THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS MENTOR IN THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL IN SCHOOLS IN THE WINDHOEK AREA

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APPROVAL PAGE

This research project has been examined and is approved as meeting the required standards for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Education.

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The work contained in this research project was completed by the author at the University of Namibia during 2004 and 2005.   It is original work except where references are made, and neither has been nor will be submitted to any other university for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

The Basic Education Teachers' Diploma (BETD) is a teacher training programme offered at the four colleges of education in Namibia. One of the major goals of the programme is to facilitate reflective practice in pre- and in-service teachers, who are or will be teaching in grades one to ten. One of the components that specifically aim at the practical development of reflective practitioners is the School-Based Studies (SBS) component of the programme. As stated in the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) the structure of SBS includes mentor teachers, teacher educators, student teachers, advisory teachers and education officers. The mentor teachers who are based at the partner schools play a very prominent role in supporting and guiding the student teacher during SBS. This study investigated the implementation of the SBS component in eleven schools in Windhoek, in Geography as a subject. Eleven mentors, twenty-one student teachers and two teacher educators were visited. They were observed and interviewed on co-planning, lesson presentations and post-lesson presentation discussions. The findings indicated that most of the SBS activities were not implemented as stated in the Broad Curriculum. Various reasons for this are highlighted in the research paper. It is concluded that student teachers do not receive the necessary support and guidance from mentor teachers to become reflective practitioners and thereby effective future teachers.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
CBS	College-Based Studies
CBTD	Classroom-Based Teacher Development
CCG	Curriculum Co-ordinating Group
CFASST	California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITTP	Integrated Teacher Training Programme
KOK	Khomasdalse Onderwyskollege
MBEC	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
MHETEC	Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation
MHEVTST	Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training, Science & Technology
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
PDS	Professional Development Schools
SBS	School-Based Studies
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
TERP	Teacher Education Reform Project
WCE	Windhoek College of Education
WOK	Windhoekse Onderwyskollege

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

To achieve the objectives of the national goals of education: access, equity, quality and democracy, as set out in the government's development brief *Toward Education for All* (1993), a new broad curriculum was developed. In an effort to prepare teachers to face and meet the challenges of equitable, quality and democratic education, a new national teacher education model was developed at the Ongwediva College of Education in January 1993 and finalised during the National Induction Seminar for Teacher Educators.

1.1 The structure of the Basic Education Teacher's Diploma

The aim of this new national teacher education model is to prepare teachers to analyse and reflect on their practice, enabling them to solve teaching and learning problems in their classrooms (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001). The BETD programme which emphasises inquiry, is a three year course, structured in two time phases: The Professional Foundation Block (first two terms of the first year) and the Specialisation Block (the following seven terms). The Professional Foundation Block serves as an introduction to professional studies and in the Specialisation Block students study their chosen subject specialisations and reflect on the needs of primary and junior secondary teachers (Windhoek College of Education, 2000).

The Specialisation Block, structured as either a major option or a minor option, includes School-based Studies (SBS) (Windhoek College of Education, 2000).

The SBS component of the BETD programme is in sharp contrast to the previous teacher education programmes. Previously the role of teachers was primarily to supervise student teachers during blocks of practice teaching sessions. In this new teacher education model, the role of teachers has been expanded to a dominant role so that the final responsibility for the professional development of the student teacher lies jointly with the mentor teacher and the student teacher. During SBS, teacher educators and student teachers meet weekly (referred to as Integrative Seminars) to explore major issues and themes of the SBS component, allowing them to reflect on the teaching experiences of the student teachers. These seminars are organised around pre-determined topics, topics born of student interest or a combination of the two formats. As they reflect on the teaching experiences of the student teachers, they focus on bridging the gap between theory and practice.

1.2 School-Based Studies (SBS)

The SBS component was developed to give student teachers the practical experience of linking theory with practice.   SBS, an essential component of the BETD programme, is more complex than the practice teaching component of previous teacher education programmes.   The BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) states that in addition to classroom teaching, SBS should promote learning through understanding.   Through child studies and classroom observations the focus should be on the learner's needs, potential

and abilities. During SBS student teachers should gain knowledge and skills enabling them to interpret syllabuses, to select content and methods based on an analysis of the learner's needs and to develop creativity in teaching and learning. SBS should make student teachers aware of the key role of teachers in the development of the nation by integrating the learner's school life and the learner's life outside the school. Student teachers are therefore expected to be actively involved in different community activities outside the school, as well as to explore the administrative system of the school. In an effort to help student teachers attain the goals of SBS as stated in the Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998), a school partnership model was adopted.

1.3 The BETD partnership school team

The essence of the partnership model is to support the development of teachers according to the new philosophy of teacher education. The mentor teacher is one of the key players in the team and is expected to help the student teacher to learn from practice by giving professional guidance and constructive feedback, enabling the student teacher to identify areas for improvement.

A framework for such a support system was developed by Murangi, Terblanche, Reimers, Kruger, O'Connor, Mbudje, Kirchner, Howard, Shilamba and Lushitele (1996). The BETD Partnership School Team, as the support system is referred to, was accepted by the Curriculum Co-ordinating Group (CCG).

SBS moderation reports between 1997 and 2001 and the Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training Report of 1999 suggest that the success of the BETD programme is resolutely connected to school support and repeatedly remind the colleges of the important role of the mentor teacher as key player in the partnership team.

Although the SBS component may not be the only reason for a possible weak link in the BETD programme, this study will investigate the role of the mentor teacher as one of the key players in the SBS component, a step towards improving the quality of teacher education.

1.4 Statement of the problem

My study will reveal that a gap exists between the stated Broad Curriculum aims and the implementation of the SBS component of the BETD teacher education programme. There is a need to improve the quality of teaching within the framework of the BETD Partnership School Team.

This study will investigate the key role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model between the Windhoek College of Education (WCE) and selected Windhoek schools.

1.5 Research questions

Given the purpose of this study, namely an investigation into the role of mentor teachers in the partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools, the following research questions guided the data collection and analysis process:

1. How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme?

2. Is there a mutual understanding of the mentoring process among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

3. Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?

4. Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

The answers to these questions during interviews with student teachers, mentor teachers and teacher educators will be triangulated with classroom observations of the interaction between mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers. Based on this comparative analysis, I will determine how well the mentoring system is working.

1.6 Significance of the study

The importance of this study is finding ways, based on research, to strengthen the SBS component of the BETD programme. The partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools is supposed to effectively use the experience and expertise of practising teachers for the benefit of student teachers. Since this does not seem to be the case, this study will attempt to determine whether the problem lies with the mentoring role of teachers.

This study may be of significance to policy makers, curriculum writers, teacher educators, BETD student teachers and practising teachers, as it will reveal information that could be of help to these stakeholders. There will be suggestions as to how to strengthen the SBS component and ultimately the quality of the educational practices of student teachers, practising teachers and teacher educators.

1.7 Definition of terms

A term that regularly appears in the text is *mentor (support) teacher* and *partnership model*.

- **Mentor (Support) teacher**

An adequately qualified and experienced teacher, who takes on a supportive role and who is responsible for the mentoring of student teachers during SBS. Major responsibilities include professional guidance and support in areas such as assessment and evaluation.

- **Partnership model**

WCE selects a number of schools at which student teachers do their SBS. These schools are selected for a fixed period, so that a partnership is built between WCE and the schools. The essence of the partnership model is to support the development of teachers according to the new philosophy of teacher education. The mentor teacher is one of the key players in the team and is expected to help the student teacher to learn from practice by giving professional guidance and constructive feedback, enabling the student teacher to identify areas for improvement.

1.8 Delimitations

This study made use of Geography student teachers and teacher educators at WCE and Geography mentor teachers at secondary schools in Windhoek where the student teachers were placed.

1.9 Limitations

The generalisation of the study may be limited due to only focusing on the Social Sciences Department at WCE and selected Windhoek-based Geography mentor teachers.

Being the investigator as well as a participant in the BETD programme impacted negatively on issues of trust when observing and interviewing mentor teachers.   Being a lecturer at WCE, as well as a member of the SBS committee, mentor teachers were reluctant to be interviewed.   It took some time convincing one particular mentor teacher that I was not conducting an inspection.

Student teachers often did not follow the timetables planned by them.   I would arrive at a school and not find the student teacher in a particular class as indicated on the timetable. In other instances, student teachers did not hand in their timetables.

1.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I gave an overview of the structure, practical component (SBS) and partnership school team of the BETD programme.   I stated that the purpose of this study was to investigate the role of the mentor teacher in selected Windhoek schools as one of

the possible reasons for the gap between the BETD Broad Curriculum aims and the implementation of SBS. I also mentioned that this study could be of significance to various stakeholders in that it may provide information with regard to strengthening the SBS component and ultimately the quality of the educational practices of student teachers, practising teachers and teacher educators. I gave the research questions, which guided the data collection and analysis process, a glossary of terms, the delimitations and the limitations of this study.

In chapter 2, an overview of literature on the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model will be given.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS MENTOR IN THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

As stated in Chapter 1, this study investigates the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools.   Given this background on the study, this chapter will give an overview of literature on the teacher as mentor, an integral part of pre-service teacher education.   After reviewing relevant literature, it became apparent that no research studies have so far been done on the role of the teacher as mentor in the BETD programme in Namibia.   For this reason, the literature review mostly refers to research done in other countries.

2.1 Namibia and Teacher Education

In this section, I trace the history of teacher education in Namibia, from the pre-independence era to the post-independence era, highlighting the origin of the BETD teacher education programme, and the changes in the practical component of the programme, namely School-based Studies (SBS).

2.1.1 Historical background

A Namibian teacher education programme, the Integrated Teacher Training Programme (ITTP), began in 1983 in Angolan refugee camps with assistance from the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) and lasted until 1989 (Craig, Kraft & du

Plessis, 1998). ITTP planted the seeds of the post-apartheid BETD programme, a programme oriented to replace teacher-centred education with its emphasis on control and rote learning with learner-centred, participatory and democratic education (Craig, et al, 1998).

The BETD programme is an outgrowth of efforts to replace the philosophy and practices of education of the apartheid era. Before independence, teacher education was fragmented and ethnic-based colleges of education were governed by second-tier governing bodies (Craig, et al, 1998). The Windhoekse Onderwyskollege (WOK) with the Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit as its guardian, was an exclusive whites only institution with state-of-the-art facilities and student-lecturer ratios as low as 12 to 1 (Craig, et al, 1998 and Van Zyl, Hatutale & Swarts, 2000). The three northern colleges (Rundu, Ongwediva and Caprivi), regarded as satellite campuses of the Windhoek-based Academy, trained black teachers under very elementary conditions. The Khomasdalse Onderwyskollege (KOK), housed in a secondary school building in Khomasdal, Windhoek, predominantly served the Coloured community (Van Zyl, et al, 2000). In 1990 WOK and KOK merged to form the Windhoek College of Education (WCE).

The first BETD student intake took place in 1993 at the Rundu, Ongwediva, Caprivi and Windhoek colleges of education. For the first time, a common national teacher education programme was offered at all four colleges of education to produce teachers who can meet the demands of a post-independent basic education system (Van Zyl, et al, 2000).

From 1990 to 1995 SIDA, through the Teacher Education Reform Project (TERP), provided assistance to the Ministry of Education to design, implement and evaluate the BETD programme (Craig, et al, 1998). In addition to the national teacher education reform and transformation project, TERP also contributed to the establishment of a professional wing which became known as the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), the centre for curriculum development and revision (Dahlström, 2000).

2.1.2 School-based Studies: The new paradigm

The BETD programme has dramatically shifted the philosophy and implementation of teaching practice as practised in the past. Apart from observations and teaching in the classroom, student teachers are expected, amongst others, to carry out child studies, arrange parent meetings, complete community and school-based projects, explore the school administrative system and undertake remedial teaching (Craig, et al, 1998, MHEVTST,1998 and MBEC, 1998).

A second major change is the relationship that is supposed to develop between colleges of education and partner (support) schools. The entire school is supposed to act as support for the BETD student teacher, with mentor teachers getting very involved in the process (Craig, et al, 1998). Prior to SBS, workshops are supposed to be conducted with mentor teachers of the support schools to familiarise them with the philosophy, approaches and learner-centred teaching strategies of the BETD programme.

In the following two paragraphs, I highlight the practical component of the programme, namely SBS, by looking at BETD moderation reports (MBEC,1997 and MHEVTST, 2001), and the SBS Handbook compiled by the SBS committee at WCE (WCE, 2004).

2.2 BETD moderation and moderation reports (1997 – 2001)

From 1990 to 1995, one of the TERP support areas was SBS (Craig, et al, 1998).   TERP support was formally phased out at the end of 1998 when all full time technical assistance was withdrawn (Dahlström, 2000).   Since then, moderation teams consisting of education officers, advisory teachers and selected teacher educators, annually evaluate the BETD programme.   Some of their duties with regard to SBS are to evaluate

- the extent to which the role of mentor teachers has been expanded to a dominant role,

- the professional development of the student teacher as a joint venture between mentor teachers and student teachers, and

- whether student teachers gained knowledge and skills enabling them to interpret syllabuses, select content and methods based on an analysis of the learner's needs, and develop creativity in teaching and learning.

