

English Language Education

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

# Models of Mentoring in Language Teacher Education

 Springer

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

# Models of Mentoring in Language Teacher Education



Springer

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen  
School of Education  
The University of New South Wales  
Sydney, NSW, Australia

ISSN 2213-6967

ISSN 2213-6975 (electronic)

English Language Education

ISBN 978-3-319-44149-8

ISBN 978-3-319-44151-1 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-44151-1

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016949401

© Springer International Publishing Switzerland 2017

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature

The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG Switzerland

# English Language Education

Volume 7

## Series Editors

Chris Davison, The University of New South Wales, Australia  
Xuesong Gao, The University of Hong Kong, China

## Editorial Advisory Board

Stephen Andrews, University of Hong Kong, China  
Anne Burns, University of New South Wales, Australia  
Yuko Goto Butler, University of Pennsylvania, USA  
Suresh Canagarajah, Pennsylvania State University, USA  
Jim Cummins, OISE, University of Toronto, Canada  
Christine C. M. Goh, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technology University, Singapore  
Margaret Hawkins, University of Wisconsin, USA  
Ouyang Huhua, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China  
Andy Kirkpatrick, Griffith University, Australia  
Michael K. Legutke, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany  
Constant Leung, King's College London, University of London, UK  
Bonny Norton, University of British Columbia, Canada  
Elana Shohamy, Tel Aviv University, Israel  
Qiufang Wen, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China  
Lawrence Jun Zhang, University of Auckland, New Zealand

More information about this series at <http://www.springer.com/series/11558>

*In honor of the late  
Professor Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (The  
University of Queensland, Australia)*

# Preface

As professionals, who have developed our academic skills within a Western educational tradition, but who have lived and worked in Asian cultures, we have had the experience of being mentored at various times in our careers. Much of our experience in being mentored has been informal, through degree supervision experiences, or through working with more senior colleagues. Sometimes, it has occurred within groups of peers, or in more organized training programs, laboratory work groups, through formal workplace support or from journal editors. For the authors, working with mentors – some of whom may not have seen themselves in this role – and subsequently being mentors ourselves has had a major positive impact on our careers. But, beyond this anecdotal evidence, what do we really know about mentoring/peer mentoring as a process and its impact on our professional development as educators and that of others?

This research monograph examines this question and its related issues from the perspective of English language teachers. In most educational institutes and schools today, teachers in general and language teachers in particular are expected to maintain and continuously upgrade their professional standards. For this to occur, they need to be provided with conditions and opportunities that allow them to reflect on and develop their teaching. Mentoring provides a possible avenue for this to occur both in teacher education and teacher professional development. This need for effective mentoring for preservice and in-service teachers has been an emerging theme in language teaching circles in recent years. However, the field of mentoring for language teachers is relatively unexplored in both of these language teacher education contexts, and the literature on mentoring language teachers is limited when compared with that of other teacher development issues such as teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) methodology.

This volume provides a research-based, practice-oriented introduction and guide for teachers, teacher educators, and coordinators who wish to understand and implement a mentoring approach to preservice and in-service teacher development programs. The book focuses on the two main themes: (1) mentoring and (2) peer mentoring in English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher education with specific research findings related to each theme.

This volume, which is framed by the disciplines of ESL/EFL and teacher training, draws on the broader literature to provide insights into issues related to mentoring/peer mentoring, which has been under-researched in ESL/EFL teacher education in general and in Asia in particular. This book provides teacher educators, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers with informed, empirically-based, yet practical information about the implementation of mentoring models that can be used for developing beneficial language teaching outcomes in Asian-specific contexts.

Although this volume reflects our findings from a series of related research studies conducted in the Vietnamese context, it is designed to allow readers to consider how they might apply a mentoring approach in their own situations. As the following chapter summaries indicate, the volume covers a wide range of topics related to mentoring and peer mentoring for language teachers both at preservice and in-service levels.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the current situation of English as a foreign language teaching in Vietnam and stresses the need for reforms in in-service and preservice teacher education. It argues that many of the issues found in language education in Vietnam are also common to other Asian contexts.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of teacher learning theories which underpin the concept of mentoring and peer mentoring and frameworks of mentoring and peer mentoring. It highlights the use of the mentoring/peer approach in teacher education. This chapter then describes different forms of mentoring, formal and informal with their main features, and provides an example of teacher reflective feedback.

