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13. MENTORING

A Profession within a Profession

INTRODUCTION

The Principal had informed me (not asked) that a new teacher would be under my responsibility for the next year. I was given a web site where I could read about my responsibilities as mentor. I was scared to learn that I was, more or less, the one who decided if the candidate would become a good teacher or not. I know how to teach children, I know my subjects, but being a mentor for an adult colleague, was far beyond what I had ever studied or wanted. I like to do a good job, and for this, I felt totally unprepared. I was worried I would not be of help to the new colleague, and most of all, I really felt this added responsibility would come in the way of doing what my real job was, teaching children.

The education of professionals is recently seen in a career wide perspective, consisting of three stages, initial, induction, and in-service education. In all three stages, mentoring activities are given a central role. During the preparation for the profession, initial education, mentors have the responsibility of introducing the practice field to professionals-to-be. During induction, mentors become supporters and guides for the novice, whereas in the phase of in-service education, formal mentoring by appointed mentors and informal collegial mentoring within communities of practice are found to promote professional learning. In this chapter mentoring is mainly discussed in relation to initial teacher education and the induction phase of newly qualified teachers.

In most cases mentors are chosen based on their reputation of being experienced and successful professionals, in our case, teachers, or they are practitioners towards the end of their professional career whose work load is reduced, and mentoring is seen as a suitable activity towards the end of a long career.

The question raised in this article is if all experienced teachers can be mentors or is mentoring a different experience than practicing the profession? The claim I make is that mentoring is not the same as teachers' first order professional practice, it is a profession within the profession in which mentoring takes place. Teaching children is a different practice from mentoring adults prior to or at the entrance of their professional career, and in this chapter the main differences will be discussed in support of the claim, that mentoring is a profession within a profession.

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The story in the beginning of this chapter was told to me by a mentor, and it is a typical example of the increasing importance of work-based learning for teachers (Zeichner, 2010). The learner is, perhaps, at first sight, the mentee (the student teacher or novice teacher), however in the above situation the mentor, the more experienced teacher sees herself as a novice in the mentoring role and feels she needs to learn the new job for which she has not been educated. Recent views on teacher education have given the concept a wider meaning. Teacher education does not only relate to initial teacher education, but to a career long teacher education. The Irish Teaching Council (2010) defines teacher education as a broad concept that "encompasses initial teacher education, induction, early and continuing professional development and, indeed, late career support" (The Teaching Council, 2011, p. 5). European Commission and OECD state that "The education and professional development of every teacher needs to be seen as a lifelong task and be structured and resourced accordingly" (European Commission & OECD, 2010, p. 12). Concepts such as continuous professional development (CPD), career long teacher learning, and life-long learning (Richter, Kunter, Klusman, Lüdtke, & Baumert, 2011) have been part of the language of teaching and teacher education for quite some time now, yet it is only recently that we see it becoming part of the political discourse as well. Such developments imply that teachers are being educated throughout their careers, yet the form, the venue and the formality of the education vary. Teacher education is often considered to be the main responsibility of academic teacher education institutions, however, today it has to a larger extent become a shared responsibility of various actors, and in particular, the practice field. In many places student teachers spend more time in schools than at the university during their initial education (Ellis, 2010). During the induction phase the main responsibility for teacher learning is placed with the school, whereas both work based and formal learning at universities contribute to in-service teacher learning. Thus, the school, its leadership and teachers hold multiple responsibilities, in addition to teaching children, at different phases of teacher learning. An additional responsibility for experienced teachers is often the task of mentoring student teachers or novice teachers employed by the school. It is usually taken for granted that teaching experience is enough to qualify for mentoring, without taking into consideration that the purpose of mentoring differs from the purpose of teaching. The goal of this chapter is, however, to argue that mentoring is a different practice which takes place in school, the context of teaching, but it has a completely different purpose. Mentoring is about supporting the search for professional self-understanding and professional growth of new professionals. The target audience of mentoring are adults at the starting point of a professional career. Thus mentoring becomes a separate profession within the teaching profession.

TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

A challenge for many systems is that career long teacher learning and added responsibilities do not necessarily lead to a different position in school. Teachers

often remain classroom teachers without possibilities for earning a more acknowledged professional status if their heart still lies with the teaching of children. Career development in teaching usually means taking on a leadership role which to a large extent removes the teacher from the classroom. Thus, teaching is often seen as a flat career (Lortie, 1975; Darling-Hammond, 2012), and motivation for professional learning rests on personal interests and is not sufficiently supported by external incentives. Some countries, Lithuania and Poland, for example, which have experienced a positive development in terms of educational achievements, have at the system level created a staged career route for teachers built around continuous professional development, increase in salary, and in professional status (Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2012). In the Lithuanian example teachers start out as junior teachers having an *apprentice* role, before becoming fully *qualified* teachers after a full year teaching. The next step in a teacher's career in Lithuania is a *senior* teacher, and at this level, there are added responsibilities, including mentoring other teachers in school. It is the principal and the municipality who decide on the designation. After five years as a senior teacher, including mentoring other teachers in school and in the district, the municipality can upgrade the professional level to a *methodist*. The last level in a teachers' career is the *expert*, which means that the teacher has been a methodist for at least seven years, and a teacher for a minimum of 15 years. Mentoring at the national level, as well as contributing to curriculum writing are added responsibilities for those who want to achieve the expert status. The designation is granted by the Lithuanian Teacher Qualification Institute, a national council under the Ministry of Education, and after nomination by the principal as well as endorsement by the municipality. Not every teacher reaches the advanced levels, for example in 2005 only 20% of teachers reached the methodist level (Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2012, pp. 78–79). Likewise, Scotland already in the nineties introduced the Chartered Teacher Scheme, which in 2009 was replaced by The Standards for Career Long Professional Learning and includes informal work place learning, added responsibilities as well as formal academic education at a master level (General Teaching Council, Scotland, 2012).

Supported by the above examples, the claim in this paper is that becoming a mentor should be seen as a stage in the career development of teachers who want to increase their professional knowledge, skills, and responsibilities by sharing their professionalism with the coming generations of teachers. Teachers, who are still in the classroom, add to their professional activities and become school based teacher educators by taking on added responsibilities and engaging in further formal mentor education. Subsequently, they need to acquire new unique professional knowledge.

The model for teachers' professional career development developed by Smith (2012) is similar to the Lithuanian model, however, in Smith's model the role of mentoring in the various career phases of teachers is being emphasized. Jointly the two models will serve as background for supporting the statement that mentoring is, in fact, a profession within the teaching profession.

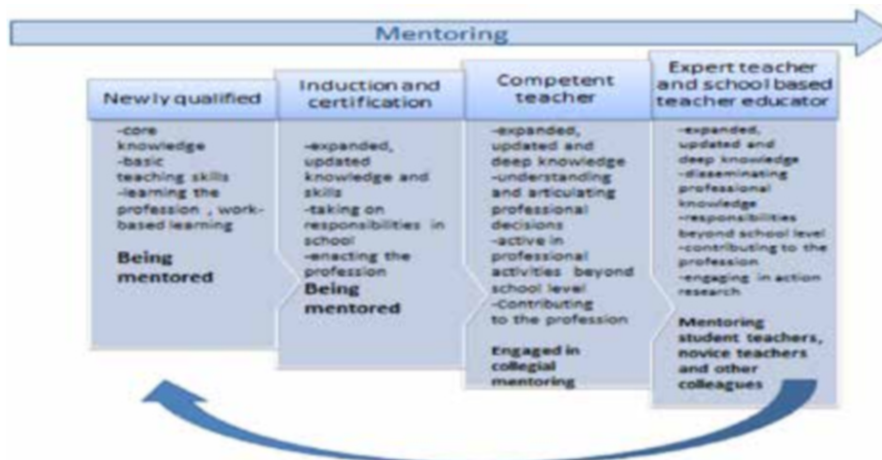

Figure 1. The role of mentoring in a staged career development model

The need for school based teacher educators (mentors) is a closely related to the fact that we are currently witnessing that the practice component of initial teacher education is expanded, at the same time as induction of newly qualified teachers becomes a built-in phase of teachers' professional careers in many countries (McNamara, Murray, & Jones, 2014; Smith & Ulvik, 2014; Hulme & Menter, 2014).