In the BETD moderation reports (MBEC, 1997 and MHEVTST, 1998 – 2001), the moderators express appreciation for positive responses to their suggestions and mention that there had generally been an improvement in student teacher performance during SBS.

However, the moderators feel that there is evidence of minimal responses to some of their suggestions, as they have to repeat them year after year. The main areas of concern are the role of the mentor teacher and the critical reflection (self-evaluation) of the student teacher. They maintain that the involvement of the mentor teacher is crucial in assessment skills, which student teachers still lack. They comment that the mentor teachers do little with regard to professional guidance and constructive involvement, in-depth critique, analysing lessons with student teachers, fulfilling a proper tutorial function, attending lesson presentations by student teachers and prominent and visible involvement with student teachers. Instead of being indifferent to moderation exercises, the mentor teachers should approach the moderators to discuss, comment and suggest solutions with regard to the professional development of student teachers. The moderators suggest that SBS lessons be taught in sequence with the mentor teacher's scheme of work. They observed that the schemes of work, term plans and daily lesson preparations are not shared and discussed with the student teachers.

As far back as 1997, moderators made suggestions regarding the lack of involvement of the mentor teacher, which, according to the moderators, has not improved since then. They state that, although there are signs of improvement, the role of the mentor teacher is still too low-key. They need to play a bigger, more strengthened role in the reflections of the student teachers. In more than one report the colleges of education are reminded to maintain a professional and co-operative relationship with the partnership schools so that the role of the mentor teacher could be strengthened. The 1999 report states that there is evidence of teacher educators not regarding the supportive role of mentor

teachers as being significant and therefore neglect to involve them thoroughly in the SBS component.

2.3 SBS Handbook: Windhoek College of Education

In the revised SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004) based on the SBS partnership model, the roles of the team members (steering committee, principals, associate teachers, mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers) are clearly spelt out. The associate teacher is supposed to take charge of the organisational aspects at the school by co-ordinating SBS activities, select mentor teachers, and place student teachers with these mentor teachers.

The roles of both the associate teacher and mentor teacher include familiarising student teachers with the learners and their parents, support with lesson preparations and other school duties, meeting students twice a week, observing and guiding lesson presentations by the student teacher, reflecting with the student teacher on weaknesses and strengths of lesson presentations and deciding on changes to be implemented, introducing the student teacher to school syllabuses, schemes of work and term plans of the mentor teacher.

In the following two paragraphs, I look at the approaches to teacher education in pre-independent, as well as post-independent Namibia, to compare how the stakeholders understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme, as well as the partnership model.

2.4 Approaches to teacher education in pre-independent Namibia

The purpose of pre-independence teacher education has been to train teachers with the emphasis on learning to do rather than learning to think (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001).   The authors identify three approaches common to teacher education in Africa, namely the behavioural-skills training approach, the model approach and the academic approach.   In both the behavioural-skills training and the model approaches there is "…a lack of interest in preparing teachers to exercise their judgement" , while the academic approach "… emphasises the acquisition of subject matter knowledge and de-emphasises professional education courses and school-based studies" (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001, p.215).   The academic approach is characteristic of teacher education programmes in pre-independent Namibia (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001), where teachers were seen as "… passive recipients of others' accumulated knowledge about teaching methods or content" (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001, p.216).

The Teacher Education Reform Project (TERP) and the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) co-operated in the development of the BETD programme to replace, what Dahlström (1995, 2000) calls, previously unreflective programmes.   This new education system emphasises reflection (critical self-evaluation) by teacher educators, teachers and student teachers.   Hargreaves and Fullan (1993) contrast classroom-based teacher development (CBTD) with traditional approaches to teacher development.   They say that CBTD involves teachers more directly in classroom development by recognising that teachers are co-learners in their own classrooms and that they participate in reflective and collaborative experiences, which "empower and

transform how teachers and students interact" (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1993, p.91). Dahlström (1995, 2000) says that reflection will enable student teachers to explore different learning environments from a learner-centred perspective, creating a personal knowledge base about teaching and learning. Furlong and Maynard (1995) refer to it as personal reflection.

2.5 Approaches to teacher education in post-independent Namibia

The BETD teacher education programme emphasises a mixture of the participatory approach and the transformational approach.   The participatory or inquiry-oriented approach, "… much less common in Africa…" (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001, p.216), prepares teachers to analyse and reflect on their teaching practices, while the transformational or social-reconstructionist approach sees teaching and learning as "… vehicles for promoting greater equity, humanity, and social justice in the classroom, the school and the society."   Unlike pre-independence teacher education, post-independence teacher education expects teachers, through inquiries about their own teaching practice, to play an active role in the process of learning to teach (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001).

Yost (2002) says that an efficient teacher is one that believes in his/her ability to achieve specific levels of accomplishment. Such a reflective, self-efficient teacher is more likely to provide the most beneficial learning environment for student teachers, encouraging them to be reflective practitioners, decision makers, problem solvers and researchers, which are vital to professional development.   Fletcher (1998), a teacher and mentor involved in training Licensed Teachers in an upper school in Bedfordshire, England,

writes about good mentoring relationships with regard to personal and professional needs. She writes about the practice of mentoring within the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme, focusing on self- actualisation, which has become widespread in schools in England and Wales. She states that a teacher's state of self-actualisation determines the understanding of the classroom interaction between teacher and learner and that successful interpersonal relationships are crucial to successful mentoring.

In the following paragraphs I highlight the mentoring process to compare how the stakeholders understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme, and the partnership model, by looking at literature on the teacher as mentor, the mentor-student relationship, mentoring and reflection, mentoring orientations and mentoring and partnership.

2.6 The teacher as mentor

According to the reviewed literature, the teacher has become the key to educational change and school improvement in recent years. Mahoney and Hextall (1998) talk about redefining the role of the teacher, necessitating the development of skills, which constantly need to be developed. Carter (1997) says that the definition of the term mentor has changed over time and since the early l980s mentoring appeared on the educational scene as part of a movement to improve education (Feiman-Nemser, 1996). Because teaching is essentially a practical activity, student teachers learn *about* teaching during college-based studies (CBS), and learn *to* teach during SBS. It is generally believed that learning to teach does not start until a student teacher enters the classroom.

The role of the teacher is no longer that of supervisor, but a mentor in school-based teacher education programmes (Field and Field, 1996). To be a good mentor, a teacher needs skills which include the following: knowing what to observe and how to provide feedback; understanding how to keep communication open and resolve conflicts; being able to reflect on his/her own teaching; and providing appropriate challenges for the student teacher (Danielson, 2002). Jones, Reid & Bevins (1997) say that the "good" mentor is characterised by one who is in favour of increased reflection, away from the immediate practical demands of the classroom; who gives regular time, immediate feedback and a sense of availability to the student teachers. The qualified mentor is someone who has confidence in his/her own personal and professional development, who enjoys giving support and encouragement, who is knowledgeable about current educational issues and practices, who is committed to the mentoring process and who has the time to work with a protégé over an extended period of time. The mentor should be open to new ideas, sensitive to the needs and concerns of others and someone who has undergone mentor training.

A paper by Sweeny (1996), regarded as an expert in mentor training programmes and who has led numerous mentor trainings since 1988, gives guidelines in the training of mentor trainers. He suggests how beginner teachers could be trained as mentors, a starting point to increase the knowledge and expertise of the stakeholders in the partnership relationship.

The literature on school-based studies reveal that the restructuring of national education programmes are of little value if teachers are not taken into account, because what they think, believe and do in the classroom is what ultimately shape the learning of the learners (Danielson, 2002). Policymakers and educational leaders should regard the mentoring process as an important means for reforming teaching and teacher education. Tomlinson (1996) agrees by saying that recent approaches to teacher education have moved towards school-based courses, which demand more direct involvement of teachers. It is widely accepted that teaching, as a practical activity, needs to be learned through actively engaging in the practice of teaching. He promotes awareness and a critical understanding of practical ways of mentoring, which he defines as "assisting student-teachers in learning to teach in school-based settings" (Tomlinson, 1996, p.3). The author looks at the essential functions of mentoring and strategies and procedures of the mentoring process.

Edwards and Collison (1996) concentrate on mentoring in primary schools in the United Kingdom (UK), on advising on the professional development of student teachers and mentors and on staff development programmes, either in primary schools or universities. The central theme is that student teachers learn best when supported by mentors, who in turn will develop as professionals in the schools where they teach. Furlong and Maynard (1995) investigated the school-based learning of student teachers in the UK, and three distinctive features of the transformed initial teacher education emerged, namely the emphasis on time spent in schools, the competency-based model and the key role that school teachers play in achieving these competencies. Student teachers develop their

own practical professional knowledge at the school during SBS and the mentor teacher supports this development of the student teacher.   Unless there is a complete thorough understanding of the processes involved in learning to teach, the role of the mentor teacher will not be achieved.   They say that although there is a growing body of knowledge and understanding about the mentoring process (how to observe and give feedback), there is little understanding about the contribution of mentor teachers to the development of the student teacher's professional knowledge.   Carter (1997) provides a summary of key issues in the implementation of the mentoring process in school-based teacher education programmes.   Furlong and Maynard (1995) summarise the role of the mentor teacher as supporting student teachers to develop an appropriate body of practical professional knowledge and to develop deeper, more complex understandings of it. They present three strategies for mentor teachers to use in supporting student teachers' school-based learning, namely opportunities for student teachers to observe the mentors teaching, to observe and provide feedback on the student teachers' own teaching, and to work alongside the student teachers, engaging in different forms of collaborative teaching.   They say that the mentor teacher takes on different roles, depending on the stage of the development of the student teacher.   At the *beginning teaching* stage, the mentoring role is that of a model and the mentoring strategy is student observation.   At the *supervised teaching* stage, where the focus is on teaching competencies, the mentor teacher is a coach and uses the observation by student teachers and reflection-on-action as a mentoring strategy.   At the *teaching to learning* stage, where student teachers understand how learners learn, the mentoring role is that of a critical friend, while the mentoring strategy is student observation and re-examining lesson plans.   At the

autonomous teaching stage, where students investigate grounds for practice, the mentoring role is that of co-enquirer, while the mentoring strategy is partnership teaching and partnership supervision.

2.7 Mentor-student relationship

Danielson (2002) refers to the doctoral thesis of S. Ross, *Perceptions of mentoring practices by interns and mentors in a professional development center,* University of South Dakota, in which she examines first year teachers' satisfaction with the support they received from their mentors according to a behaviour continuum.   At the one end of the continuum is the mentor initiating interactions and offering support not requested by the mentee.   At the other end is the mentee requesting guidance from the mentor.   The best mentors balance both styles by being able to "read" (Danielson, 2002, p.184) their mentees, intervening when appropriate and holding back when necessary.   Danielson (2002) goes on to say that formal and informal mentoring encourage collegial relationships which can "… initiate a deeper reflection about practice, offer encouragement that supports ongoing growth, and increase the job satisfaction needed for teachers…" (Danielson, 2002, p.185), as well as for our aspirant teachers at WCE.

The work by Williams (2002) is concerned with the organisational aspects of SBS, in that it helps develop effective school management skills.   It reflects on the reality of modern day teaching and is of special value to middle management and those who are training for head teachers in the United Kingdom.   This work deals with issues that contribute to successful management, for example strategies for team building, managing change and

dealing with conflict. He clarifies the nature of the mentor-mentee relationships and communication in the mentoring process.

Wright and Bottery (1997) examine the perceptions of professionalism which secondary school teacher mentors bring to student teachers. They say that because students are "attached to an experienced teacher in their training school" (Wright and Bottery, 1997, p.239), the mentor's role is crucial not only to the student's long-term development, but also to the teaching profession as a whole. The mentors were asked in a questionnaire to list their views with regard to the main personal and educational qualities of a mentor, the main tasks of a mentor, the main issues a mentor needs to tackle, the tasks and issues mentors are most confident in dealing with and the tasks and issues mentors are least confident in dealing with. The results show that mentors believe that their most important tasks are related to classroom management, planning and providing a clear focus for student lessons. A concern is expressed with regard to a lack of reference to wider professional issues such as developing relationships with student teachers, taking feedback from student teachers, dealing with deficiencies in student teachers, providing a professional role model, et cetera. A strong emphasis on competency-based training is likely to lead to student teachers whom are skilled, yet unprepared for further professional development, and student teachers whom are uncritical of educational change and largely uninformed of the wider cultural, social and political context of the role of the teacher. They say that such student teachers will not develop into reflective practitioners, if teacher educational reforms create a centrally directed teaching force, which is "not required to think too much or too deeply about the larger, social, moral and

political issues which a richer conception of professionalism would commit them to." (Wright and Bottery, 1997, p. 251).

