What is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers?

Vivienne Claire Mackisack

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Abstract

Preservice teacher education has long relied on mentor teachers to support and guide preservice teachers' learning during practicum. Much has been written about who these mentor teachers should be and what they should know and be able to do. Becoming a mentor teacher is a shift from being a teacher of school students to being a teacher of school students and a mentor of adult learning. A professional and a personal transition occurs: the teacher is developing a new sense of them-self. Even though mentor teachers are recognised as important in preservice teacher education, and teachers are often asked to take on the mentor role, little is known about what it is like for teachers to experience this transition from teacher to teacher *and* mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

This thesis presents the lived experiences of six teachers who were becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

A hermeneutic phenomenological approach was taken to gathering and analysing data from a series of semistructured interviews during a longitudinal study. As the researcher, I took a cyclic, reflexive approach to interpreting the descriptions of the participants' experiences. Initially my focus was on details, however as I grew as a phenomenological researcher, I began to move from knowing to interpreting and *being in* each experience with the participants. In line with the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, I have found meaning in these experiences and presented my interpretations as stories and allegories in this thesis.

My interpretations indicate that there is much to be known about what it is like for teachers to experience the transition from teacher to teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers. It is important to understand the way that new mentor teachers interpret and navigate familiar and unfamiliar expectations, emotions and circumstances, and manage tensions between their teaching and mentoring roles. These understandings are necessary in order to provide appropriately targeted support and professional development for teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers in the context of their work.

I invite each person who reads this thesis to reflexively develop their own understanding of what they read so that all of our understandings can be added to a shared and dynamic body of knowledge of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

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This has not been an easy journey. But I have never been on this journey alone.

I have been privileged to have had the company of six dedicated teachers who generously shared their experiences with me as they were becoming mentor teachers. During the pilot study, three committed, experienced mentor teachers shared their experiences and advice with me. I have learnt so much more than I could ever have imagined from you. Your stories are now part of my story and I will always be grateful to you all.

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Part I

Chapter 1. Introduction

There is a point in time when an individual teacher decides to *become* a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. They may have been asked to take on the role or they may have offered to do so. Becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers might have been a long-held desire or the teacher may not have considered the option before. Regardless of how they come to this point or whether they fully understand the professional and personal ramifications, they make a conscious decision to move from being a teacher of students to becoming a teacher of students *and* a mentor for adult preservice teachers at the same time. In their examination of new teacher educators' experiences, J. Murray and Male (2005) discussed the differences between teaching students and teaching *adult* preservice teachers. They described the differences as relating to roles that are "first order" (those activities that are related to teaching students) and "second order" (those activities that are related to mentoring adults). So, by making the decision to become a mentor for preservice teachers, a teacher is taking on a second order role, and thus deciding to change who they are and who they are *becoming* in their professional life.

When a teacher decides to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, they choose to extend who they are becoming as an educator and they choose to extend the context/s in which that becoming occurs. As a teacher, the context in which they work is related to their work with their students. When they become a mentor teacher, they begin to interact with other contexts such as the preservice teacher education provider. It is clear from literature, that when a teacher makes this choice, something changes in the development of their identity. They have a new and different sense of self and personal and professional agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Identity development is a dynamic process (Buchanan & Olsen, 2018; Ovens et al., 2016), and so, even the notion of "being" a teacher is not a fixed concept. Being a teacher involves the demonstration of particular types of knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006); being a teacher also involves deliberate and unconscious reflection on, and adjustment of, knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Thus, when an individual is being a teacher, they are also involved in a process of becoming a teacher. In this sense, when a teacher decides to become a mentor, they make a shift from being an individual who was, and is, already *becoming* a teacher to being an

individual who is now also *becoming* a mentor. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2010) coined the term "teacher-mentor" (p. 722) to highlight this point. The hyphen is crucial. It emphasises the whole person: the teacher and mentor as one.

It is important to clarify the use of the terms mentor and mentor teacher in this thesis because the ways that people use these terms can vary. Moreover, a range of other terms are used within New Zealand and internationally to refer to the teacher who supports preservice teachers' learning during practicum (see also, Mentor Teacher and Other Terms, Chapter 4). A scholar's choice about which term to use in literature can depend on a number of things, including the nature of the programme, the theoretical position of the preservice teacher education provider involved, or policy directions within individual jurisdictions. In an attempt to avoid confusion and support readability, I have used the terms *mentor*, *mentor teacher* and/or *mentor teacher for preservice teachers* throughout this thesis to identify the "teacher in the field" who supports learning during practicum. Mentor and mentor teacher are also used when mentoring for beginning teachers, interns and other colleagues is discussed in this thesis. It is important to note that this means the term "mentor" might be used to refer to a role or position where "mentoring" is not taking place. This is further discussed in Chapter 4.