Chapter 3 critically reviews the use of mentoring for preservice teachers during the preservice practicum. Then, it examines an example which reports findings from a study which investigated the situation of mentoring preservice language teachers during the practicum in Vietnam.

Chapter 4 describes the major components in the design for a formal mentoring program and covers such topics as training mentors, attributes of mentors, and mentor-mentee matching. For each section, there is a more general theoretical discussion, and then a specific research-related example from an Asian context is provided, e.g., research is discussed which explores what personal attributes preservice teachers expect from their mentors.

Chapter 5 introduces the use of an integrated mode of mentoring (group mentoring) for preservice teachers during the practicum as an approach to facilitating teacher reflection. The chapter reports findings from a qualitative study which explored how this model of mentoring fostered preservice teachers' reflection. It describes in detail the implementation of this model and its effectiveness in developing preservice teachers' reflective skills using data from interviews and recordings of mentoring conversations.

Chapter 6 provides a comprehensive research example that investigates how a peer-mentoring model has influenced preservice EFL teachers' professional practice. A mixed method design that included both qualitative and quasi-experimental techniques was used to investigate the impact of a formal peer-mentoring intervention program on participants' professional practice during the practicum. The study



sheds light on the use of peer mentoring as a model for developing beginning teachers' professional practice and its effectiveness in a specific Asian context.

Chapter 7 reports on a comprehensive research study whose aims were to investigate how a peer-mentoring model might influence preservice EFL teachers' perceptions of the amount of support they receive from their peers. The study sheds light on the use of peer mentoring as a model for supporting beginning teachers and its effectiveness in a specific Asian context.

Chapter 8 reports a case study which explores the experience of groups of Vietnamese EFL teachers toward their participation in a formal peer-mentoring model over one semester. Through observations and interviews, this study offers insights into the participants' experiences as well as the application of formal peer mentoring as a model of EFL teacher professional development. This study offers insights into the participants' experiences with this model in Vietnam as well as how this model could be appropriately used as a model of teacher professional development in a particular Asian context.

Chapter 9 examines the issues of implementation of peer mentoring for preservice and in-service teachers.

Chapter 10 summarizes the main argument of the book and makes suggestions about future practice.

Throughout the book, there is an emphasis on:

- A developmental approach to assist and support preservice and in-service language teachers to advance their professional practice
- A focus on findings from research studies in Vietnamese settings and implications for the wider implementation in other contexts
- Implications for practice

I believe this volume provides an important addition to the literature on mentoring for EFL language teachers and to our understanding of the implementation of mentoring in a specific context in Asia. The volume offers a stimulating and thorough examination of mentoring and peer mentoring, integrating theory and practice throughout. The volume should be of interest to language teacher educators, teachers, and policy makers. The findings from these studies, which are discussed in the light of previous research and in the context of teacher learning theories, are a useful source of information for a variety of educational groups interested in finding ways to improve the quality of teacher education programs and for carrying out teacher development activities in their own settings.

Kensington, NSW, Australia  
April 2016

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

# Acknowledgments

This book could not have been completed without the help, encouragement, and support of a number of people all of whom deserve my sincerest gratitude and appreciation.

My first and special thanks are to the Late Professor Richard (Dick) B. Baldauf Jr. at the School of Education, The University of Queensland (UQ), Australia, who was my supervisor since the beginning of my PhD journey and my mentor since I started my academic life in Australia. Dick encouraged me to publish my studies in a book when I finished my PhD as he saw the passions in my research interest and benefits of this book to the teachers, policy makers, and teacher educators in teacher education in general and language teacher education in particular. Dick and I initially proposed the book. His constant encouragement and his critical comments were crucial factors in the writing process. He taught me a great deal in how to make an argument for a book. His influence made me a better writer and scholar. It was a memorable time in both our lives. Unfortunately, in 2014 when I was intensively working on the book, Dick left us for another world. It took me a while to believe this bitter fact. I decided to memorialize his life in this book in order to keep him in my heart as a great mentor and scholar. I also would like to thank Pam, Christina and little Sophie for always considering me as a family member. It means so much to me.