Jones, Reid and Bevins (1997) support the idea that the mentoring process should emphasise professionalism. They say that student teachers not only need training in classroom management, but also in their wider professional commitments, to secure a lifelong contribution to the teaching profession. A teacher education programme, which focuses heavily on skills required for good classroom performance, might devalue the professional skills of newly qualified teachers. Holloway (2001) says that mentoring encourages the professional development of both new teachers and their mentors, because mentors take part in professional development through learning about the mentoring process and what is expected of them before assuming their duties.

2.8 Mentoring and reflection

Danielson (2002) says that in day-to-day classroom routines, teachers may not take time to reflect on their practice, while good preparation in mentorship stimulate the reflective process. The ability of a mentor teacher to develop reflective decision making is crucial to successful teaching (Danielson, 2002). According to Schon (1987) there are at least three different kinds of reflective behaviour. *Knowing-in-action* refers to the ability to respond automatically to the unexpected. *Reflection-in-action* refers to the ability to change direction during teaching and to the ability to identify critical situations that went well and not so well after teaching. Furlong and Maynard (1995) uphold that by moving student teachers from reflection-in-action to reflection-on-action, they begin to gain control of their own teaching. This provides a rationale for the change from pre-

independence practical components of teacher education programmes to the post-independence trend of school-based teacher education and their focus is that schools must become central to the training process and teachers, who have the knowledge that student teachers must acquire, must become the key players in the teacher education process. The final responsibility for the professional development of the student teacher lies jointly with the teacher as mentor and the student teacher.

In the learner-centred approach, reflection and collaboration become an expected part and an increasing requirement of the practising teacher. Holloway (2001) says that trained mentors should help beginner teachers plan lessons, assist them in gathering information about best practices, observe the new teachers' classes, and provide feedback to them. The beginner teachers in turn should reflect on their practice and apply what they have learned to future lessons.

Dahlström (1995, 2000) says that this new philosophy of education puts many challenges on classroom teachers. They are central to the process of educational reform, because they implement and interpret the curriculum in classrooms, ensuring its relevance. Feiman-Nemser (1990) traces the historic traditions in preparing teachers in the USA and offers some frameworks for looking at specific approaches and alternatives. She states that a proper curriculum should enable teachers to determine what to teach and by what methods, and it should pertain to reflective inquiry that would equip teachers to select and adapt material to the needs of the learners. This corresponds to Dahlström's (1995, 2000) statement that becoming a reflective practitioner is central to classroom

effectiveness. It is an essential way for teachers to help themselves change and improve what they do in the classroom. By gathering information as they teach, they are able to get a better understanding of their own practice. Holloway (2001) says that mentoring helps student teachers face their new challenges through reflective activities and professional conversations, and they improve their teaching practices as they assume full responsibility for a class.

2.9 Mentoring orientations

In this context, *orientations* refer to a set of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them.

Feiman-Nemser (1990) suggests different orientations the mentor teacher can take to support student teachers in learning to teach. Any orientation should include a view of teaching and learning and a theory about learning to teach, giving direction to the practical component of teacher education. She looks at five orientations in student teacher education, namely academic, practical, technological, personal and critical/social. They do not represent alternatives from which to choose, but form a source of ideas and practices to draw on in deciding how to prepare student teachers in a particular context. Each orientation highlights different issues that must be considered, but none offers a fully developed framework to guide programme development. The reflective orientation is seen as generic (general), since many of the programmes in her paper explicitly support the goal of reflection.

2.10 Mentoring and partnership

Learning to teach is a complex process, which involves the development of a suitable body of practical professional knowledge which Furlong and Maynard (1995) regard as a pre-requisite to learning to teach.   Field and Field (1996) elaborate on four case studies of school-university partnerships, which can be used as models for those in the initial stages of SBS.   The BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) states that the collaborative partnership gives student teachers practice in the variety of duties of a teacher.   Furlong (1995) says that fundamental to the collaborative partnership is the commitment to develop a training programme where students are exposed to different forms of educational knowledge, where student teachers are encouraged to critique what they learn in school and visa versa, and through this process they build up their own body of professional knowledge. The success of this model depends on student teachers and teachers working and planning together and one of the principles of this model is mentoring.   The mentor teacher, therefore, is one of the key players in the partnership and is expected to help the student teacher to learn from practice by giving professional guidance.

Murangi, et al (1996) proposed a framework for the organisation and implementation of the Partnership Model in the Windhoek educational region.   This document gives the key features of the partnership concept, the structuring of SBS, the selection of partnership schools, the planning and implementation of the SBS component, organisational structures, the roles and responsibilities of the team members and the purpose of integrative seminars.

Abdal-Haqq (2000) compares the professional development school (PDS) model with the traditional school model, which Dahlström (1995, 2000) describes as schools with unreflective programmes.   The PDS, with the objective to redesign teacher responsibility and to improve the practice teaching process, is the result of collaboration between universities and local school districts in the United States of America (USA), created because public schools in the USA do not adequately prepare tomorrow's teachers. (Abdal-Haqq, 2000).   The author says that teachers in the USA considered teaching experiences gained during their teaching practice to be the most powerful element in their professional preparation.   A major obstacle of PDSs is the use of considerable resources such as time, money and personnel.   Transforming the education system meant transforming Namibian schools (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001).   The inherited fragmented education system left "… grossly unequal resources …" (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001, p.210-211) so that formerly white schools are well supported with materials and suitably qualified teachers, while formerly black schools are poorly equipped with materials and employ minimally qualified teachers (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001).

2.11 Perceptions of the mentoring process

The perceptions that teachers have of the mentoring process is important.   Duquette (1998) compared the perceptions of teachers acting as mentors in secondary schools to those of elementary mentor teachers, as recorded in previous studies on the school-based programme in Ontario, Canada.   The results showed that secondary teachers believed that this was a good pre-service training programme, while elementary and secondary

teachers had the same positive attitudes towards the school-based programme.   They felt that the school-based programme provides mentor teachers with effective opportunities for professional development, because of opportunities for thoughtful reflection.

She also refers to the negative side of teacher perceptions, for example

- A secondary mentor teacher who was "overwhelmed by her workload as a classroom teacher and as a mentor to a student teacher." (Duquette, 1998, p.178),
- An elementary teacher who was frustrated by a student teacher implementing only a few of her suggestions for improvement, while she had little support from the faculty to resolve the problem and,
- A teacher who said that she would not take on the role of mentor teacher again.

Mentor teachers also differed in their opinions with regard to the support the faculty gives to the mentors - some felt a need for regular contact sessions to address questions and issues, especially about the evaluation of the student teachers, while others did not express such a need.   Mentor teachers need support and the opportunity to discuss ideas, problems, and solutions with other mentor teachers (Holloway, 2001).   He says that training the mentor for this new mentoring role improves the quality of a mentoring programme.   Beginner teachers working with trained mentors possess a higher level of teaching skills than new teachers whose mentors were not trained.   In other words, the presence of a mentor is not enough; the mentor's knowledge of how to support new teachers and skill at providing guidance is crucial. This is supported by the Beginning Teachers' Induction Program in New Brunswick, Canada (Holloway, 2001) where ninety

six percent of beginning teachers and 98 percent of experienced teachers felt that they benefited from the support programme. The experienced teachers were particularly enthusiastic because they believed that mentoring allowed them to help others, improve themselves, receive respect, develop collegiality, and profit from the beginner teachers' fresh ideas and energy.

A success story is the support programme for beginner teachers and their mentors, namely the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST). In an analysis of the initial impact of the CFASST programme, it was found that most of the programme's teachers said that mentoring plays a significant role in the professional growth of the new teachers. More specifically, the programme's design helps new teachers sharpen their practice and to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching. Mentors also found that working with beginner teachers engaged them in reflection about their own teaching practices. Prospective teachers who were assigned mentors who were trained in the framework of the Pathwise mentoring programme, demonstrate more complete and effective planning, more effective classroom teaching, and a higher level of reflection on their practice than did new teachers whose mentors had received only an orientation programme. A focused, systematic mentoring programme has a positive influence on the performance of new teachers, as well as being advantageous to mentors and the learners in the classroom (Holloway, 2001).

Giandomenico (2002) gives ideas generated at a meeting of mentors from past programmes in the USA, regarding the problem of part-time internships in the USA.

The participants were asked to generate ways in which the internship could be made meaningful. These ideas are organised under headings such as the definition, purpose and function of mentoring, the qualification and role of a mentor, the mentoring relationship, the value of mentoring to the protégé (mentee), mentor and organisation, the stages and the three phases in mentoring relationships (establishing the relationship, mentoring and cultivating a collegial relationship), mentor behaviour, principles of mentoring, potential problems in mentoring, mentors giving and receiving feedback, and a preparation programme for school principals and supervisors ((intern performance evaluation, a checklist for mentors and guiding questions for mentor-mentee discussions). The participants see the mentor as an experienced role model who guides the professional development of the student teacher as a less experienced individual. For the mentee, the value of mentoring lies in the opportunity to discuss educational issues with a role model and respected practitioner who provides on-going support and encouragement, as well as honest and constructive feedback. In the mentoring relationship, both the mentor and the mentee learn more about themselves, improve their skills, and gain professional recognition.

2.12 Integrative seminars

It was stated in chapter 1 that an Integrative Seminar is when teacher educators and student teachers meet weekly during the SBS period, to explore major issues and themes of the SBS component. Together they reflect on the teaching experiences of the student teachers and focus on bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Inkster (1994) outlines a practical component of a teacher education programme created by a university English department, which clarifies the purpose of a reflection-based teacher education programme.   He says that the value of this new approach lies with it providing a "multiplier effect" (Inkster, 1994, p.3).   He explains the multiplier effect as a means whereby teacher educators and mentor teachers influence one another, especially in problem solving, programme planning and management, and methods of collegial learning and facilitation.   Inkster states that the "colloquium" (Inkster, 1994, p.3) should run concurrently with the practical experience of the student teachers, a similar pattern of the integrative seminars of the SBS component at WCE.   He indicates that the colloquium provides opportunity for intensive reflection on teaching experiences, common problems and issues, as well as the brainstorming of teaching and learning strategies.   Edwards and Collison (1996) call it school-based seminars, which are planned, organised and executed by teachers acting as mentors, not by teacher educators as in the case of WCE. These authors elaborate on practising teachers being at the centre of the education process as put forward by Dahlström (1995, 2000).   Edwards and Collison (1996) write about the purpose of these seminars, how mentors can plan a seminar programme and by referring to a case study, how mentors can manage student learning during these teacher-run seminars.

2.13 Team teaching (Group practice)

Team teaching refers to second year student teachers jointly preparing lessons under the guidance of the mentor teacher, and then presenting the lesson as a team.   At WCE team teaching or group practice is done in pairs, namely two students per support teacher.

Team teaching (Group practice), a prominent feature of the SBS component, involves co-operative learning, which is broadly defined by Brown, Chriest and Maher, (2001) as a classroom situation where groups of people work together towards a shared goal to get the most out of their own teaching and each others' learning. They explain the five basic principles that are fundamental to co-operative learning and give tips on how mentors can manage group practice. They describe the role of the teacher as that of a facilitator (someone who helps and encourages others, who monitors the learning process by giving on-going feedback) and provide case studies to illustrate the meaning of concepts related to SBS.

When second year student teachers jointly prepare lessons under the guidance of the mentor teacher and only one student teacher takes full responsibility for the actual teaching of the lesson, it is referred to as individual practice.

2.14 Conclusion

In this chapter I reviewed the literature related to the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools. The literature reveals that teachers must be involved in the practical component of a teacher education programme as they have a critical role to play in helping pre-service teachers become effective teachers.

WCE mentor teacher workshops should guide and assist mentor teachers in offering the necessary expertise and support to student teachers. If mentor teachers believe in themselves and their abilities to teach, they will also believe in their mentee-students' abilities to learn to teach. One of the purposes of mentoring is to create a link between theory and practice in schools.

Dahlström's (1995, 2000) description of the new Namibian national teacher education programme established a foundation of educational thought and practice, based on learner-centred and democratic ideas. Mentor teachers should be equipped to support our student teachers to explore new ways to develop the teaching-learning process and to develop practical knowledge and relevant skills during SBS.

In chapter 3, the research methodology with regard to the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools, is described. The chapter looks at the research design, the pilot study, study participants, research instruments, the procedures followed and how the data was analysed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology will be described with regard to the gathering of data and the procedures that were followed to collect the data. It describes the research design, the pilot study, which preceded the main study, the study participants, the research measures, the procedures and the analysis of the data.