This thesis presents the lived experiences of six participants who were becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Mentor teachers for preservice teachers guide our essentially naive, frequently passionate, novice teachers towards their careers in teaching. They support preservice teachers' learning during the professional learning experiences (practicum) of preservice teacher education programmes and at the same time they continue to be responsible for the learning of their assigned class of students. They are at once teachers and mentor teachers. These mentor teachers may believe that they know what is expected of them but there is no reliable way of knowing whether they all understand the expectations of the role or not. They may be enacting an apprenticeship model of mentoring (Maynard & Furlong, 1995), an inquiry-learner model (Timperley et al., 2017), a mixture of the two or another model altogether. When a teacher agrees to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, each individual develops their own strategies for finding out about the role and constructing how they will operate; they develop their own way of being. This process is the focus of this thesis.

Turning to the Phenomenon – Beginning My Story

My memories of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers are of relationships, uncertainty, loneliness, admiration and hope. I had little understanding of the mentoring role or who or what I was expected to "be," patchy memories of being a preservice teacher and the collegial introduction to my career. I had no induction or mentoring related to mentoring others. My memories of being a mentor for mentor teachers continue to be of relationships, inconsistency, uncertainty, admiration and hopefulness, but I am not lonely. My experiences now are also of effective pedagogy, community and belief that together our profession can do better.

As I reflect on a career spanning 40 years, I see that mentoring and becoming a mentor have remained a persistent theme for me. I became a teacher through fortunate, accidental circumstances. Late in my high school years I realised that my propensity to faint at the sight of blood meant that nursing was not an option. Many of my friends were applying for entry to Teachers' College and so I applied too. Beyond secretarial and retail roles, I was not aware of any alternative. As a 70s teenager in small-town New Zealand, ongoing learning and career education are not a feature of any of my school memories. Although I generally enjoyed my school years, there is no one teacher whose professional practice influenced my decision. Becoming a teacher just made the most sense at the time.

At the time of my training, the focus at Teachers' College was on developing the whole person. My lasting impressions are of the cafeteria and, among many who were or have since become well-known in their fields, of only one lecturer who introduced me to pedagogy and sound practices. I remember two practica and one mentor teacher: both from my final year. We began the final year with a weekly day in our "full-control" class. I loved these days. When I became the teacher for a period of several weeks during the second school term, I felt well inducted and well prepared. I received positive feedback about my work during this practicum. At the end of our third year, each preservice teacher had a short final practicum placement. Everyone I knew was placed with mentor teachers who offered them the opportunity to absorb as much as they could and benefit as widely as possible from a whole-school experience. While this was not the official purpose of this placement, there was a general understanding amongst preservice teachers that this was what was to be expected. The mentor teacher I was placed with had other ideas. She expected that I would release her for 2 weeks so that she could reorganise the library. I barely saw her during the placement. I felt that this was unfair and begrudgingly did as I was told – and I know that my

dissatisfaction showed. I remember a sense of frustration and anger that I had no right of reply to her poor report of me following this experience. And so, my passionate interest in close communication between school placement settings and preservice teacher education providers, consistent practicum experiences for all preservice teachers, and the value of mentoring and mentor teachers has early foundations.

I began teaching in 1981 in well-functioning schools with clear processes and I consistently felt well-cared for and supported. I expect that during my training I learnt to make connections between what I had studied at school and effective organisation for delivery; and that I began my teaching career emulating those who had taught me. During my early years of teaching, each curriculum area was supported by manuals and handbooks. I remember feeling very proud when I received my full set; it felt like gaining some sort of symbol of recognition. I followed the lead of those around me, "felt" like a teacher and received affirmation in my roles. However, I cannot identify any specific feedback that communicated why or how I was performing effectively or what I could do to improve my practice.