Special thanks go to Dr Obaid Hamid, Dr Nga Ngo, Dr Tony Loughland, Dr Jayne Keogh, Dr Lynn Sheridan, Associate Professor Andy Gao, and Professor Chris Davison for their critical comments on the earlier version of the book. I greatly appreciate their generosity with their time and effort in giving feedback on a number of chapters in the book.

My deep gratitude and appreciation also go to my husband, Dr Nam Nguyen, and my lovely daughters, Mira and Maya. Their love, support, and constant encouragement gave me a great deal of strength and determination that helped me during the

time of writing this book. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my husband for being there for me whenever I needed him. His trust in my ability to complete everything I do will always be valued and treasured.

Arts & Social Sciences  
The University of New South Wales  
Kensington, NSW, Australia

Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>The EFL Context in Vietnam and East Asia.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	English Language Teaching in Vietnam .....	1
1.1.1	Historical Background.....	1
1.1.2	The Quality of ELT .....	4
1.1.3	In-service EFL Teacher Professional Development .....	8
1.1.4	Pre-service EFL Teacher Education in Vietnam.....	10
1.2	EFL/ESL in Asian Contexts.....	13
1.2.1	Issues in In-service EFL Teacher Education .....	15
1.2.2	Issues in Pre-service Teacher Education .....	16
1.3	The Use of Mentoring.....	18
1.4	Summary.....	20
	References.....	20
<b>2</b>	<b>Theories of Mentoring .....</b>	<b>29</b>
2.1	Underlying Theories of Peer Mentoring/Mentoring in Teacher Education .....	29
2.1.1	Social Constructivism.....	30
2.1.2	Collaborative Reflection.....	31
2.2	Mentoring: A Theoretical Framework .....	33
2.3	Peer Mentoring: A Theoretical Framework .....	36
2.3.1	Career-Related Functions .....	36
2.3.2	Psychosocial Functions .....	39
2.4	Summary and Conclusions .....	42
	References.....	42
<b>3</b>	<b>TESOL Practicum Mentoring for Pre-service Teachers: The Vision Versus the Reality.....</b>	<b>47</b>
3.1	Introduction.....	47
3.2	Practicum in Pre-service Language Teacher Education .....	47
3.2.1	Pre-service Teacher Education .....	47
3.2.2	Role of the Practicum.....	49

3.3	Mentoring in Pre-service Teacher Education.....	51
3.3.1	Mentoring .....	51
3.3.2	Limitations of School-Based Mentoring .....	52
3.4	Examining an EFL Pre-service Mentoring Context .....	54
3.4.1	Findings from the Pre-practicum Interviews.....	55
3.4.2	Findings from Post-practicum Interviews .....	57
3.5	Discussion.....	62
3.6	Implications and Conclusions.....	64
	Endnote .....	65
	References.....	66
<b>4</b>	<b>The Design of Mentoring Programs .....</b>	<b>71</b>
4.1	Introduction.....	71
4.2	Informal Versus Formal Mentoring .....	71
4.3	Formal Mentoring .....	73
4.3.1	Mentoring Attributes .....	73
4.3.2	Matching in the Formal Mentoring System .....	74
4.3.3	Mentor Training and/or Orientation .....	76
4.4	Conclusion .....	79
	References.....	79
<b>5</b>	<b>Group Mentoring: Facilitating Teacher Reflection .....</b>	<b>83</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	83
5.2	Teacher Reflection .....	83
5.3	Group Mentoring .....	84
5.4	The Study.....	87
5.4.1	Research Approach.....	87
5.4.2	Research Participants .....	87
5.4.3	Research Implementation.....	88
5.4.4	Methods of Data Collection .....	89
5.5	The Theoretical Framework for Reflection.....	89
5.6	Findings .....	90
5.6.1	Level of Reflection .....	90
5.6.2	Patterns of Reflection.....	92
5.6.3	Factors Fostering Reflection.....	93
5.7	Discussion.....	96
5.8	Conclusion .....	99
	References.....	99
<b>6</b>	<b>Peer Mentoring for Pre-service Teachers: Developing Professional Practice.....</b>	<b>103</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	103
6.2	Peer Mentoring for Pre-service Language Teachers.....	103
6.3	Peer Mentoring as a Strategy for Developing Professional Practice .....	104
6.3.1	Professional Practice .....	104
6.3.2	Peer Impact on Developing Teachers' Professional Practice .....	106