3.2 Research design

This study is descriptive in that it describes how teacher educators, mentor teachers and student teachers interpreted and experienced the mentoring process. The study used qualitative data obtained through interviews, observations and document analysis, to answer the questions on:

- How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the concept mentorship as used in the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the concept mentorship among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

- Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

3.3 Pilot study

The pilot study respondents were one Geography teacher at a junior secondary partnership school, one Social Science major (option 8-10) student teacher and one Social Science major (option 8-10) teacher educator.   The pilot study was conducted two and a half weeks before conducting the actual study.

The purpose of the pilot study was to refine the interview protocol and observation techniques and foci.   The idea was not to focus on the data, but to learn about the research process, the interview questions and the observation techniques.   The participants in the pilot study were briefed about their role, namely to answer questions with the intent of suggesting improvements, changes and omissions to the interview protocol, for example: Are the questions clear enough?   Are the questions appropriate?   What else should the interviewer be asking?

By talking to the interviewees after the interview, the clarity and appropriateness of the interview questions were analysed, as well as suggested additions and omissions to the interview protocol.   The participants also commented on the length of the interviews.

Another purpose of the pilot study was to test the observation techniques, for example: How do the people being observed respond?   What would make them feel more comfortable?   Can the researcher take field notes while observing the participants, or should notes be made after the observation session?

The results of the pilot study were used to revise and strengthen the research process, the interview questions and the observation techniques.

3.4 Study participants

The participants in this study were selected from the BETD Partnership School Teams formed with the Windhoek College of Education.   The group involved the two Geography teacher educators and twenty-one Geography student teachers in the WCE Social Science Department and eleven Geography teachers at eleven junior secondary partnership schools.

The motivation for choosing this group is that I, a lecturer in the Social Science Department at WCE, had easy access to it, because it is the group I work with.

Since the study does not aim at generalisations, the group provided the information needed to answer the research questions.

3.5 Research instruments

 The principal sources of data were semi-structured interviews and participant observations. Other sources were documents such as lesson preparation plans, reflection journals, critical inquiry/action research reports, integrative seminars, and the SBS Handbook of WCE.   The SBS meeting and the SBS workshop served as sources of information too.

3.5.1 Observation

Participant observation was employed to observe partnership school teams to see how the mentorship process was implemented in the SBS component of the BETD teacher education programme.   The purpose of the observation was made clear to the participants before the observation sessions started.

The observation period lasted for six weeks when both second and third year student teachers were placed at junior secondary high schools, teaching Geography, one of their major options.   There were different observation sessions, namely:

- Observing mentor teachers and student teachers during co-planning sessions, the purpose being to determine mentor support before the actual lesson presentation.

- Observing student teachers presenting lessons while being assessed and evaluated by mentor teachers, the purpose being to observe the mentor's critique of the lesson presentation.

- Observing mentor teachers and student teachers during post-lesson discussions, the purpose being to observe the mentor teacher's role in post-lesson discussions, reflections and recommendations.

- Observing lessons being presented by student teachers while being assessed and evaluated by both mentor teachers and teacher educators, the purpose being to determine mutual understanding between mentor teachers and teacher educators.

- Observing mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers during post-lesson discussions, the purpose being to determine mutual understanding between mentor teachers and teacher educators.

- Observing more team teaching (group practice) than shared individual teaching in the second year, the purpose being to determine the level of co-operative learning between mentor teachers and student teachers.

Observations were noted in a field notebook and my personal comments and opinions were recorded on audio cassettes, giving a full, detailed account of ongoing behaviour and events as they occurred. The field notes were a description of everything I regarded as noteworthy from my observations. Each observation was provided with the date of observation, where the observation took place and the participants present.

During observations, I built up a continuous record of events, issues and occurrences. As participant observer, I observed and recorded the routine, as well as unusual activities and interactions, as they occurred naturally and spontaneously in the setting. The participants were allowed to reflect upon the observations made, by reading the field notes and listening to audio cassettes, to determine if the interpretation was correct.

I planned to observe Student Progress Meetings, which were supposed to take place midway through SBS, as well as Joint SBS Meetings, which were supposed to take place towards the end of SBS. As these meetings did not take place, I could not determine

how the mentor teachers and teacher educators evaluated the achievements of the student teachers according to the assessment criteria as set out in the SBS Handbook.

SBS meetings should occur prior to, during and after SBS. There was only one meeting that took place during SBS. At the meeting held on 10 June 2004, matters concerning the support of the mentor teacher were not discussed.

3.5.2 Interviews

Informal interviews were conducted with the mentor teachers after the lesson presentations were observed. These interviews mostly served to triangulate the observed data. Because the interview topics were determined by what was observed, it was not possible to design an interview protocol. The purpose was to get current patterns in the mentoring process. Interview questions were therefore different for each participant, as well as the number of informal interviews per participant.

Formal interviews were conducted with each one of the Geography mentor teachers. During these interviews, co-planning, assistance, lesson critique, support, lesson evaluations, interventions, lesson procedure, overall student teacher progress and the goals of the partnership model were emphasised. Participant student teachers were interviewed as second year and third year groups. The two participant teacher educators were interviewed together. The purpose of the group interviews was to determine whether there was mutual understanding of the partnership model among the participants.

To make comparisons possible, the same questions were set to all mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators during the formal interviews.   The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and transcripts were made as soon as possible after the interviews.   Four open-ended questions were developed around the first and third research questions each.   The formal interview protocol can be found in the APPENDIX.

To encourage open and honest interviews, the following was made explicit at the start:

All interview evidence in the form of notes and audio cassette tapes were considered highly confidential, participants were presented anonymously in written reports or presentation of the research findings and all opinions expressed were treated confidentially. Interviewees had the right to check my notes that were either written or recorded during or after an interview, to consider whether the notes were a fair, relevant and accurate account of what had been discussed and observed.

After having reported back to the individual interviewees and group interviewees, I summarised the results.   As a teacher educator at WCE and therefore an active participant in the SBS component, I was sensitive to possible problems, such as imposing my own agenda on the interviewee, giving opinions rather than asking questions, failing to ask for concrete examples, and using an audio recorder without consulting the interviewee.

3.5.3 Document analysis

The SBS handbook of WCE had been created by the SBS Committee and was issued to student teachers and teacher educators to inform them of their respective duties for the duration of SBS. The mentor teachers were supposed to receive copies too, but those interviewed did not receive an SBS handbook. The handbook provided guidelines with regard to the roles of the stakeholders, lesson preparation plans, reflection journals, critical inquiry-action research reports and integrative seminars. Other documentation was the minutes of the one SBS Committee meeting and the minutes of the Partnership workshop. These written texts relating to the SBS policy of WCE were analysed to determine their strengths and weaknesses by comparing them with interviews conducted and observations made. These written texts were used in conjunction with interviews and observations to determine if a consistent picture emerged with regard to intention of the SBS programme and the implementation of the SBS programme. I wrote up a brief summary of the contents of these texts, referring to the significance or importance thereof.

3.6 Procedures

I requested permission from the Rector, Social Science Head of Department and the SBS Committee of WCE to be relieved of my official SBS duties in order to do the study. I also asked my promoter at UNAM to write a letter of recommendation to the afore-mentioned people and committee.

I contacted the relevant high school principals well in advance of SBS, requesting permission to do this study. Although student teachers knew in advance at which schools they were placed for SBS, they only knew who their mentors were during the first week of SBS. Therefore, I contacted the relevant associate teachers only during the first week of SBS to introduce myself, and to obtain the names of the mentor teachers for the Geography student teachers. After having been introduced to them, I explained to them the nature of my research, the reasons for conducting it, confidentiality and the roles of the various stakeholders in the partnership team.

During the first week of SBS, a visiting timetable was carefully planned with the student teachers. However, I could not use it effectively, as the student teachers mostly did not adhere to these timetables, and co-planning sessions and formal post-lesson discussions mostly did not take place. Also, a timetable was developed for the visiting Geography teacher educators so that I could observe both the mentor teacher and teacher educator evaluating lessons of the student teachers.

It was not possible to plan these time tables in advance, as it was impossible to know the number of mentor teachers that were going to be involved, as well as the number of schools. However, due to past experience, it was possible to work on the following assumptions when preparing for the study to be conducted:

- **Second year student teachers**

Second year Social Science student teachers are generally spread among 5 high schools where they have to teach a minimum of 20 group practice lessons and a minimum of 12 shared individual lessons.

- **Third year student teachers**

Third year Social Science student teachers are generally spread among 5 to 7 high schools where they have to teach a minimum of 45 individual lessons.

- **Student Progress and Joint SBS meetings**

I could not prepare time slots for the Student Progress and Joint SBS meetings, as the guardian lecturers did not plan for these meetings to take place.

- **Observation during co-planning sessions**

I prepared to use a field notebook during my observations of mentor support before lesson presentations. However, because co-planning sessions did not take place in the majority of cases, I could not effectively determine support in the areas of the overriding aim of the unit, lesson objectives, selection and sequencing of activities (*what* to do and *when*), the culminating activity of the unit, and the key activities after each lesson. Because co-planning sessions did not occur, I could not determine the student teachers' familiarisation with syllabuses, schemes of work, unit plans, daily lesson plans, and other relevant documentation, as well as whether suggestions were being used as set out in the SBS Handbook.

- **Observation during lesson presentations**

I used a field notebook to record my observations of the student teachers presenting lessons. In the majority of cases, the mentor teachers were not present during these

presentations.   Although I planned to observe how the mentor teacher assessed and evaluated the student teachers, I could not do so because the mentor teachers were absent. Because there was no co-planning in the majority of the cases, I could not determine whether student teachers were applying what was planned, whether they understood the suggestions, whether they were clear about how the unit should have been explored.   I observed that in the majority of cases, mentor teachers did not review the lesson plans prior to the presentations.

During the presentations where the teacher educators were present, I planned to determine whether there was regular communication between mentor teacher and teacher educator, whether they supported one another, whether they shared the same expectations and whether they discussed the teaching skills to be developed in the student teachers.   I could not determine this, as there was no communication between the mentor teacher and teacher educator in the few instances where the mentor teacher was present.

- **Observation during team teaching (group practice):   Second year student teachers**

I used a field notebook to record my observations of the student teachers presenting jointly prepared lessons.   I determined whether co-operative learning occurred between mentor and student teacher, and what responsibilities were given to the student teachers, for example making or collecting resources, planning fieldtrips, planning assessment tasks and assessment criteria, etc.

- **Observation during post-lesson discussions**

I prepared to use a field notebook to record my observations during post-lesson discussions, but these discussions did not take place.   I could therefore not determine

how the mentor teacher acted as a facilitator, for example, did the mentor teacher provide professional assistance and give encouragement? Did the mentor teacher monitor the learning process by giving positive feedback to the student teachers? Did the mentor teacher show an ability to give the student teachers a sense of availability, support and encouragement? Did the mentor teacher show knowledge about current educational issues and practices? Did the mentor teacher display a commitment to the mentoring process, as set out in the criteria for professional and subject competencies in the SBS handbook?

- **Observation during Student Progress and Joint SBS Meetings**

I planned to use a field notebook and a tape recorder when observing these meetings. I hoped to determine how the mentor teachers and teacher educators evaluate the student teachers against the assessment criteria set out in the SBS Handbook. Because these meetings did not take place, I could not determine similarities and differences with regard to expectations and student teaching skills. I could not determine the mentor teachers' commitment to the mentoring process, their ability to work with student teachers over an extended period of time, neither could I determine the impact that the workshop had on them.

- **Observations during SBS meetings and Training workshops**

I used a field notebook and a tape recorder when observing the proceedings of the meeting and the workshop. During the workshop there was no training for mentor teachers and during the SBS meeting, mentor teacher-related issues were not discussed.

- **Informal interviews**

I used a field notebook and a tape recorder when conducting informal interviews. Because the interview topics were determined by what was observed, it was not possible to provide a procedure protocol during the preparation phase of this study.

- **Formal interviews**

I used a field notebook and a tape recorder when conducting formal interviews with the mentor teachers. These occurred during the SBS period after normal school hours, to limit interruptions. Because I did not know beforehand which afternoons the mentor teachers were going to be available, I could not develop a timetable during the planning phase of the study. Participant student teachers were interviewed in two groups: a second year group and a third year group. Participant teacher educators were also interviewed in a group.

3.7 Data analysis

The data collected through interviews was separated from the data obtained through observations, and kept in a file.

3.7.1 Analysis of observations

Observations and informal interviews were sequenced chronologically, made possible by the field notes. The observations of each participant were used to identify the key issues which were then described. The purpose was to identify patterns and to relate them to the research questions.

3.7.2 Analysis of interviews

The participants were asked the same questions during the formal interviews.   Each participant's response to these questions was recorded, transcribed and analysed to identify recurring themes.   Similarities and differences in these responses were identified and then described in order to identify patterns, which were related to the research questions.

3.7.3 Combining information from observations and interviews

Through triangulation, it became evident that what the participants did during observations, and said during the formal interviews, were not in congruence.