Between 1985 and 1997 I worked in a range of part-time teaching positions alongside raising a family and studying for a Diploma in the Education of Students with Special Teaching Needs. This all seemed rather haphazard at the time; however, in hindsight it offered me a wonderful variety of teaching and learning experiences. Through my reflection on my teaching experiences and on my role as a parent I began to learn about what I valued about being a teacher. But I was still without a framework to determine success. At one time I remember thinking that my experiences were so disjointed that I really didn't know how to teach properly. I remember thinking that I was the proverbial "jack of all trades and master of none" and I remember using that description when I talked with others. I still recall and recount that feeling when I work with preservice teachers and other mentor teachers.

Moving into full-time teaching in 1998, I continued to observe and critique a range of different approaches to classroom practice and leadership and to refine my theories. It has always been my belief that the relationship we establish with each student is fundamental to effective teaching. I had a natural preference towards formative assessment and learning conversations. I took leadership opportunities as they were presented and I was asked to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I agreed because I felt that declining would somehow indicate that I thought I wasn't up to it.

I had been a teacher for 18 years when I first became a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I was excited and nervous. I knew that my preservice teacher would bring documentation that would tell the two of us what to do and that someone from the preservice teacher education provider would visit to check on how things were going. I knew that I would need to make "space" for the preservice teacher alongside me, it was important that we "got along" and I would need to model and observe practice. I knew that I wanted to be a better mentor teacher than some of those I had had when I was a preservice teacher, and I wanted to be as good as others. I loved being part of someone else's learning and I wanted to support the development of new teachers. At the same time, I had no idea who or what I was supposed to be. I genuinely didn't think that I was "up to it" and I was worried that I wouldn't *be* "enough." I agreed anyway – because I had been asked.

My own awareness of the importance of mentor teachers for preservice teachers was sown during my own time as a preservice teacher. It was cultivated as a novice mentor teacher and developed into a deep-rooted interest during my development as a mentor for mentor teachers and more recently teacher-researcher. My thesis for the Master of Education investigated the benefits and challenges of undertaking the role of mentor teacher for preservice teachers (Mackisack, 2011). I have my own perception of what being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was like for me, but that experience was some time ago and it was mine.

A Great Deal of Literature but Limited Understanding About Mentor Teachers

There is a great deal of literature about mentor teachers for preservice teachers: what everybody thinks these mentor teachers do, could do or should do (see for example, Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000); what mentor teachers for preservice teachers think they do (see for example, Fairbanks et al., 2000; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005); and how preservice teachers feel about their mentor teachers and their work (see for example, Fairbanks et al., 2000; Rajuan et al., 2008). It is not difficult to find literature about mentor teachers for preservice teachers' circumstances and relationships. However, studies that focus on the experiences of new mentor teachers for preservice teachers or "mentors to be" appear to be less common (Gardiner & Weisling, 2018; Whatman & MacDonald, 2017).

Becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers can be emotionally demanding and conflicting. New mentor teachers are faced with new thoughts about the person they think they are (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009) and who and what they are becoming. These thoughts all relate

to the mentor teachers' developing identities. Bullough (2005) believed that teachers' mentor identities are "subsumed under teacher identities" (p. 153). In his study, Bullough used Gee's (2000) "ways" to view identity (see Identity Development: The Nature of Becoming, Chapter 4 for further explanation). Bullough (2005) found that elements of his participant's nature-identity (that which we are by nature) and discourse-identity (that which we are because of how we are recognised as a teacher) shaped her mentoring decisions. Rodgers and Scott (2008) cautioned that a focus simply on contexts and relationships will address only the outward aspects of identity construction. The "internal, meaning-making aspects" (p. 733) of identity development must be communicated through stories and emotions. These stories are necessary in order that mentor teachers for preservice teachers, and those who appoint, guide, support and provide their professional development, can connect with each other and understand what is occurring. Yet, as Whatman and MacDonald (2017) and Gardiner and Weisling (2018) reported, the voices of mentor teachers for preservice teachers about their own experiences seem to be largely unheard.

Orienting to the Question and Positioning Myself Within the Study

When I began this study, I had been involved in preservice teacher education at a tertiary institution and working with preservice teachers during practicum for 3 years. I had held the position of practicum coordinator (preparing preservice teachers for practicum and liaising with their mentor teachers and visiting lecturers) for 2 of those years. I had recently been appointed to lead the 3-year undergraduate preservice teacher education programme and that position included professional oversight of practicum coordination. Accordingly, I was making decisions that influenced the appointment, guidance, support and professional development of mentor teachers for preservice teachers. I was deeply concerned that there seemed to be a great deal of discussion about mentor teachers for preservice teachers but very little that provided insight into who they were and what mentoring preservice teachers was like for them. I was particularly interested in the time when a teacher makes the decision and begins the process of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I believed this to be a formative time for mentor teachers' beliefs, practices and aspirations related to mentoring. However, while I was both personally and professionally invested in this area of study, my ability to undertake research related to mentor teachers for preservice teachers was limited by my relationship to them through my leadership roles. And so, I employed a research assistant to gather the data (see Chapter 5, from Using a Research Assistant onwards, and Chapter 6).