In initial teacher education mentoring of student teachers by experienced teachers in school during the practicum is a well-known phenomenon internationally. The mentors are often chosen based on their reputation as being good teachers, role models, or teachers whose teaching schedule is not filled (Cox, 2005). Research shows that the practicum during teacher education is, by many students, found to be the highest valued component of their education (Smith & Lev-Ari, 2005), even though most mentors have not been educated do undertake the responsibility of acting as school based teacher educators. The increased practicum component in teacher education puts more emphasis on work based learning. Professional learning takes place within the school, when practicing teaching and it is supported by mentors. The challenge is, however, that there has not yet been given sufficient attention to the infrastructure of an expanded practical component of teacher education, and in many cases the assigned mentors lack the knowledge and the skills to act as school based teacher educators. So mentoring is needed in the very beginning of a teacher's professional career.

During the induction and certification phase novice teachers are in many countries, such as Scotland and Israel (among others), given a mentor whose task it is to support and guide them during the important induction phase (Hulme & Menter,

2014; Lazovzky & Reichenberg, 2006). In this context mentoring is still central to the mentee's professional development, yet the mentor takes on a different role, it is about mentoring a colleague. The novice teacher is still the one thought of being in need of support from a more experienced colleague. The mentor plays a central role in the way novice teachers experience the crucial induction phase, and if they decide to stay in the profession or not (Rots, Kelchtermans, & Aelterman, 2012).

In the next phase, where the teacher aspires to be accredited as a competent teacher, collegial mentoring within communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) is conducive to teacher learning which aims at deepening professional theoretical and practical knowledge. Through collegial discussions and support lie possibilities for teachers to develop the skill of articulating their tacit knowledge, which has been found to be a challenge for teachers (Bertram & Loughran, 2012). At this phase the role of mentoring is intentionally planned to serve the purpose of the whole school development, and not only the professional growth of individual teachers. It is, however, a must in any mentoring activities in which teachers' personal practice theory has to be made accessible to other teachers and to the coming generation of teachers (Smith, 2005).

In the last phase of the teacher career model presented here, teachers still remain in the classroom with the main responsibility of teaching children, but they are also acting at mentors for others. Only teachers in the last phase of the model are allowed to take on the role of being school based teacher educators serving as mentors for student teachers in phase one, as well as appointed mentors for novice teachers during the induction phase (phase 2), and being involved with school development (phase 3). Moving from one career level to the next does not necessarily reflect years of teaching experiences beyond the induction phase. The model reflects teacher learning and development, and not years of teaching. This means that a teacher cannot become a competent teacher without documentation of continuous learning which is acknowledged by the profession such as The General Teaching Council Scotland, or by other bodies with an authorisation power. Similarly, a teacher cannot become a mentor just because she has accumulated years of experiences. In order to become a mentor (school-based teacher educator), the teacher has to be educated for the role through formal mentor education. In this respect, being a mentor means taking on additional and different responsibilities from those of a teacher.

In the above discussion it has been argued that mentoring plays a central role in the professional development of teachers throughout the various phases of their professional career. Moreover, the claim has been made that to take on the role of mentors, unique knowledge and skills have to be acquired (which will be explained later in this chapter), thus making mentoring a profession within a profession. To clarify the position taken in this paper, the next section will briefly discuss what makes a profession, and the extent to which mentoring can be said to fulfil the requirements of a profession.

WHAT MAKES A PROFESSION?

Preceding the discussion about what makes a profession it is useful to define what is meant by acting as a professional within the context of the current paper. The Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary defines professionalism as “the skill, good judgement, and polite behaviour from a person who is trained to do a job well”. There are some inherent features in the Merriam-Webster definition, such as ‘good judgment’ meaning that there is no clear-cut right or wrong way of acting, but the ‘good judgement’ has to be exercised within a given context. Moreover, ‘polite behaviour’ implies that the professionalism is practised in relation to other people. Finally, the professional is ‘trained to do the job well’, implying that judgment is based on specialised professional knowledge and skills. The professional acts out of theoretical and practical professional knowledge, jointly with extended situational knowledge and experience, all of which are essential ingredients of a person’s professional wisdom (Brunstad, 2007). A model for illustrating the meaning of professional wisdom is presented below.