3.7.4 Final stage

Based on this comparative analysis, I determined how well the mentoring process was working by comparing it with literature on this topic, as well as with the stated goals of the SBS component of the BETD programme.   Data was also analysed against the research questions in an effort to answer these questions.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter the research design was described.   As a qualitative study, data was obtained through interviews, observations and document analysis.   An overview was given of the study participants who were interviewed to determine if there was mutual understanding with regard to the partnership model.   The research measures, namely observations, interviews and documents were then described to show how the data was

collected. Finally, I described how the data was analysed to determine how well the mentoring process within the SBS component of the BETD teacher education programme was working and to answer the research questions.

This chapter formed the basis for chapter 4, which deals with the data analysis and findings of the research conducted on the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model between WCE and selected Windhoek schools. Chapter 4 looks at eleven case studies, and the findings related to the research questions, namely:

- How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the mentoring process among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

- Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS ON THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS MENTOR IN THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the results of the investigation is analysed and described.   Given the responses to the observations and interviews, the description and analysis of the data focus on how mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers interpreted and experienced the mentoring process.   The observation data was used to triangulate the interview data.

It is important to note that the activities of the SBS component consist of planning, presentations, observations and discussions by the partnership teams.

I observed and interviewed the two teacher educators responsible for assessing and evaluating the second and third year student teachers during SBS.   I also observed and interviewed eleven mentor teachers at eleven partnership schools in Windhoek, as well as the eleven second year and ten third year Geography student teachers as two separate groups.   I observed at least four lesson presentations per student teacher and at least two critique lessons per teacher educator, as well as the pre- and post-presentation discussions.   I also consulted documents relating to the practical components of the teaching programmes and sat in on the SBS committee meeting.

The findings are presented as individual case studies. Each case study focuses on co-planning sessions, presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer, post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher, presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers, and post-lesson discussions between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher.

4.2 Case studies

Below find a presentation of the case studies.

4.2.1 Case study 01

<u>Co-planning sessions</u>

At this school there were two second year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The duty of the mentor teacher was only to check the lesson plans of the student teacher, to see whether all the essentials of the lesson were covered in the plan, and to give the student teacher supplementary material, as some of the information in the textbook is not well explained. During my observations, the mentor teacher very rarely checked the student teacher's lesson plans prior to the presentations.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

In my interview with the mentor teacher, she explained that when she observes student teachers, she would look at the following aspects: if the student teacher emphasised

important facts, assessed whether the content was covered sufficiently, determined whether the learners understood the lesson objective, and whether the learners were given activities to do.   However, when I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, the mentor teacher was sitting at the back of the classroom, busy with other things.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and this is what she said: If the student teacher were willing, she would discuss the presentation with the student teacher. Sometimes the student teachers would ask about the lesson presentation and if time allowed, they would sit together and talk about the lesson.   She also said that if post-lesson discussions occurred they would usually take place during the lunch break. However, what was commented, was never observed, for example, I never came across the mentor teacher having a discussion with the student teacher over the lunch break.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments were: She was not involved, because teacher educators did not talk to the mentor teachers.   She would observe lessons when the teacher educator was present, but they would not communicate, nor would they sit together.   I observed that the teacher educator and

mentor teacher very seldom communicated, and that the mentor teacher was very seldom present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Teacher educators did not include the mentor teachers in these discussion.   They ignored the mentor teacher and only had discussions with the student teacher.   The mentor teacher further commented that they should be part of the team at all times.   I observed that the mentor teacher very seldom formed part of the partnership team.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher mentioned that she checked the student teacher's lesson plans, observed the lessons presented and discussed the lesson with the student teacher after presentation.   However, during my observations, I did not see the mentor teacher giving this type of assistance to the student teacher.   I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.2 Case study 02

Co-planning sessions

At this school there was one third year student teacher assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments were: As a supervisor, she was responsible for giving assistance to the student teacher with regard to teaching methods, lesson content and how to get through to the learners. Because she had no support from the college, she did not know that co-planning sessions were compulsory, and waited for the student teacher to approach her. She said that these sessions did not occur because the student teacher did not approach the mentor teacher for assistance. I did not once observe the mentor teacher giving assistance to the student teacher.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The student teacher should be allowed to have his own space, so that he can feel it is his class. On arrival the student teacher was given a class to manage for the entire SBS period, and only if the student teacher asked her to observe his lessons, would she do so. I did not observe the student teacher to be capable of managing a class on his own, neither the mentor teaching being present during any of the lesson presentations. Yet the mentor teacher signed the student teacher's lesson plans, and indicated that everything went well.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, she had the following comments: Only if the student teacher asked would she comment on methods used, and also give general comments with regard to teaching aids and the lesson content. They did not have discussions after every lesson, as available time was a problem. Also, the student teacher should get a chance to do his thing in his own way, so she would only talk to him when she felt it absolutely necessary. The student teacher should be given space to reflect on what he did, what went wrong and how to improve the next time, without the interference of the mentor teacher. I did not observe the mentor teacher taking the initiative to comment on the lesson presentations by the student teacher.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educators as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: She thought that she should not be present when the teacher educator assessed the lessons presented by the student teacher, because the teacher educators did not involve the mentor teacher – they only talked to the student teacher. She felt that she and the teacher educator should jointly have assessed the student teacher, that there should have been communication as to how good or poor the presentation was. I observed that the teacher educator did not expect the mentor teacher to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happens during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Teacher educators did not include the mentor teachers during these discussion. Even if she was present, she was not consulted. She further commented that, as a mentor teacher, she should also be involved with the final grading of the student teacher, not only the teacher educator.

Summary

During the interview the mentor teacher said that she did not co-planning with the student teacher, because he was capable to manage a class on his own. She said that she had post-presentation discussions only when she felt it absolutely necessary. During my observations, I did not find the mentor teacher doing what she said during the interview. I also observed that the student teacher was not experienced enough to manage a class on his own. However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.3 Case study 03

<u>Co-planning sessions</u>

At this school there were two third year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: When the student teachers arrived, the mentor teacher talked with them so that they could get to know one another.   She said that the mentor teacher should focus on assisting the student teacher, by being able to help them improve on the weak areas in their presentations.   But, she said, because the student teachers were not interested, this did not take place.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and she commented: She must have been busy somewhere during my visits, because she was always in the class, observing the student teachers.   She said that during the lesson presentations, she would write down comments – what was good and what was poor, observe the learners to see whether they understood what the student teacher was teaching and observe whether the student teacher was motivating and encouraging the learners.   However, when I asked to browse through her notes, she could not find them.   Neither did I observe her doing what she said during the interview.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal

interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: There was very rarely time to do this. When there was an opportunity, she would talk with the student teacher, concentrating on teaching methods. But overall the student teachers were not interested. They had excuses, like "I have a class now" and only seemed interested in grades. I observed that grades for individual lessons were not given, as it is not the policy of WCE. A grade is only giving after the SBS session.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this upon which she commented: The student teachers ignored her, as if what she had to comment was of no use. Often she would tend to other school-related matters, while the lesson presentation was being observed by the teacher educator. I observed that the teacher educator did not expect the mentor teacher to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The teacher educators did not give her time to talk with them. On one occasion, the teacher educator asked her to leave the classroom, so that he could talk to the student teacher in private. She was

furious, because since it is her classroom, her comments should be valued by the visiting teacher educator.

<u>Summary</u>

During the interview the mentor teacher said that she did not co-plan with the student teachers, that she was always present during the lesson presentations writing down comments. During my observations, I found that what she said about co-planning sessions corresponded to what she did, but I did not observe her being present during lesson presentations, doing what she said she did.   However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview

4.2.4 Case study 04

<u>Co-planning sessions</u>

At this school there was one third year student teacher assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happens during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The student teacher was not interested in co-planning with her, although she regarded co-planning to be important, as student teachers are not always sure of some of the syllabus themes and topics.   She further commented that student teachers have to be guided with regard to teaching approaches and methods and syllabus content to concentrate on.   She also commented that student teachers need help with the preparation of their lesson presentations.   However, when I went to observe what happens during co-planning sessions, this never happened.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and she commented: She could not recall why she was not present during the times that I visited the student teacher when presenting lessons, because she was always present.   She commented that she would be busy at the back of the classroom, because the presence of the mentor teacher gives confidence to the student while teaching, and it also helps with the discipline of the learners.   Also, the mentor teacher should be present to intervene when the student teacher is unable to give satisfactory answers to the learners' questions. She should also intervene if she has more information than the student teacher on the particular topic.   Yet the mentor teacher remarked that she was not always present as her presence made the student teacher nervous and a student should be left to do things his/her way.   I did not observe the mentor to be present doing what she said she did.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Time did not allow discussions to take place, because either the student teacher had a lesson to teach, or she had a lesson to teach.   But when it happened, she would concentrate on the shortcomings of the lesson, especially the lesson content.   She would talk to the student teacher about what to work on, what needs to be changed.   I did not observe the mentor teacher having post-lesson discussions with the student teacher.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and this is what she commented: She said that because the teacher educator did not ask her to attend those presentations, she stayed away.   She felt that she should be present, so that she could see how the teacher educator assessed the student teacher.   She felt that the teacher educator should give support to the mentor teacher, talking about whether she was correct in her support and contributions.   She said that because this did not happen, there was a big difference between their assessments of the lesson presentations. I observed that the teacher educator did not expect the mentor teacher to be present.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Although the mentor teacher felt that she and the teacher educator should sit together to discuss the student teacher's performance, especially the shortcomings, it did not happen, as the teacher educator never invited her to join in the discussions.   In fact, she never met the visiting lecturers.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher said that guidance and assistance to the student teachers are important. She said that she was always present during lesson presentations, and that post-lesson discussions sometimes took place. Although she said that the student teacher was not interested in co-planning with her, I did not once observe her doing what she said during the interview. However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.5 Case study 05

Co-planning sessions

At this school there were two third year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Co-planning is necessary and a "must", because it is a two-way process – the mentor teacher and student teacher both learn from the process. The student teachers should know how the mentor teacher approaches a lesson, how the learners should be kept interested throughout the lesson. The mentor teacher should meet with them every day to look through their lesson plans and to give them advice. But co-planning did not take place, as the student teachers did not approach him – instead, they sat in the sun and did not do what they were supposed to do. I did not observe the mentor teaching making an effort to assist the student teachers as he commented during the interview.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this upon which he commented: He said that he was always present, sitting at the back of the classroom, completing the critique form as the lesson progressed. He did not give any reason for not being present during the lesson presentations that I observed.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between the mentor teacher and student teachers, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The student teachers disappeared very quickly after having taught a lesson, so discussions very rarely took place. The mentor teacher was of the opinion that discussions should take place after every lesson, because he and the student teachers could learn from one other. For instance, he could ask the student "Where did you get this idea?" and they could then talk about the effectiveness thereof. But, unfortunately, the student teachers were only interested in grades – they almost demanded good grades, even if the lesson presentation was not up to standard, even if they did not deserve it. They were not interested in discussions, neither did they show that they wanted to learn from the mentor teacher and improve on their teaching. Because of this attitude, the mentor teacher was very reluctant to offer assistance to the student teachers. I observed that grades for individual lessons were given, although it is not the policy of WCE, as stated in the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004). A grade is only giving after the SBS session.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teachers and teacher educators as observers</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He should join the teacher educator when lessons are being assessed, because everybody has something to learn, which could only lead to better teaching skills.   But the teacher educator did not seem to want him present.   I observed that the teacher educator did not expect the mentor teacher to be present.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teachers</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments were: The teacher educators did not ask him to join in the discussions.   He felt that the teacher educators should visit the student teachers more often, and should communicate more often with the mentor teacher and associate teacher at the school.   But the teacher educators were always in a hurry, never having time to communicate with either the mentor teacher or the student teacher. I observed that the teacher educators had thorough post-lesson discussions with the student, although the mentor teacher was absent.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher felt very strongly about assisting the student teacher during co-planning sessions, lesson presentations and post-presentation discussions.   Although he mentioned that the student teachers were not interested in his assistance, I did not observe him helping the student teachers as he passionately mentioned during the interview.   During the interview he said that he was always present during lesson presentations, but during my observations, I did not once see him in the classroom observing the student teachers.   However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.6 Case study 06

Co-planning sessions

At this school there was one third year student teacher assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this upon which the comments were: Co-planning is when the mentor teacher looks at the prepared lesson plans of the student teacher.   It is not necessary to have a special time of the day for this.   It can happen any time, whenever the student teacher approaches her.   But this does not happen, because the student teacher does not bother to show him the prepared lesson plans.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The mentor teacher remarked that he must have left the classroom for one or other reason, and missed me because of this. He was always present, sitting at his table and listening to the lesson presentation, completing the critique form. I did not observe the mentor teaching observing the student teacher's lessons.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Time did not allow for discussions to take place on a regular basis. When they did have discussions, he would focus on things that did not go well and compliment the student teacher when appropriate. However, during my observations I did not observe any post-lesson discussions taking place, as the mentor teacher was not present during the presentation.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educators as observers</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He could not give reasons why he did not observe the student teacher together with the teacher educator. He was under the impression that he was supposed to

leave when the teacher educator arrived to critique a lesson presentation by the student teacher. I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and he commented: Because he did not observe the lessons together with the teacher educator, he saw no purpose in joining the post-lesson discussion. In any case, there was no communication between teacher educator and mentor teacher.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher said that co-planning does not take place. This corresponded with what I observed. During the interview, the mentor teacher also said that he was present during all the lessons presentations, and that he often had post-presentation discussions with the student teacher. During my observations, I did not see the mentor observing any of the lessons presented by the student teacher, neither did I observe post-lesson discussions taking place. However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.7 Case study 07

