuwait city: Kuwait University publications.

Alkhateeb, A. (1989). Dour muassat aedad wa tadreeb almuaalem fe taazeez mehnat altaaleem. Derasat Tarbaweya, 4(16), 70-93.

Alsuwaidi, W. (1994). Dour mushref altarbiya alamaleya. At-tarbiya, 23, 95-125.

Barnes, D. (1992). The significance of teachers' frames for teaching. In T. Russell & H. Munby (Eds.), Teachers and teaching: from classroom to reflection (pp. 9-32). New York: Falmer Press.

Beach, D., & Reinhartz, J. (2000). Supervisory leadership: Focus on instruction. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Borko, H., & Mayfeild, V. (1995). The roles of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor in learning to teach. Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(5), 501-518.

Bunting, C. (1988). Cooperating teachers and the changing views of teacher candidates. Journal of Teacher Education, 39(2), 42-46.

Carter, K. (1990). Teachers' knowledge and learning to teach. In W. Houston, M. Haberman, & J. Sikula (Eds.), Handbook of research on teacher education (pp. 291-310). New York: Macmillan.

Clark, C. M., & Peterson, P. L. (1986). Teachers' thought processes. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed., pp. 255-296). New York: Macmillan.

Cochran-Smith, M. (1991). Learning to teach against the grain. Harvard Educational Review, 61(3), 279-310.

Cogan, M. (1973). Clinical Supervision. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Connelly, F., & Clandinin. (1985). Personal practical knowledge and the modes of knowing: Relevance for teaching and learning. In E. Eisener (Ed.), Learning and teaching the ways of knowing . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Connelly, M., & Clandinin, J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. Educational Researcher, 19(5), 2-14.

Dembele, M. (1995). Mentors and mentoring: frames for actions, ways of acting, and consequences for novice teachers' learning. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Dewey, J. (1904/1964). The relation of theory to practice in education. In R. Archambault (Ed.), John Dewey on Education: Selected writings (pp. 313-338). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Elbaz, F. (1983). Teacher thinking: A study of practical knowledge. New York: Nichols Publisher.

Elliott, B., & Calderhead, J. (1993). Mentoring for teacher development: Possibilities and caveats. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, & M. Wilkin (Eds.), Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based teacher education (pp. 166-189). London: Kogan Page.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (1983). Learning to teach. In L. Shulman & G. Sykes (Eds.), Handbook of Teaching and Policy (pp. 150-170). New York: Longman.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2000). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. Unpublished manuscript, the Strengthening and Sustaining Teaching Project (SST).

Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). Helping novices learn to teach: lessons from an exemplary support teacher. Journal of Teacher Education, 52(1), 17-30.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Buchmann, M. (1985). Pitfalls of Experience in Teacher Preparation. Teachers College Record, 87(1), 53-65.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Buchmann, M. (1986). The First year of Teacher Preparation: Transition to pedagogical thinking? Journal of Curriculum Studies, 18, 239-256.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Parker, M. (1990). Making subject matter part of the conversation in learning to teach. Journal of Teacher Education, 41(3), 32-43.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Parker, M. (1993). Mentoring in context: A comparison of two U.S. programs for beginning teachers. International Journal of Educational Research, 19(8), 699-717.

Feiman-Nemser, S., Parker, M., & Zeichner, K. (1993). Are mentor teachers teacher educators? In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, & M. Wilkin (Eds.), Mentoring: perspectives on school-based teacher education (pp. 147-165). Philadelphia: Kogan Page.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Rasaen, C. (1997). Guiding teacher learning: A fresh look at a familiar practice. In S. Feiman-Nemser & C. Rosaen (Eds.), Guiding teacher learning: insider studies of classroom work with prospective and practicing teachers (pp. 7-35). Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Garland, C., & Shippy, V. (1995). Guiding Clinical Experiences: Effective Supervision in teacher education. Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Goldhammer, R. (1969). Clinical Supervision: Special methods for the supervision of teachers. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Gomez, M. (1988). The national writing project: Creating community, validating experience, and expanding professional opportunities (Issue paper 88-2). East Lansing: Michigan State University. National Center for Research on Teacher Education.

Griffin, G. (1986). Issues in student teaching: A review. In J. Raths & L. Katz (Eds.), Advances in teacher education (Vol. 2, pp. 239-273). Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Guyton, E., & McIntyre, D. (1990). Student teaching and school experiences. In W. Houston, M. Habernman, & J. Sikula (Eds.), Handbook of research on teacher education (pp. 514-534). New York: Macmillan.