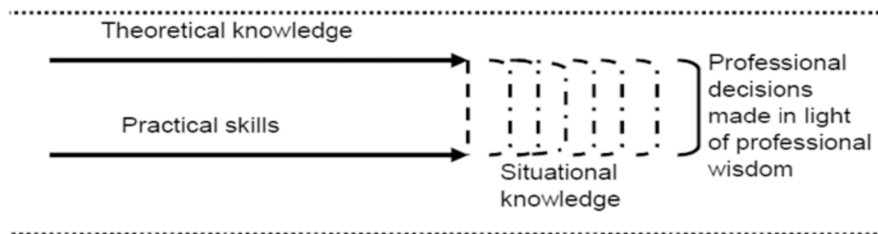

Figure 2. professional wisdom, Smith, 2013
(Adapted from Brunstad, 2007)

Professionals will constantly experience unexpected situations, and the way they react to this situation is grounded in their professional wisdom, which against relies on formal education, on job experience, and knowledge of the situation. Thus it is difficult to make a recipe list of correct professional actions. A simplistic definition of acting professionally could therefore be “Doing the right (optimal) things at the right time in specific situations, and being able to explain why it was right” (Smith, 2013). The last part of this definition is the ability to articulate tacit knowledge discussed above.

So, what makes a profession? A profession consists of a group of people who have undergone specialised education to provide services to others (adaption from Merriam Webster on line dictionary). The classic examples of professions are medical doctors and lawyers. Both professions meet the criteria for a profession, as presented in the literature. The core characteristics of the traditional trait model for a profession are:

- Clearly defined practical and theoretical knowledge base
- Systematic education
- Certification of professional practitioners
- Professional autonomy
- Explicit ethical code
- Priorities serving others to personal economical gains (Burbules & Densmore, 1991; Runtè, 1995; MacBeath, 2012)

For an occupation to be called a profession there has to be a clearly defined knowledgebase which is unique to the profession and which is acquired through systematic education, in other words, a formal education. Practitioners of the profession are required to be certified at the end of the education to engage in professional practice characterised by a large extent of autonomy which allows for making optimal professional decisions when encountering unexpected situations. In addition to being guided by the professional knowledgebase, practitioners are also guided by an ethical code known to all members of the profession out of awareness of and concern for 'the other' who is the receiving part of the professional practice.

A different view on what constitutes a profession is presented by Runte (1995). In his paper he discusses the structural-functional definition for a profession which says that all occupations will, little by little, develop a unique knowledge base that only practitioners of that profession holds. As this knowledgebase is being developed, the occupation will eventually become a profession. If we take mentoring as an example, the understanding and the articulation of the knowledge and the skills required to practice mentoring are little by little being developed and known (see Smith & Ulvik's Chapter 14 in this book on The Professional Knowledge of Mentoring). The practice of mentoring can therefore, according to the structural-functional model, be called a profession.

In spite of the fact that the two models differ greatly, they both share, however, the perception that a profession is defined by a genuine knowledgebase owned by practitioners of the profession. When the profession is within education, the professional knowledge can be seen in relation to Shulman's (1986) concept, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The elaboration of mentors' pedagogical content knowledge is discussed elsewhere in this book, whereas in the next section the extent to which mentoring can be called a profession or not will be raised. The first issue to discuss is how the mentoring profession can be distinguished from the teaching profession.

MENTORING – DIFFERENT FROM TEACHING

Having established the claim that mentoring plays a central role in the various phases of teacher education, and that professional practice is guided by theoretical and practical knowledge applied in an optimal manner in light of the analysis of specific situations, there is a need to explain why mentoring is a profession in itself, and that

it is quite different from teaching children in school. Mentoring can rightfully be said to be a profession within the teaching profession. It is practiced at the various phases of teacher education, but the responsibility, the purpose, and the methods are distinctively different from those of a school teacher. In this section some of the main differences will be illuminated before moving on to discussing various roles the mentor takes on, and examining mentoring in relation to the traits which characterizes a profession as discussed above.

A major difference between mentoring as discussed in the current paper and teaching children is that mentoring takes place within the profession. Teachers teach a subject, math, history, English, physical education, etc. Mentoring is about teaching, an activity practiced by both the mentee and the mentor. So it is not teaching a subject, it is providing support and guidance within the profession they both practice.

Another difference is the age of the recipient of teaching/mentoring. School teachers teach children, and their education is built around children's learning and development, in addition to the subject matter taught. A mentor within the framework of teacher education works with adults, either these are student teachers, novice or more experienced colleagues. Adult learning differs from children's learning, and instead of discussing the pedagogy of mentoring, perhaps we should start discussing the andragogy of mentoring? Related to this is the challenge inherent in mentoring a colleague, either it is a colleague-to-be, a novice or a more experienced colleague. The hierarchy that is found in a teacher-pupil relationship is minimized, and if there is a hierarchy, it is grounded in accumulated experience and seniority, and not necessarily in formality. Giving constructive criticism to a colleague might, for many, be more difficult than to do the same with pupils in class.