<u>Co-planning sessions</u>

At this school there were two second year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher.   When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: Co-planning did not take place, because the student teachers chose to ignore him.   Instead of consulting with him, the student teachers were in the staff room, while they were supposed to be observing his teaching.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He could not recall why he was not present during the lesson presentations that I attended.   He said that he usually was present, listening to the student teachers teaching and completing the critique forms. However, this is did not take place during the lesson presentations that I observed.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this upon which the comments were: The student teachers were not interested in discussing their efforts - they were only interested in the grade allocated by him.   Also, if the student teacher did not approach him, then discussions did not take place.   During such discussions, it is important to talk

about shortcomings, teaching methods, and lesson content. However, I did not observe any post-lesson discussions taking place.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educators as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educators, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He saw no purpose in being present, as the only communication is that between teacher educator and student teachers. Nobody ever told him to be present. I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He understood that the post-lesson discussions were only for the student teacher and the teacher educator.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher said that co-planning does not take place. This corresponded with what I observed. During the interview, the mentor teacher also said that he was present during all the lessons presentations, and that he often had post-presentation discussions with the student teachers, although they were not interested in his assistance. During my observations, I did not see the mentor observing any of the

lessons presented by the student teachers, neither did I observe post-lesson discussions taking place. However, I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.8 Case study 08

<u>**Co-planning sessions**</u>

At this school there were two second year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The student teachers were not interested in the assistance of the mentor teacher. He would give assistance if approached, otherwise it was a waste of time. During my observations, the student teachers did not approach the mentor teacher for guidance and assistance. I noticed that they did their lesson preparations on their own.

<u>**Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer**</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, the mentor teacher was present, sitting at the back of the classroom. However, he did not appear to be listening to the student's lesson presentation, as he seemed to be busy assessing learner tasks. During the formal interview with him, I asked about this and these were the comments: He did observe the student teacher, ascertaining whether the lesson content was covered sufficiently. He commented that the mentor teacher must be present to prevent the learners from giving problems to the student teacher, especially with regard to

discipline.   I did not observe the mentor teacher doing any of these things, or taking down notes for a discussion with the student teachers.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments made were: There is no time for discussions, as one of the two would have a lesson to present, or the student teachers had to prepare for their next lesson presentations.   As stated in the SBS Handbook, student teachers are not supposed to be preparing lessons in the staffroom. They should be observing their mentor teachers presenting lessons.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educators as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The teacher educators showed no interest whether he was present or not.   It was as if they had nothing to say to him.   The teacher educators did not ask him any questions – they were only concerned about the student teacher.   I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place.   During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student

teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments were: The teacher educators did not seem to care whether the mentor teacher was present or not, because they did not communicate. They did not ask questions about the student teacher's performance. I only observed the teacher educator and student teachers in discussion.

Summary

During the interview, the mentor teacher said that co-planning only took place on request of the student teachers. He said that he attended all lesson presentations, giving guidance and assistance. He also said that he did not have post-lesson discussions. During my observations, I did not observe the student teachers requesting the mentor teacher for guidance and assistance. Neither did I observe the mentor teacher being present during lesson presentations. However, I did observe that no post-lesson discussions took place and that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.9 Case study 09

Co-planning sessions

At this school there were two second year student teachers and one third year student teacher assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this upon which he commented: He did not know why he had to co-plan with the student teacher, as only the teacher educator's

critique was taken into consideration for the final grade. According to him, co-planning is unnecessary and a waste of time, because in the end, the student teacher's grade is determined by the teacher educator, not the mentor teacher.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The student teachers did not pay attention to what he had to say, as they did not implement his suggestions. There was a big difference in lesson quality when the teacher educator was present, and when only the mentor teacher was present. What should be happening is that the mentor teacher must be considered as the one with the teaching experience, the one who should be guiding and assisting the student teacher during lesson presentations. It is the mentor teacher who would know whether the lesson objectives were continuously achieved, whether the student teacher continuously used appropriate teaching and learning aids, whether the student teacher had more than sufficient knowledge of the lesson content, etc. He said that he did not like to sit in on the presentations, because things were not done the way he would like it to be done, and he did not bother to talk to the student teachers, as they did not consider his advice to be of any significance. I observed that the student teachers did not consult with the mentor teacher when planning their lessons and teaching media. I also noticed that they put much more effort into their planning and presentations when they expected the teacher educator for a lesson observation.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: The mentor teacher and the student teachers did not have time for these discussions. But, he commented, such discussions are important as the student teachers are going through a learning process. The student teachers have to be told and advised about teaching methods, time management, learner discipline, etc. However, I did not observe any post-lesson discussions taking place.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He said it was not necessary for him to attend, as the teacher educator and the student teacher formed a team. He was only there to supervise when nobody from WCE could assess the student teachers. I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the

mentor teacher, I asked about this and the comments were: Although it would be good for him to attend these sessions, it did not occur as he did not observe the lessons.

Summary

During the interview the mentor teacher showed a negative attitude towards the SBS component of the BETD programme.   He said that he did not like to sit in on the presentations, he did not bother to have pre- and post-lesson discussions with the student teachers and he did not observe lessons together with the teacher educator.   During my observations I observed that what the mentor did during SBS and said during the interview, corresponded.   It was evident that the student teachers did not consult with the mentor teacher when planning their lessons and teaching media. I also observed that they put much more effort into their planning and presentations when they expect the teacher educator for a lesson observation.   During my observations I observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.10 Case study 10

Co-planning sessions

At this school there were two second year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher.   When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done.   During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: There were no co-planning sessions with the student teachers, because they were never seen, unless they had to teach a lesson.   Sometimes they would approach him, and only in such cases would there be a

pre-presentation planning session. But the student teachers rarely approached him for assistance and guidance. I did not observe this taking place during my visit to the school.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He could not recall why he was not present, as he always sat in on the lesson presentations. What often happened was that the student teachers did not follow the timetable, and made changes without consulting him. The students often did this to avoid having him in the classroom, as they did not prepare as well as when a teacher educator would assess their lessons. He always attended the lesson presentations, carefully noting the shortcomings of the student teachers, especially with regard to lesson content. Student teachers had the tendency to cover less content than what they should, and this is where the mentor teacher should assist them. However, when I looked at the lesson plans of the student teachers, I did not see any comments made by the mentor teacher, neither did I observe the mentor teaching doing what he said during the interview.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: There was no time to conduct these discussions, although they are important to both student teacher and mentor teacher. Also, during these discussions, the mentor teacher and student teacher should get to know one another better, and the mentor teacher should

get an idea of what is being taught at WCE, especially with regard to learner-centred teaching methods. I did not observe the mentor teacher having any discussions with the student teachers.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He said it was not necessary for him to attend, as the teacher educator was there to assess the student teacher and to complete the critique form. I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: He did not attend these sessions, because the teacher educator observed the lesson, not the mentor teacher.

Summary

During the interview the mentor teacher said that he did not have co-planning sessions with the student teachers, unless they approached him for guidance. He also said that he always sat in on the lesson presentations, but that there was no time to conduct post-lesson discussions. However, during my observations, I did not notice student teachers

approaching the mentor teacher for guidance, neither did I observe the mentor teacher approaching them to plan their lessons. Although he said that he attended the lesson presentations, I did not see him in the classroom during my observations. During my observations I also observed that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.2.11 Case study 11

<u>Co-planning sessions</u>

At this school there were two second year student teachers assigned to one mentor teacher. When I went to observe what happened during co-planning sessions, I discovered that co-planning was not done. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: It depended on the student teachers whether they wanted her input before presenting lessons. They never asked for such input, so she did not have co-planning sessions with them. I did not once observe a co-planning sessions being conducted.

<u>Presenting lessons with mentor teacher as observer</u>

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations, I discovered that the mentor teacher was not present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: She could not recall why she was not present, as she always sat in on the lesson presentations. Often the student teachers lied to her about the time, because she would arrive at a class to assess the student teacher, whom would then tell her that the lesson was already presented. She feels that it is

important to attend the lesson presentations, to see if the student teachers covered the content as it is described in the relevant chapters in the textbook. Student teachers never supplemented the content in the textbook, and she would point this out to them during the presentation. Also, student teachers must be guided with regard to questioning techniques as well as to how to handle answers given by the learners. However, this did not happen during my observation of the lesson presentations.

Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher and student teacher

When I went to observe what happened during post-lessons discussions between mentor teacher and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and she commented: Although these discussions are important, there was no time for them to take place. These discussions, she felt, were important as she could have let the student teachers know what was expected of them, what they did not do so well, and praise them for things that went well.

Presenting lessons with mentor teacher and teacher educator as observers

When I went to observe what happened during lesson presentations observed by both the mentor teacher and the teacher educator, I discovered that it did not take place. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: She said it was a matter between the teacher educator and the student teacher, therefore it was not necessary for her to attend. I observed that the teacher educator accepted the mentor teacher not to be present.

<u>Post-lesson discussion between mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher</u>

When I went to observe what happened during post-lesson discussions between the mentor teacher, teacher educator and student teacher, I discovered that it did not take place. During my observations, the teacher educator was in discussion with the student teacher, without the mentor teacher being present. During the formal interview with the mentor teacher, I asked about this and these were the comments: She was not present during the presentations, so there was no need for her to attend.

<u>Summary</u>

During the interview, the mentor teacher said that she did not have co-planning sessions with the student teachers, but if they approached her, she would give her input. She also said that she sat in on all the lesson presentations, but that there was no time to conduct post-lesson discussions. During my observations, I did not observe the mentor teacher observing the lessons presented by the student teachers. However, I did notice that no discussions occurred between her and the student teachers, and that the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated, which corresponded with what the mentor teacher said during the interview.

4.3 Findings related to research questions

The findings will now be discussed as it relates to the research questions.

4.3.1 Research question 01

- **How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the *mentoring* process of the BETD programme?**

By asking this question, I wanted to investigate whether the mentoring process encouraged the professional development of both the student teachers and their mentor teachers.

The concept *team teaching* is clearly explained in the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004, p.28-29).   The Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) states that SBS is an essential component of the BETD programme, "giving the student knowledge, awareness and practice of the range of duties of a teacher" (MHEVTST, 1998, p.14).   After every lesson presentation and the post-presentation discussion with the mentor teacher and/or the teacher educator, the student teacher has to complete a reflection on the lesson presented, as well as weekly reflections on "interesting and noteworthy events" (WCE, 2004, p.5, 7).

Based on the interviews conducted, mentor teachers understood the term *mentoring* as assisting and guiding student teachers with their lesson preparations and lesson presentations.   During the interviews, it emerged that teacher educators and student teachers understood the concept *mentoring* as a process involving the mentor teacher giving support to the student teacher, which entails much more than mere assistance and guidance.   For instance, they said that *support* included familiarising the student teachers

with the school's criteria and standards of assessment, schemes of work, criterion-referenced tasks and building a professional relationship with the student teachers. *Support* also means that the mentor teacher is willing to put in extra time and energy to provide excellent support to the student teacher.

The literature on SBS reviewed in chapter 2 reveal that the restructuring of national education programmes is of little value if teachers are not taken into account (Danielson, 2002). As the case studies suggest, the teacher educators and mentor teachers very seldom communicated, student teachers very rarely approached the mentor teachers for guidance, mentor teachers very seldom attended the lesson presentations by the student teachers, and the mentor teachers and teacher educators very seldom observed lesson presentations together. According to Tomlinson (1996), approaches to teacher education have moved towards school-based courses, which demand more direct involvement of teachers. The SBS partnership teams do not seem to completely understand the partnership model, and Furlong and Maynard (1995) say, unless there is a complete thorough understanding of the processes involved in learning to teach, unless the mentor teachers and student teachers are engaged in collaborative teaching, the role of the mentor teacher will not be achieved.

The case studies also revealed a poor relationship between mentor teacher and student teacher. Because student teachers are "attached to an experienced teacher in their training school" (Wright and Bottery, 1997, p.239), the mentor's role is crucial not only to the student's long-term development, but also to the teaching profession as a whole.

The fact that the mentor teachers interviewed understood *mentoring* as limited to planning and teaching lessons, is a concern as this may likely lead to student teachers not developing into reflective practitioners.