Hawkey, K. (1997). Roles, responsibilities, and relationships in mentoring: A literature review and agenda for research. Journal of Teacher Education, 48(5), 325-335.

Hawkey, K. (1998). Mentor pedagogy and student teacher professional development: A study of two mentoring relationships. Teaching and Teacher Education, 14(6), 657-670.

Healan, C., & Wilbourne, A. (1999). The research team: A project involving mentor teacher, teacher candidate, and their students. In P. Graham, S. Hudson-Ross, C. Adkins, P. McWorter, & J. Stewart (Eds.), Teacher/Mentor: A dialogue for collaborative learning (pp. 102-110). New York: Teachers College Press.

Kainan, A. (1995). Forms and functions of storytelling by teachers. Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(2), 163-172.

Leiberman, A., & Grolnick, M. (1996). Networks and reform in American education. Teachers College Record, 98, 7-45.

Little, J. (1987). Teachers as colleagues. In v. Richardson-Koehler (Ed.), Educators' Handbook: A research perspective (pp. 491-518). New York: Longman.

Little, J. (1990). The mentor phenomenon and the social organization of teaching. In C. Cazden (Ed.), Review of research in education (pp. 297-351). Washington DC: American Educational Research Association.

Little, J. (1985). Teachers as teacher advisors: The delicacy of collegial leadership. Educational Leadership, 43(3), 34-36.

Martin, D. (1997). Mentoring in one's own classroom: An exploratory study of contexts. Teaching and teacher education, 13(2), 183-197.

McIntyre, D., Byrd, D., & Foxx, S. (1996). Field and laboratory experiences. In J. Sikula, T. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), Handbook of research on teacher education (pp. 171-193). New York: Macmillan.

McNally, P., & Martin, S. (1998). Support and challenge in learning to teach: the role of the mentor. Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 26(1), 39-50.

Meade, E. (1991). Reshaping the clinical phase of teacher preparation. Phi Delta Kappan, 72(9), 666-669.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis. (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Nevins, R. (1993). Classroom teachers as mentors: Their perspectives on helping novices learn to teach. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Pennell, J., & Firestone, W. (1996). Changing classroom practices through teacher networks: matching program features with teacher characteristics and circumstances. Teachers College Record, 98, 46-76.

Saunders, S., Pettinger, K., & Tomlinson, P. (1995). Prospective mentors' views on partnership in secondary teacher training. British Educational Research Journal, 21(2), 199-218.

Schon, D. (1987). Educating the reflective practitioner. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher.

Schwille, S. (1997). Louise and me: An analysis of instructor's construction of guided practice. In S. Feiman-Nemser & C. Rosaen (Eds.), Guiding teacher learning: insider studies of classroom work with prospective and practicing teachers . Washington DC: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Shareef, N. (1990). Taquweem adaa khareej kuleyat al tarbeya min wejhat nathar al maydan. Kuwait city: Kuwait University publications.

Shulman, J. (1991). Revealing the mysteries of teacher-written cases: Opening the black box. Journal of Teacher Education, 42(4), 250-262.

Shulman, L. (1986). Paradigms and research programs in the study of teaching: A contemporary perspective. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed., pp. 3-36). New York: McMillan.

Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. Educational Researcher, 15(2), 4-14.

Staton, A., & Hunt, S. (1992). Teacher socialization: Review and conceptualization. Communication Education, 41(2), 109-137.

Stoddart, T. (1990). Perspectives on guided practice (Technical series 90-1) . East Lansing, MI: National center fro Research on Teacher Education.

Sulaiman, M. (1982). Altarbeya alamaleya: nedamuha wa mushkelateha. Al-tarbiya, 52, 54-56.

Sullivan, C. (1980). Clinical supervision: A state of the art review. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tatum, B., & McWhorter, P. (1999). Maybe not everything, but a whole lot you always wanted to know about mentoring. In P. Graham, S. Hudson-Ross, C. Adkins, P. McWhorter, & J. Stewart (Eds.), Teacher/Mentor: A dialogue for collaborative learning (pp. 21-33). New York: Teachers College Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman (Eds.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). Thinking and Speech. In R. W. Reiber & A. S. carton (Eds.), The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Volume 1: Problems of general psychology (pp. 39-285). New York: Plenum.

Wang, J. (2001). Contexts of mentoring and opportunities for learning to teach: a comparative study of mentoring practice. Teaching and Teacher Education, 17, 51-73.

Wildman, T., Magliaro, S., Niles, R., & Niles, J. (1992). Teacher mentoring: An analysis of roles, activities, and conditions. Journal of Teacher education, 43(3), 205-213.