Mentoring includes a great deal of assessment, and assessing the practice of a colleague is for many one of the most difficult parts of mentoring. Formal, summative assessment is mainly found when mentoring takes place in initial teacher education context, where at the end the mentor might be involved in deciding if the mentored student teacher has passed the practicum or not. Even in the mentoring of novice teachers during the induction phase summative assessment takes place when the mentor is involved in deciding if the novice is to be certified as a teacher or not. The double role of acting as an assessor versus guide and supporter, has been found to be a difficult challenge in mentoring situations (Bray & Nettleton, 2007).

It is, however, the informal formative assessment of mentoring which is at the heart of the activity. Mentoring is about providing feedback, support and guidance, all of which is based on observation of performance, often preceded, as well as followed by mentoring activity. Observation includes assessment by the mentee as well as by the mentor, deciding what should be discussed during the mentoring activity is assessment, and providing support, ideas, guidance, is all about feedback and feed forward, in other words, assessment for learning. So mentoring is, to a large extent an assessment activity when looking at assessment in a broad perspective with a main focus on assessment for learning, yet, mentoring also includes assessment

for judgmental purposes. Assessing a colleague's practice is a challenge as there are personal, social, and contextual factors to be considered. This is the case also in teacher-pupil relationships, yet not to the same extent.

The main differences between mentoring and teaching are summarised in the following table:

Table 1. Differences between mentoring and teaching

	Teaching	*Mentoring*
content	subjects (math, history, etc.)	Teaching about teaching
age	children	adults
theoretical foundation	pedagogy	andragogy
hierarchy	explicit, accepted	Implicit, problematic
relationship	teacher-student	collegial
assessment	explicit formative and summative	explicit formative, implicit summative

MENTOR ROLES

As illustrated by the above table, there are clear distinguishes between teaching and mentoring, and the difference becomes more salient when taking a closer look at the roles of the mentor, as presented in the literature. The mentor takes on multiple roles in mentoring situations which makes mentoring a complex activity.

Teacher. Part of the mentor's responsibility is to teach the mentee about teaching, either it is contributing with new understandings about teaching or providing practical ideas for teaching. The teacher role is complicated because the mentor herself is acting out the role when teaching about it.

Guide. The mentee is entering a new world, the professional world of teaching. When encountering a new world, a new culture, it might be overwhelming and confusing, and the newcomer is likely to feel lost, not knowing the way(s) (Sabar, 2004). The mentor becomes the guide who leads the way, as we say in Norwegian (veileder = mentor), through the demanding socialisation process the novice goes through. The guide shares her knowledge and experience with the mentee when points of interest are met, or the road becomes demanding with scary curves and tough hills.

Counsellor. Mentoring is not, however, just to show the way. At times the curves have been too sharp and the hills too steep, and the mentee is most of all in need of somebody who can listen and show empathy. It is not necessarily the cognitive sides of teaching that are experienced as most difficult, but there are affective sides

related to relationships with students, colleagues, leadership, and just to find time for oneself when things get tough (Smith, Ulvik, & Helleve, 2013). In these situations the mentor becomes foremost a counsellor.

Motivator. Many students teachers decide to become teachers out of intrinsic and altruistic motifs (Watt & Richardson, 2008; Roness & Smith, 2009). When they are faced with the reality of school, such as discipline problems, extensive documentation requirements, temporary employments (Smith, Ulvik, & Helleve, 2013), their motifs for being teachers are challenged, and teacher attrition rates are worrying in many countries, including Norway (Roness, 2011) and USA (Ingersoll, 2012). The mentor plays a central role as a motivator to continue in the profession, by providing support and being herself an enthusiastic member of perhaps, a society's most important profession (MacBeath, 2012).

Sponsor. When the mentor takes on a sponsor role, she speaks in favour of the mentee and recommends her for job openings, various responsibilities in school, and in-service learning opportunities. It is not always easy to speak in favour of oneself, but the mentor, who is working in close relationship with the mentee, can act as a sponsor and recommend the mentee for suitable responsibilities in school. This is also a way of supporting the mentee in the socialisation process into the new culture.