Given what was happening during my observations, as well as during my interviews, I am concluding that the team members have different understandings of the mentoring process.

4.3.2 Research question 02

- **Is there a mutual understanding of the *mentoring* process among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?**

In order to answer this question, I asked the following questions during the interview sessions with the mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers: Can you describe what happens, what does not happen and what should be happening during the mentoring process? Apart from lesson observations, in what other ways are the student teachers supported?   Can you explain the roles and responsibilities of the mentor teacher?   Is there planning and sharing among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

Based on the answers to these questions, as well as on the interview findings summarised under research question 1, it seemed that there was a difference in perception among the three partnership members with regard to what the mentoring process entails.   The

mentor teachers saw the SBS component consisting only of observations and teaching, the way teaching practice was practised in the past. The teacher educators and student teachers saw observations and teaching as only a part of the SBS component. They seemed to agree with Craig, et al, (1998) who state that student teachers are expected, amongst others, to carry out child studies, arrange parent meetings, complete community and school-based projects and explore the school administrative system.

Reflective practice is at the heart of the SBS component of the BETD programme. As Holloway (2001) says, in the learner-centred approach, reflection and collaboration become an expected part of the partnership teams. Becoming a reflective practitioner is central to classroom effectiveness, because it is an essential way for teachers to help themselves change and improve what they do in the classroom. (Dahlström, 1995, 2000). Student teachers should be assisted in lesson planning and the gathering of information about best practices. It is essential that the mentor teachers observe the lessons presented by the student teachers and provide feedback to them. The student teachers in turn should reflect on their practice and apply what they have learned to future lessons.

However, I observed that the communication among the teacher educators, mentor teachers and student teachers was poor. I also observed that, in the majority of the cases, co-planning did not occur, lesson presentations were not observed and post-presentation discussions did not take place. It was therefore not possible to conclude whether there was a mutual understanding or not about the mentoring process, as described by the partnership members during the interviews (research question 1). It was also not

possible to determine whether the partners had a mutual understanding of the term *mentoring,* whether they see mentoring to help student teachers face their new challenges through reflective activities and professional conversations.

Given what was happening during my observations, as well as during my interviews, I am concluding that the team members do not have a mutual understanding of the mentoring process. It appears that mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers did not familiarise themselves with the mentoring process and what is expected of them before assuming their duties.

4.3.3 Research question 03

- **Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?**

With this question I wanted to see whether there was some degree of congruence between the BETD partnership goals and the attaining of them by the mentor teacher. In order to answer this question, I asked the following questions during the interview sessions with the mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers: What is a partnership? What is the purpose of a partnership? Who are the stakeholders in the BETD partnership?

In an effort to attain the goals of SBS as stated in the Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998), a school partnership model was adopted where SBS is organised within teams in selected support schools.

It was mentioned earlier that mentor teachers, student teachers, teacher educators, advisory teachers and education officers form the SBS partnership teams.   Because advisory teachers and education officers were not actively participating in the partnership model, this study only concentrated on mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators as team members of the partnership model.

The partnership teams should always be guided by the partnership goals stated in the Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998, p.1-2, p.14), namely

- To develop resourceful, committed teachers with a sense of responsibility and knowledge and skills, who will raise the quality of education in Namibia,
- To develop teachers who have sufficient knowledge and skills to interpret syllabuses and to relate subject content to the needs of the learners through the learner-centred approach to teaching,
- To develop teachers who can evaluate learning environments and learning experiences which are meaningful to the learning process,
- To give student teachers knowledge, awareness and practice in the range of duties of a teacher, and
- To prepare student teachers to become reflective practitioners who can analyse and reflect on their own teaching practices.

The SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004, p.36-39, p.28-29), based on this partnership model, clearly describes the roles of the team members. It explains that team teaching is a prominent feature of the SBS component, which involves co-operative learning.

In order for these goals to be attained, the mentor teachers and student teachers need to work together towards the partnership goals in a collaborative way, which Brown, et al (2001) say is necessary to get the most out of their own teaching and each others' learning.

However, since I found that working towards the achievement of the partnership goals are not done, it was difficult to see how these goals can be attained by the mentor teachers. Evidence to further support this, can be found in the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998, p.14), where it is stated that a collaborative partnership was adopted to give student teachers practice in the variety of duties of a teacher. Furlong (1995) says that the commitment to develop a training programme is fundamental to such a collaborative partnership.   In this type of partnership, student teachers are exposed to different forms of educational knowledge, and are encouraged to critique what they learn in school and visa versa.   Through this process, student teachers will build up their own body of professional knowledge. Furlong (1995) further states that the success of this model depends on the mentoring process where student teachers and mentor teachers work and plan together.   Therefore, the mentor teacher is one of the key players in this partnership model.   Craig, et al (1998) say that the entire school acts as support for the student teacher, with the mentor teacher being one of the key players in this collaborative

partnership, as it is a general belief that learning to teach does not start until a student teacher enters the classroom.

Given what was happening during my observations, as well as during my interviews, I am concluding that the mentor teachers are not attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme.   Further investigation needs to be done to determine why mentor teachers are not familiar with the BETD partnership goals, why they are not familiar with the purpose of such a partnership and why they are not familiar with the roles of the partnership team members.

4.3.4 Research question 04

- **Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?**

By asking this question, I wanted to investigate whether mentor teachers worked and planned together with teacher educators and student teachers.   I also wanted to determine whether they regarded the mentor teacher as one of the key players in the BETD partnership in helping the student teachers to learn from practice.   In order to answer this question, I asked the team members what the roles of the BETD partnership team members are.

As stated in the chapter on the review of literature, the BETD partnership team is a support system to support the development of teachers according to the new philosophy

of the BETD teacher education programme. The mentor teacher as the key player in this partnership is expected to help the student teacher to learn from practice by giving professional guidance and constructive feedback. The presence of a mentor teacher is not enough - the mentor teacher's knowledge of how to support student teachers and knowledge of the skills to provide guidance is crucial.

According to the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998, Foreword), the BETD partnership team is supposed to help student teachers to master the teaching and learning conditions in Namibian schools and to become reflective practitioners through critical inquiry. It further states that team teaching should occur under the guidance of the mentor teacher, where *guidance* includes the support from the partnership team during preparation and evaluation of teaching.

During the interviews, neither the mentor teachers, nor the student teachers could adequately explain what the SBS partnership model entails. Some saw it as a co-operation among parents, teachers and the community in which the school is situated, others saw it is a co-operation among Geography school teachers with the purpose to improve their teaching in Geography, while others saw it as a co-operation among the rector of WCE and school principals with the purpose to recruit future teachers for the schools. In the majority of the cases, they saw the partnership lasting only for the duration of the SBS period.

The teacher educators saw the SBS partnership model as a co-operation that exists between teacher educators and student teachers, a relationship between selected schools and WCE where mentor teachers and teacher educators freely communicate throughout the academic year. They saw it as a relationship that not only lasted for the duration of the SBS period, but also outside the SBS period.

Because of the lack of a supporting partnership team, it was very difficult to verify what was said during the interviews with what was happening in the SBS partnership. I did not observe the teacher educators doing what they said during the interviews. Also, it was not possible to conclude whether the partners were committed to developing student teachers as described in the partnership goals, because of the poor communication channels among the team members. It was therefore not possible to determine whether the partners were working towards developing quality learning experiences and environments for all student teachers, advancing schools through uniting the various members of the partnership, and helping student teachers to cultivate reflective thinking and decision-making habits. It was not possible to conclude whether the partnership schools were fulfilling their role of sharing knowledge and expertise with teacher educators and student teachers, and working as collaborative teams with WCE. It was not possible to determine whether WCE was fulfilling its role of sharing knowledge, expertise, teacher research and resources with the partnership schools, facilitating regular meetings with the partnership schools, and supporting the mentor teachers.

Given what was happening during my observations, as well as during my interviews, I am concluding that a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among the team members does not exist.

4.4 Conclusion

During my observations, I did not see the mentoring process, as explained in this paper, being carried out by the majority of the mentor teachers.

In the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004), the following is clearly stated:

- The mentor teacher as the key player in this partnership, should have regular planning meetings with the student teachers, preferably at the beginning of a new teaching unit, theme or topic, and

- It is important that the mentor teacher sees the student teacher's lesson plans before the presentation, to bring about necessary changes and to make suggestions.

I did not see the mentor teacher giving this type of assistance to the student teacher. I observed that in the majority of the cases, the teacher educator and mentor teacher very seldom communicated. I also observed that the student teachers were not experienced enough to manage a class on their own, as was often the case.

The majority of the mentor teachers I observed did not execute their roles as described in the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004). In the majority of cases, I did not find mentor

teachers present while the student teachers were presenting their lessons, neither did I see post-lesson discussions taking place. During my interviews with them, I learned that they were not familiar with the SBS handbook. Some of them were not even aware that such a booklet existed. Interviews with the student teachers revealed that they only consulted the booklet with regard to sections on the number of lessons they had to teach during SBS. The teacher educators commented that they did not need to consult the booklet, as they only had to observe a certain number of lessons in order to give the students a grade at the end of the SBS period.

The handbook states that the mentor teachers must be "adequately qualified and experienced teachers" (WCE, 2004, p.37). Yet one of the mentor teachers interviewed had more teaching experience in the primary school, and was not confident in teaching Geography to junior secondary learners. Another mentor teacher interviewed has a Bachelor of Arts degree, but does not have a teachers' diploma. The spoken English of at least two of the mentors interviewed was of such a poor quality that it was difficult to make sense of some of the comments given during the interviews. On one occasion the mentor excused herself from the class, because she has no geographical background and would not know "right from wrong".

I did not see the student teachers requesting the mentor teacher for guidance and assistance, and they prepared their lessons without the guidance of the mentor teachers. I did not see team teaching taking place, and although the process is described in the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004, p.28-29), there was great uncertainty about it among the team

members.   I observed that the student teachers completed their reflections without the mentor teacher having given any input on the lesson presentations.

During the interviews I could not determine what the criteria were for selecting mentor teachers.   The interviews revealed that none of the mentor teachers had attended a workshop to acquaint themselves with the expanded role of the mentor, which leads me to conclude that WCE is not adequately assisting the mentor teachers in their role as key players in the BETD partnership model.

A workshop was held on 15 April 2004, titled "Joint SBS meeting between partnership schools and college staff".   According to the SBS Committee Annual Report 2003-2004, principals of Windhoek schools and representatives of the Ministry of Education were invited.   Since mentor teachers were not invited, the workshop did not focus on the preparation and professional development of mentor teachers, and therefore did not effectively contribute to the mentoring process.   The division into subject-related discussion groups was not based on mentor teachers and teacher educators, so I did not notice the start of a mentor teacher-teacher educator relationship.   At the meeting, various school principals commented on matters such as inadequate lesson preparations, inability to plan and execute continuous assessment tasks, inability to design schemes of work, and poor lesson presentations.   The Social Sciences discussion group comprised six lecturers, one principal, one representative from the Regional Office, and one teacher who was not involved in the mentoring process at his school.   None of the eleven mentor

teachers interviewed had attended this workshop, nor were they introduced to the teacher educators prior to SBS.

I observed that the moderator reports were not discussed at the workshop, neither at the SBS Committee meeting held on 10 June 2004.

The major role of the SBS Steering Committee is to co-ordinate the whole SBS process and the committee should meet at least three times per year. However, according to my interviews and observations, such meetings did not take place, because the committee is non-existent.

I observed that the academic approach still dominated. During my interviews with the mentor teachers, I learned that most of them did not experience learner-centred education themselves during their years of school and tertiary education. I also learned that they were not coping adequately with providing learning environments for student teachers to develop into reflective practitioners, decision makers and problem solvers.

I observed that, although student teachers learn about teaching during college-based studies, they did not learn how to teach during SBS as the majority of the mentor teachers were not present during the student teachers' lesson presentations.

Given what mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers are saying and doing,

the evidence suggests that the mentoring process and the BETD partnership is not attaining its intended goals. Based on my observations and interviews, I am concluding that the mentor teachers are not attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme, as they were not familiar with what was expected of them before assuming the role of mentor teacher.

Based on the interviews and observations, mentor teachers are not assisting in developing resourceful teachers, and are not adequately preparing student teachers to reflect on and analyse their teaching practices. It also appears that mentor teachers are not familiar with the purpose of the BETD partnership and the various roles of the partners. It appears that the partners do not communicate regularly, support one another and do not share their expectations.

Further investigation needs to be done to determine why the low-key role of the mentor teacher has not been expanded to the dominant role described in the BETD partnership goals. The success of this partnership model depends on mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers working and planning together.

Based on the data analysis and findings in this chapter, chapter 5 deals with conclusions and recommendations regarding the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS MENTOR IN THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations with regard to the SBS component of the BETD programme will be briefly discussed, based on the findings of the interviews conducted with mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers, and the observations I made during the SBS session.