6.4	Research Methodology .....	109
6.4.1	Research Question .....	109
6.4.2	Design .....	109
6.4.3	Research Participants .....	110
6.4.4	Intervention .....	111
6.4.5	Data Analysis .....	113
6.5	Findings .....	114
6.5.1	Comparing Groups on Professional Practice over Time .....	114
6.5.2	Overall Professional Practice .....	126
6.5.3	Violations of Assumptions .....	129
6.5.4	Professional Practice Comparison Summary .....	130
6.6	A Comparison of Perceived Changes in Professional Practice Across Groups .....	131
6.7	Discussion and Conclusion .....	134
6.7.1	Domain 1: Planning and Preparation .....	134
6.7.2	Domain 2: The Classroom Environment .....	135
6.7.3	Domain 3: Instruction .....	136
6.7.4	Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities .....	137
6.8	Conclusion .....	138
	References .....	139
<b>7</b>	<b>Peer Mentoring: A Source of Support for Pre-service EFL Teachers</b> .....	<b>143</b>
7.1	Introduction .....	143
7.2	The Study .....	143
7.3	Findings from the Experimental Group .....	145
7.3.1	Psychosocial Support .....	145
7.3.2	Career-Related Support .....	152
7.4	Control Group Findings .....	160
7.4.1	Psychosocial Support .....	161
7.4.2	Career-Related Support .....	164
7.5	Discussion .....	170
7.6	Conclusion and Implications .....	172
	References .....	173
<b>8</b>	<b>Peer Mentoring with Beginning EFL Teachers</b> .....	<b>175</b>
8.1	Introduction .....	175
8.2	Beginning EFL Teachers .....	176
8.3	Theoretical Background .....	178
8.4	The Study .....	179
8.4.1	Research Design .....	179
8.4.2	Research Context .....	179
8.4.3	Setting and Implementation of the Peer Mentoring Program .....	180
8.4.4	Data Collection and Analysis .....	181

8.5	Results and Discussion .....	182
8.5.1	Engagement Between Beginning Teachers and Their Peer Mentors .....	182
8.5.2	Mentoring Programs Increased the Participants' Self-Reflection on Their Teaching Practice.....	184
8.5.3	Psychological Support.....	187
8.5.4	Tensions.....	189
8.6	Conclusion .....	190
	References.....	192
<b>9</b>	<b>Issues of Implementation of Peer Mentoring for Pre-service/Inservice Teachers.....</b>	<b>197</b>
9.1	Peer Mentoring Attributes.....	197
9.2	Peer Mentoring Matching .....	201
9.3	Peer Mentoring Training.....	202
9.4	Peer Mentoring Problems .....	206
9.5	Conclusion .....	207
	References.....	207
<b>10</b>	<b>Whether Mentoring in Teacher Education: Final Thoughts .....</b>	<b>209</b>
10.1	Introduction.....	209
10.2	Models of Mentoring .....	210
10.3	Conditions for Effective Mentoring.....	211
10.4	Move Forward.....	212
	References.....	214

# Chapter 1

## The EFL Context in Vietnam and East Asia

**Abstract** This chapter provides a brief overview of the current situation of English as a foreign language teaching in Vietnam and stresses the need for reforms in in-service and pre-service teacher education. It argues that many of the issues found in language education in Vietnam are also common to other Asian contexts.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the current situation of English as foreign language (EFL) teaching in Vietnam. Then, I identify the central role that pre-service and in-service EFL teacher education play in English language development in Vietnam, followed by a discussion of the need for changes in pre-service teacher education, and in-service teacher professional development. The discussion of these issues and of mentoring is then widened to the Asian EFL context and the recurring themes found in the region are highlighted.