The Aim of This Study and the Research Question

As a mentor for preservice teachers and for mentor teachers for preservice teachers, I know that relying on my own perception of what becoming a mentor teacher was like for me is not enough. I cannot assume that I know what it is like for other teachers to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I believe that it cannot be enough for *any* preservice teacher education provider or representative, policy maker or school leader to rely on their own perception of what becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is like. I see a gap in our understanding, where assumptions are being made, which led to the genesis of this study. Therefore, the central question of this study is: What is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers; what is their *lived* experience?

Through this study I sought to know the lived experience of others as they transitioned from being a teacher to being a teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers: to interpret the "texts" of these mentor teachers' lives in order to broaden and enrich my understanding (van Manen, 1997).

It is also my aim that this study will contribute to filling a gap in the literature where lived experiences of mentor teachers for preservice teachers does not appear to be well represented. And so, this study presents a hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation: giving voice to the lived experience of becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Outline of This Thesis

This thesis is arranged in three parts. In Part I, Chapter 1: Introduction has provided an overview of my background and personal connection with this research, and outlined the central question of the study. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the political and practical contexts in which mentor teachers for preservice teachers work in New Zealand; Chapter 3 identifies the theoretical understandings which underpin this research. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 form Part II of this thesis. Chapter 4 reviews the literature related to mentoring and becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. The hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the research is described in Chapter 5. The methodological details related to data gathering and analysis, and ethical considerations for this study are described in Chapter 6. In Part III, Chapters 7 and 8 present the findings, discussion and conclusions arising from the study. Chapter 7 is focused on the analysis of the data gathered about the lived experiences of the mentor teachers for preservice teachers involved in this study. In line with the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, these experiences are presented as reflexive writing in order to

enable the reader to engage with the possible meaning of these experiences. The thesis concludes in Chapter 8 with a discussion which links my reflexive writing and the literature, conclusions arising from the study, reflections on the limitations of this study and implications for future research.

Chapter 2. The New Zealand Context

Practicum Requirements in Preservice Teacher Education

The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (TCANZ) is the professional body for the teaching profession in New Zealand. Over the last 3 decades, TCANZ has been variously called the New Zealand Teachers Council, the Education Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (ECANZ) and TCANZ. In this thesis, I will use The Council to refer to this professional body under all three structures and titles. The Council is a statutory entity and, as such, has a number of legislative functions. Setting the requirements for, and approval of, preservice teacher education programmes is one of these functions (TCANZ, 2021b). Through The Council's approval and monitoring process, preservice teacher education providers are held accountable for providing effective practicum opportunities for preservice teachers. The Council has published various documents outlining requirements for programme approval in recent years. For example, their *Approval, Review and Monitoring Processes and Requirements for Initial Teacher Education Programmes* document was first published in 2010, with successive edits being published through to 2016 (ECANZ, 2016).

In each version of the *Approval, Review and Monitoring Processes and Requirements for Initial Teacher Education Programmes* document, The Council explicitly stated that there was a key role for mentor teachers for preservice teachers but they did not give details about the role. Instead, The Council left this to preservice teacher education providers, requiring that mentor teachers' roles and responsibilities be outlined in their documentation. The preservice teacher education providers were also required to provide appropriate professional development for the mentor teachers who worked with their preservice teachers – although "appropriate" was not defined by The Council (ECANZ, 2016). In 2019, The Council introduced new approval, monitoring and review processes and requirements (Requirements; TCANZ, 2019). Again, The Council stipulated that the mentor teachers' roles and responsibilities were to be clearly outlined and that professional learning opportunities must be available for mentor teachers. The Requirements detailed a number of ways that preservice teacher education providers and school colleagues must work together to support preservice teacher education (TCANZ, 2019). For example, there must be negotiated and shared understanding of the purpose of the practicum, and assessment of the preservice teacher's progress during the practicum must be based on expectations that

are shared by all parties. The role of mentor teachers for preservice teachers in this work was implied rather than explicitly described and there was no requirement in either the 2010 or the 2019 document that mentor teachers must engage in professional learning opportunities. There is no detail about how or when mentor teachers for preservice teachers would access support for their learning as mentors, even though they are expected to take direct responsibility for facilitating learning for the preservice teachers during the practicum.