Role model. The last mentor role presented in this paper, yet not the last in a long list, and certainly not the least, is the mentor acting as a role model for the mentee. The mentor should be, in addition to being formally educated as a mentor, also be an exemplary role model for the mentee as a teacher, communicator, and I would also add, as a human being. Teaching is basically a moral practice (Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser, & Schussler, 2010). Mentoring is an important part of the identity formation of teachers, especially during initial teacher education and the induction phase. The relationship established between the mentor and the mentee will affect not only the teaching skills and understanding of the complexity of teaching hold by the mentee, but the whole person, including professional attitudes and values, what Hansèn (2008) calls teachership. The mentor should be alert to the influence she might have on the mentee's perception of the teaching profession and act with this in mind.

"The roles you undertake as a mentor depend on the needs of the candidate, and of the relations you have established with the candidate. Sometimes you will act in one role, other times you will take on different roles" (United States Department of Health and Human Services, quoted by Smith, 2010, p. 23). Mentoring is a complex activity in any context, and in a school setting the differences between mentoring a student teacher, novice teacher or experienced colleagues and teaching children are, as discussed above, two very different practices taking place in the same context. But is it a profession in itself? In the next section I will be revisiting the traits of a practice which makes it into a profession (see p. 289).

MENTORING AS A PROFESSION

When taking a second look at the traits that characterise a profession presented above, the first impression is that mentoring does not align with the suggested list of traits. What is, for example, the knowledge base of mentoring? Moreover, there are probably more mentors without systematic education than those who are qualified as mentors. However, I would like to challenge such a first impression by relating to our own work at the University of Bergen, Norway. We are able to, as a result of five years of research on mentoring (observing activities, interviewing mentors and mentees, collecting data on mentor education, and by diving into relevant literature) present a framework of a possible professional knowledge of mentors, or its pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986). A more complete presentation of the proposed knowledge base for mentoring is presented elsewhere in this book, and a framework of this knowledge base can be presented. So, when revisiting the first characteristic of what makes an occupation a profession, it seems that mentoring is moving in the direction of fulfilling this 'requirement'.

When a knowledge base has been established, it is also possible to develop systematic mentor education for the profession. Such an education has taken place at our University since 2007, and it has all the ingredients of a formal academic education. From 2009 the mentor education has been a two years course consisting of two levels. Level one focuses on mentoring student teachers in initial teacher education. The year-long course allows for 15 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), whereas the second level addresses mentoring novice teachers and collegial mentoring. This course also runs over one year with an additional 15 ECTS value. The first level (mentoring student teachers) is a prerequisite for the second level (mentoring qualified colleagues). The courses have to meet the academic criteria of all academic courses offered by the University, including involving external examiners for the summative assessment assignments (portfolio for level one and action research project for level two). The mentor students are practicing teachers with at least three years of experience, and they have to be recommended for the course by their school principal. Similar courses are offered by all Norwegian teacher education institutions in Norway with national funding. So, in the Norwegian context today there is a systematic education for the mentoring profession.

Regarding the certification of its professional practitioners, the mentor profession is only at the very beginning of the process. There are still more mentors without formal mentor education than with in Norwegian schools. The political steering documents and the professional opinions suggest that in a long term perspective all mentors should be certified as mentors, and that is also the reason why the Government has decided to support mentor education programmes. Yet, there is still a long way to go. However, when looking at the international literature on mentoring, required systematic education leading to certification is still rare (Smith & Ulvik, 2010), and Norway seems to be in the forefront towards accepting mentoring as a profession

by having initiated a process of systematic education leading to certification of practicing mentors.

Professional autonomy, another trait in Burbules' and Densmore's list (1991), is to a large extent met, at least in the mentoring context with which I am familiar. There is a framework for mentoring, but there are few directives regarding how mentoring should be practiced, and explicit standards have not been set in Norway. This means, there is much room for the mentor to act out of professional knowledge and wisdom (Brunstad, 2007), enacting her professional competence. The question is, will the autonomy be more restricted as the profession becomes more strongly established, and will the profession itself, in dialogue with policy makers be able to find an optimal balance by defining professional standards without letting them have a reductive impact on professionalism? When looking at the teaching profession, there are worrying signs in Norway and internationally of the restriction of teachers' professional autonomy. It is worthwhile noticing, however, that in the most successful educational systems teachers' professional autonomy is strategically being extended (Darling-Hammond & Rothman, 2011; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2012). In the process of establishing mentoring as a new profession, it wise to keep this in mind.