### 1.1 English Language Teaching in Vietnam

#### 1.1.1 *Historical Background*

Given that language is highly socio-political, economically, and ideologically bounded, the position of foreign languages in Vietnam has been treated differently at different historical stages. It depends much on the government's priority in political relations. In the 1880s, for example, French was popular in Vietnam education system as a result of the French colonial establishment (K. T. Bui, 2003; Do, 2006, September). Post 1954 when the French withdrew from Vietnam, the Vietnamese language flourished throughout the North because the government implemented national campaigns called "Giao Duc La Quoc Sach Hang Dau" (education is the national priority) and "Xa Hoi Hoa Giao Duc" (socialization of education). During the years of the American War (1954–1975), French and English were mostly taught in the educational system in South Vietnam. This period saw a shift from French to English language usage as the impact of the American political influence. However, French still played a role in the administration (Wright, 2002). The two foreign



languages were considered to be the language of the invaders in the north, a notion that was dramatically supported by Russia and China. Chinese and Russian involvement in the North impacted on the government's policies regarding the teaching and learning of Russian and Chinese. Thus, during this period, Chinese and Russian replaced French in secondary and tertiary colleges and English language teaching did not receive much attention in the North. In 1975, when the Communist Party won the right to unify the country following the complete withdrawal of the American forces in the South, "the dominance of Russian as the main foreign language, and the decline of English as well as other languages in the educational system" (Do, 2006, p. 1) was marked. Denham (1992) notes that a long period after reunification after 1975, different foreign languages had different roles in the language education. At high school, 15% students studied French, 25% English; and 60% students studied Russian. Although English and French were taught to some degree, Russian was the most powerful and popular foreign language during this period when Vietnam was politically influenced by Soviet. In 1979, diplomatic relations between Vietnam and China deteriorated as a result of the border dispute between the two countries. Consequently, the Chinese language together with French and English almost completely disappeared (Wright, 2002). Some years later, Russian language usage started declining with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. In 1986 Vietnam enacted its open-door policy, finally stopping the long period of isolation.

Beginning in 1986 with 'Doi Moi', Vietnam began to open up its economy and its relationships with the West. The role of English has been dramatically increasing (T. T. N. Bui & Nguyen, 2016; H. T. M. Nguyen, 2012). The 1990s saw the growing realization that foreign languages were a key factor in the facilitation of change. In particular, the teaching and learning of English was increasingly being seen as a 'world language' (Brutt-Griffler, 2002) and as such, was becoming more popular and widespread. Over time, English language teaching and learning has gained in status and in domains of use.

Over the past decade, English teaching has been used as the main foreign language in the education system. This contrasts with the pre 'Doi Moi' language policies which considered Russian the preferred language. Thus, the positions of English, and the attitudes toward it, have changed greatly over the last 30 years. Of the major foreign languages taught in the Vietnamese education system, the government has emphasized the role of English as integral to sustain Vietnam's socio-economic development. This leads to a growing recognition of English as the preferred foreign language in Vietnam nowadays (H. Bui, 2005; Denham, 1992; Do, 2006, September; V. C. Le, 2007a; X. V. Nguyen, 2003; Wright, 2002). As a result, the teaching and learning of English as a compulsory school subject has increased at all levels. English language proficiency has become a prerequisite for further study and employment. Primary English was introduced as an elective subject in 1996. Starting from the second semester of Year 3, teachers take two 40-min periods a week (H. T. M. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2007). According to 2013 statistics from MOET (MOET, 2013a, 2013b), there are an estimated 22 million English language learners in school of all types and levels of education in Vietnam