5.2 Findings and recommendations

This paragraph looks at the four research questions, namely:

1. How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme?

2. Is there a mutual understanding of the mentoring process among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

3. Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?

4. Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

5.2.1 Research questions one and two

- How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the mentoring process of the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the mentoring process among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

According to these questions I investigated, I found that team members seemed to have different views of the mentoring process and that they did not have a mutual understanding of the process. The mentor teachers saw the SBS component consisting only of observations and teaching, while the teacher educators and student teachers saw observations and teaching as only a part of the SBS activities.   I observed that in the majority of the cases, SBS classroom activities, namely planning, presentations, observations and discussions did not take place as described in the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) and the SBS Handbook (WCE, 2004).   I also observed that, in the majority of the cases, team members did not do what they said during the interviews.

Given these findings, supported by literature on the new way of approaches to teacher education, I propose the following: Since the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) does not describe the role of the mentor teacher, this document could be revised to give a detailed exposition of the mentor teacher's roles and responsibilities.   It could also list the selection criteria of mentor teachers.

A half-day workshop for the academic staff and second and third year student teachers of WCE could be arranged annually by the SBS committee. The purpose of the workshop could be: To ensure that all teacher educators and student teachers have a mutual understanding of the mentoring process, to ensure that all departmental members give the same information to the teachers at the workshop for mentor teachers, to improve the communication among the teacher educators, and among the teacher educators and student teachers, and to discuss the moderation report of the previous year. This workshop could be compulsory for teacher educators and student teachers, and I suggest it be arranged during a lecture-free day. WCE must be able to convince the Ministry of Education of the importance of this workshop, so that it has permission to have this lecture-free day.

A one-day workshop for the teacher educators, mentor teachers, advisory teachers and education officers team members could be arranged annually by WCE departments. The purpose of the workshop could be: To give an opportunity to the members to observe simulations of the mentoring process, to ensure that all members have a mutual understanding of the mentoring process, to improve the communication among the members of the SBS partnership teams, and to discuss the moderation report of the previous year. WCE should obtain permission from the Ministry of Education to have the teachers, advisors and officers on campus during this one-day workshop.

The tendency to have speaker upon speaker should be avoided. Participants should be actively involved in consolidating the SBS activities. The organisers of the workshop

could use the paper by Sweeny (1996), giving guidelines in the training of mentor trainers. Practical ways of mentoring can be found in the book by Tomlinson (1996), which looks at mentoring strategies and procedures. Furlong and Maynard (1995) present three strategies for mentor teachers to use, namely opportunities for student teachers to observe the mentor teachers teaching, to observe and provide feedback on the student teachers' own teaching, and to work alongside the student teachers, engaging in different forms of collaborative teaching. They write about the different roles the mentor teacher takes on, namely the *beginning teaching* stage, the *supervised teaching* stage, the *teaching to learning* stage and the *autonomous teaching* stage.

Representatives from the Ministry of Education, the two teachers' unions, NIED and the moderation teams could be invited so that all the stakeholders have a clear understanding of what the mentoring process entails.

The SBS committee should ensure that all advisory teachers, education officers and teachers who are going to be involved in the mentoring process, attend this workshop. Those who are absent could be disallowed to participate in the mentoring process. Mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers could familiarise themselves with the mentoring process and what is expected of them before assuming their duties.

Advisory teachers and education officers could be primarily involved in the setting up of criteria for selecting mentor teachers. The SBS moderation teams could be selected from the advisory teachers and education officers who attend the workshop.

WCE management could grant the SBS committee permission to have a financial budget for these workshops, so that every relevant aspect can be covered.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Education, NIED and the teachers' unions, WCE could propose incentives for teachers to take on the role of mentor teacher. Financial rewards need not be the only incentive. I propose that the team members at each of the partnership schools select a "mentor teacher of the year". The teacher educators should then select at least one mentor from the list, who could be rewarded in one of the following ways:

- To visit the northern parts of the country where a mutual sharing of mentoring experiences can be done.

- To visit education colleges in any one of the SADC countries to observe SBS activities, and to share experiences.

- To attend a teachers' conference outside the borders of the country.

- To take part in symposiums and presenting papers on their mentoring experiences.

It is important that a follow-up meeting be held with the mentor teachers at the partnership schools in Windhoek. I suggest that this feedback be incorporated in the one-day workshop for teacher educators, mentor teachers, advisory teachers and education officers.

5.2.2 Research questions three and four

- Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?

- Is there a mutual understanding of the partnership goals among mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers?

According to these questions I investigated, I found that the mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators did not have a mutual understanding of the partnership goals as intended by the SBS component of the BETD programme.   I did not see the team members working towards achieving these goals as stated in the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998), consequently it was difficult to determine how these goals could be attained by the mentor teachers.   Mentor teachers, therefore, were not attaining the goals of the partnership.

Although the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998), mentions SBS partnership teams, it came to light during the interviews that mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators were not aware of who the team members are.   They were unfamiliar with the partnership goals, the purpose of such a partnership and the roles and responsibilities of the partnership team members.   I observed that advisory teachers and education officers were not actively participating in the partnership, and the SBS committee chairperson could not provide me with names of the various team members.

Given these findings, supported by literature on the new way of approaches to teacher education, I propose the following: Since the BETD Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) does not describe the roles and responsibilities of the partnership team members, this document could be revised to give a detailed exposition of the SBS partnership model. It could also give recommendations with regard to the number of partnership schools and the number of student teacher placements per school. The reason for having this partnership arrangement is to have fewer schools involved in SBS. During 2004, fifty primary and secondary schools were in partnership with WCE, with some schools only accommodating one student teacher. This is not what is intended with the partnership model as the process becomes ineffective (Murangi, et al 1996). The Broad Curriculum (MHEVTST, 1998) could give guidelines as to the rotation of partner schools, for example a partnership cycle of three years. Fewer schools could mean a more effective and successful partnership and improved communication among the partners.

The mentor teachers, advisory teachers and education officers in a partnership team should be rotated on the same basis as the partner schools. Advisory teachers and education officers could be primarily involved in the selection of partnership schools and mentor teachers. They could assist WCE in trying to solve problem cases, for example school principals refusing to have student teachers placed at their schools, or principals dictating the number of student teachers to be placed at their schools.

Student teachers specialising in a particular field of study could be placed in the same schools. A roster of the SBS activities at the particular school, such as parent meetings, community and school-based projects, remedial teaching and lesson presentations could ensure that the mentor teachers are not overwhelmed by having too many students wanting to teach at the same time.

After the one-day mentoring workshop and before the SBS session commences, teacher educators could occasionally visit the classes of the mentor teachers and vice versa, in preparation of SBS. They should communicate primarily about working towards the achievement of the partnership goals. They could reach a consensus regarding teaching units, schemes of work and lesson plans, about learner-centred and teacher-centred teaching strategies, etc.

During the first week of SBS, the teacher educators, mentor teachers and student teachers could work out a timetable for the planning sessions, lesson presentations, observations and discussions. The focus should be on quality and not on quantity. Prescribing the number of lessons to be presented distracts the team members from fulfilling their other SBS duties.

After the SBS session, teacher educators and mentor teachers could sit together and reflect on the achievement of the partnership goals. They should critically look at the problem areas, find ways to overcome them and take the necessary action during the following SBS session.

Feedback sessions are very important as it encourages the members of the SBS partnership to become reflective practitioners: How are mentor teachers coping with the new paradigm for teacher education? How did the workshops contribute to the professional development of mentor teachers to mentor effectively? How did mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers benefit from the SBS partnership? These are fundamental questions that could form the core of the half-day and one-day workshops.

5.3 Possibilities for future research

It is evident from the findings on the role of the teacher as mentor in the partnership model, that communication among the teacher educators, mentor teachers and student teachers are poor.

The case studies discussed in chapter 4 revealed that teacher educators and mentor teachers very seldom communicated, student teachers very rarely approached the mentor teachers for guidance, mentor teachers very seldom attended the lesson presentations by the student teachers, and mentor teachers and teacher educators very seldom observed lesson presentations together.

The BETD partnership goals describe the mentor teacher as having a dominant role during SBS. An area that lends itself to research is why the low-key role of the mentor teacher has not been expanded to the dominant role as described in the BETD partnership goals.

Criteria for selecting mentor teachers could be investigated, as the mentor teacher's knowledge of how to support student teachers, and knowledge of the skills to provide guidance is crucial.

The findings in chapter 4 reveal that *mentoring* is limited to planning and teaching lessons. As this may likely lead to student teachers not developing into reflective practitioners, research can be done on how the mentor teacher could effectively support student teachers during SBS.

Another possible area for future research is to investigate how mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators can be encouraged to engage in collaborative teaching.

Research could be done on why mentor teachers, student teachers and teacher educators do not have a mutual understanding of the BETD partnership goals, the purpose of a partnership and the roles of the partnership team members.

Since advisory teachers and education officers were not actively participating in the partnership model, research could be done to show how their absence impacts on attaining the partnership goals, as well as on the moderation of the BETD programme.

5.4 Conclusion

As mentor teachers are not providing adequate support to the student teachers, and because they are not working towards achieving the SBS partnership goals, they have to

be shown how to be part of the reflective and collaborative experiences of practice teaching. The mentor teacher is the key player in the SBS activities and training for this new mentoring role will improve the quality of the SBS mentoring component.

The collaborative SBS partnership of the BETD programme is a teaching practice programme where student teachers are exposed to different forms of educational knowledge, where they are encouraged to critique what they learn in school and vice versa, and through this process, build their own body of professional knowledge (Furlong, 1995). Working with trained mentor teachers give student teachers a higher level of teaching skills, than student teachers whose mentors were not trained (Holloway, 2001).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 01:   Formal interview protocol

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	FORMAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
How do mentor teachers, teacher educators and student teachers understand the mentoring process as used in the BETD programme?	1. Compare the role of the mentor (support) teacher in the pre-BETD era with that in the BETD era. 2. Explain the mentoring (supporting) process by describing what happens, should happen and does not happen during SBS. 3. What, in you opinion, are the positive and negative aspects of being a mentor (support) teacher? 4. Does the mentoring (supporting) process have an important role in the reformed teacher and teacher education programme in Namibia? Motivate your statement.
Are the mentor teachers attaining the goals of the partnership as intended by the BETD programme?	1. Explain what is meant by the term *"partnership school"*. 2. Comment on the duration of the SBS period. What do you regard to be the advantages and disadvantages of such an extended practice teaching session? 3. Explain the roles and responsibilities of the associate teacher, the mentor (support) teachers and the teacher educators (visiting lecturers, subject lecturers). 4. Elaborate on the procedure and purpose of the Student Progress and Joint SBS Meetings.

Appendix 02: Co-planning sessions

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">CO-PLANNING SESSIONS</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">THEME/TOPIC</td><td colspan="2">UNIT</td></tr>
<tr><td>DATE</td><td>MENTOR</td><td>STUDENT TEACHER</td><td>LESSON(S)</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">QUESTIONS</td><td align="center">TICK</td><td colspan="2" align="center">COMMENTS</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Did mentor familiarise student teachers with schemes of work, unit plans, daily lesson plans, syllabuses, subject policy, etc?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Was planning done at the beginning of a unit, theme or topic?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Was planning done at the beginning of every lesson?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Did mentor discuss the aim as the destination and the objectives as stops on the way to the destination?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Did mentor discuss the selection and sequencing of activities, eg How to start the unit; Administering lesson activities; The key activity after each lesson?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">What responsibilities were given to the student teacher with regard to the teaching unit, eg Making or collecting resources; Planning field trips; Planning assessment tasks and the accompanying criteria, etc.</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Were the student teachers clear about how the unit should be explored? Did they understand?</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 3: Lesson presentations

LESSON PRESENTATIONS			
THEME/TOPIC		**UNIT**	
DATE	**MENTOR**	**STUDENT TEACHER**	**LESSON(S)**
CRITERIA		**COMMENTS ON MENTOR'S CRITIQUE**	
OBJECTIVE What should the learners be able to do? What must be done en route to achieving the aim?			
TEACHING & LEARNING AIDS Home spun aids? Effective? Relevant? etc			
INTRODUCTION Aroused curiosity? Prepared learners to receive new ideas/information? Attention focused on a particular area/problem? Did the objective of lesson serve as the link?			
DEVELOPMENT/PRESENTATION 1. Knowledge questions to encourage learners to explore the topic? Analysis of topic? 2. Time allowed for learners to discuss topic? Able to explain in depth? To interpret topic?			
RECAP/REVIEW PERIODS Did it occur after each major step?			
CHALKBOARD Used effectively?			
QUESTIONS Relevant for different lesson moment? Were questions planned?			
CONCLUSION 1. Consolidation: Cement what was learned? 2. Application: Could learners apply?			
EVALUATION Was objective achieved? Reflection: what went well? Not so well? What can be changed?			
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT			
TEACHING STYLE/STRATEGIES/METHOD			