Increased Attention to Preservice Teacher Education

The Council's development of vision documents and approval and requirement processes has occurred during a period of increasing attention to preservice teacher education in New Zealand: at the policy level and in literature. A number of papers have been commissioned by the Ministry of Education and The Council since the turn of the century; see for example, Cameron and Baker (2004), Kane et al. (2005), Aitken et al. (2013), Timperley (2013), and Whatman and MacDonald (2017).

During the first decade of this century, Cameron and Baker (2004) reviewed literature and Kane et al. (2005) composed a summary of providers' documented approaches to preservice teacher education qualifications in New Zealand. Cameron and Baker (2004) found that the literature they reviewed focused – largely positively – on "perceptions of the purposes of practicum experience; perceived roles of participants; relationships between participants; practicum experiences usually from the perspectives of preservice teachers; and analysis of [mentor teachers for preservice teachers'] mentoring practices" (p. 43). However, while Cameron and Baker found that the research generally described the practicum for preservice teachers in a positive light, mentor teachers themselves did not fare so favourably in the review. Cameron and Baker noted a somewhat critical underlying theme in the literature, critiquing how mentor teachers for preservice teachers should "be" and what they should "do." Kane et al. (2005) found that, in general, mentor teacher for preservice teachers were selected and offered meetings, workshops or formal courses about mentoring. However, Kane et al. did not identify what these meetings, workshops and formal courses focused on. While Kane et al. found some evidence of preservice teacher education providers and mentor teachers working in tandem during the practicum (and preservice teacher education providers acknowledging the time and commitment required by the task), she also noted concern about the "quality" of mentor teachers available for preservice teachers. In

particular, she identified the "challenge of ensuring that the [mentor teachers] working with student teachers in schools have appropriate experience and qualifications" (p. 206).

Shift in Focus from Preservice Teacher Education to Induction and Mentoring

While a further report by Rivers (2006) presented an overview of the Ministry of Education's and The Council's research programme into preservice teacher education, induction and mentoring for preservice teachers moved into the spotlight in 2005 (TCANZ, 2021a). The Council implemented the first *Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teachers* (the Guidelines) in 2011 (see ECANZ, 2015). Since that time, employers have been required to base the programme that they provide for beginning teachers on these guidelines. The Guidelines outline "key areas of knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for high quality mentoring" (ECANZ, 2015, p. 17). These key areas include "pedagogy of teacher education and of mentoring" (p. 17). Specific emphasis has been given to transforming practice using an "educative 'mentoring' approach … [involving] skilled facilitation of 'learning conversations' focusing on evidence of teachers' practice" (p. 4). While employers have been required to base the programme that they provide for beginning teachers on these guidelines, there have been no parallel requirements for preservice teacher education.

Renewed Attention on Preservice Teacher Education

Seven years after Rivers's (2006) summary was published, and Timperley (2013) and Aitken et al. (2013) published companion papers to "inform policy and promote discussion on programme development" (p. 4) for preservice teacher education and the mentoring of early-career (preservice and beginning) teachers. Both papers focused on what early-career teachers were expected to do, be and *cause*, for example: engaged students who would be learning in individualised, stimulating, culturally safe, collaborative, respectful, learning environments (Aitken et al., 2013; Timperley, 2013). Timperley (2013) envisaged that the process of learning to become a teacher was best undertaken in "carefully constructed learning communities" (p. 22). Thus, while the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers was not stated explicitly in either paper, what they were expected to cause was apparent by inference. For preservice teachers to be able to increasingly learn from, and for, practice, there was an expectation that their mentor teachers would contribute to that carefully constructed community. Timperley recognised the developing focus on collaborations between preservice teacher education providers and schools and cautioned

that establishing effective partnerships for preservice teaching learning would require "a new set of conditions … based on a new set of understandings" (p. 37).

Whatman and MacDonald's (2017) more recent literature review focused on the practicum aspect of preservice teacher education, outlining elements of high-quality practicum experiences in particular. They found eight "essential ingredients" to a high-quality practicum – and the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers can be found (specifically or inferred) in seven of them. Whatman and MacDonald identified the need for mentor teachers to clearly understand the practicum requirements and their role (and the role of others) during the practicum, be fully prepared, integrate theory and practice (and assist preservice teachers to do the same), partner (for co-learning and assessment) with the others involved in the practicum, and contribute to a community of learning with and for preservice teachers. Whatman and MacDonald concluded that broad-scale transformation and collective, consistent commitment was required if these essential ingredients were to be realised in preservice teacher education – with "shared acceptance of responsibility" (p. 46).