The next trait to be discussed is if the practice of mentoring is enacted in accordance with an explicit ethical code. In the Norwegian context this is not yet the case, however, our mentor students are introduced to the European Mentoring and Coaching Council's ethical code (http://www.emccouncil.org/) which covers five areas; competence, context, boundary management, integrity, and professionalism. Each area has a number of points which are meant to serve as guidelines for both mentor and mentee. The competence of the mentor has to be ensured alongside continuous professional learning and development. Mentoring should take place within a context of shared expectations and goals, and which is conducive to learning, and in full awareness of the limitations of responsibilities and personal competence of the mentor. Integrity of the mentor and the mentee should be maintained, especially as regards to confidentiality and with alertness to rules and culture of the context in which mentoring takes place. Professionalism in mentoring is first of all to act in the best interest of the mentee, and safeguard the mentee's privacy. It is therefore possible to say that the profession of mentoring has an explicit ethical code, and it is left to the actors in the various mentoring contexts to become familiar with it and adhere to it.

The last trait of a profession discussed is that the main priority of the practitioner is to serve others, especially over personal economic gains (Burbules & Densmore, 1991). In most mentoring situations within the educational system the mentoring practice is done voluntarily or as part of the job of the mentors. In Norway the school receives a small fee per student teacher they host during the practicum, and it is up to the school principal to decide how the money is to be spent. When the mentee is a novice teacher or other colleagues, at best the mentor's teaching hours is reduced to

give space for the second profession, mentoring. But it is hard to say that mentoring in schools is a financial profitable activity. The profits are more in the form of mutual learning for mentor and mentee and gaining a deeper understanding of the teaching profession.

CONCLUSION

The conviction that has guided the writing of this article has been that mentoring should be accepted as an independent profession within the teaching profession. The perception is that teacher education is a career long education consisting of various phases, initial, induction and in-service teacher education. Mentoring plays a central role in each of these phases, however there is a lack of clarity as regards who the mentors are and what qualifications are requested. The argument put forward is that to be able to practice mentoring formal and informal professional learning has to take place, which suggests that mentoring offers, for those who engage in the required professional learning programmes, a staged career development which opens up for different professional responsibilities, status and salary.

The second part of the paper has discussed the extent to which mentoring meets the criteria for being called a profession, first by discussing the complexity of the mentor role, and then by addressing the various traits of a profession suggested in the literature (Burbules & Densmore, 1991; Runtè, 1995; MacBeath, 2012). To be a mentor, experience is not enough, formal education for qualification is required. The aspiration of this author is that in order to practice mentoring, the practitioner must be qualified and certified to practice the profession. Mentor education leads to qualification, and the mentoring profession itself, in cooperation with the school leadership and the authorities, should be the certifying authorities. In order to continue practising mentoring after certification, the quality of the mentor's work has to be subject to quality assurance examinations, for example every five years. Again it becomes the school leadership and the mentoring profession which have the authority to renew a mentor's licence, yet the documentation of sustained and improved quality is at the responsibility of the mentors themselves. A dynamic mentor portfolio which also includes feedback from mentees, is a possible means to document professional practice.

As a summary we can say that the practice of mentoring in the educational system, and more specifically as enacted in Norway, is in the process of establishing itself as a distinct profession within the teaching profession. Such a view places heavy responsibilities on the various stakeholders; the politicians, school leaders, mentors and not least, the mentees. The politicians' responsibility is to provide resources for creating a solid infrastructure for the rising profession to grow and develop and avoid restricting the practice of mentoring through top down regulations. The school leaders need to accept that teacher education is a career long activity and provide space and protected time for professional learning at all levels to ensure sustained

school development. Mentors are requested to develop a second professional identity as school-based teacher educators, which means undertaking further formal and informal education in order to accumulate theoretical and practical knowledge and understandings to be certified as mentors. Finally, mentoring in itself does not lead to professional learning and development. It depends on the quality of the mentoring process, and in addition to the mentor's profession competence, the mentee must be open to mentoring at all levels of her professional career. There is, however, still a long way to go, and in Norway it is exiting to be involved with the professionalization process of mentoring in full awareness that the process has started!

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