In 2017, The Council published its vision for preservice teacher education, documenting decisions that had been made as the result of consultation with "the profession" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 3). In this document, The Council declared its commitment to "create system-level change in ITE, built on local collaborative relationships between stakeholders" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 3). It noted feedback that had been received about the key role expected of mentor teachers for preservice teachers and the possible additional pressure on workload that might result for mentor teachers. The Council also noted that it had received calls to "support the development of quality practica arrangements and partnerships" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) including the provision of professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers.

The Council reiterated the value of expert mentoring during practicum in its vision document and it highlighted the importance of professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers for preservice teachers. It committed to ensuring that there would be research-informed "improvements in the integration of theory and practice, and increased professional learning opportunities" for those involved (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 4). The Council envisioned that its next steps would be to "make recommendations about the capability and ongoing development" of mentor teachers for preservice teachers (it is not clear in this document whether "capability" infers *current* or *requisite* competence), "consider how" they could support the work of mentor teachers and "work with the Ministry of Education to provide

advice to Government" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) about what might be needed in order to achieve this. Specific actions that might see consistent, nationwide support for mentor teachers for preservice teachers eventuate are not detailed in The Council's vision document. However, while there are no national guidelines or standards for mentoring preservice teachers, all teachers are required to adhere to the *Code of Professional Responsibility* (The Code) and *Standards for the Teaching Profession* (The Standards; ECANZ, 2017a). Additionally, *The Leadership Strategy for the Teaching Profession of Aotearoa New Zealand* (The Strategy) and the *Educational Leadership Capability Framework* (The Framework) were published by ECANZ in 2018. These documents are relevant to mentoring because together they set out the expectations related to conduct and effective teaching practice and ways that leadership expertise can be developed for every teacher in New Zealand.

Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession

The Code and Standards frame teacher education provision in New Zealand. The Code is intended to be aspirational, and conveys "expectations of conduct and integrity" (ECANZ, 2017a, p. 6) inclusive of commitment to all learners in New Zealand and to the profession as a whole. The Standards outline The Council's expectations related to knowledge, relationships, leadership and professional learning and development. For example, teachers are required to use inquiry to "impact and improve on the learning and achievement of all learners" (p. 18). They are required to have and develop knowledge, understanding, approaches, strategies and expectations that enable them to be excellent teachers and leaders of learning. There is a stated expectation related to ongoing professional learning and working as research-informed practitioners. Moreover, members of the profession are required to demonstrate leadership and responsibility within their school and contribute to a "learning-focused culture" (p. 20).

The Leadership Strategy | Rautaki Kaihautū and Educational Leadership Capability Framework

The Strategy and The Framework inform and guide leadership development opportunities for all teachers in New Zealand. The notion of a "learning-focused culture" within schools (ECANZ, 2017a, p. 20) can also be found in The Strategy (ECANZ, 2018b) and The Framework (ECANZ, 2018a). The Strategy focuses on "growth and development of leadership capability for all registered teachers … across all the mediums of teaching and

learning" (p. 4). The Framework is a "set of [nine] core capabilities" intended to provide a guide for schools as they develop "shared understandings of what leadership in different spheres of influence looks like in practice" (ECANZ, 2018a, p. 3). The Strategy reveals the intent that "professional learning will support all forms of leadership across the professional pathway, from initial education through to induction and mentoring, leadership within a range of teaching roles, and specific leadership roles" (ECANZ, 2018b, p. 16). Additionally, some elements of mentoring (such as reflection, self-regulation, and inquiry-based and collaborative learning) are mentioned as being important for "leadership learning" (ECANZ, 2018b, p. 16). However, mentors themselves appear to be only mentioned in relation to how leaders might draw on their support and expertise. Among the references provided in The Strategy (ECANZ, 2018b), only one relates specifically to "the educational leadership capacity of mentors working with new teachers and … factors that support and hinder the development of this leadership capacity" (Thornton, 2014, p. 18).

In the Education Council's (2018a) Framework, one capability relates to "building and sustaining collective leadership and professional community." However, there is no indication in The Framework that the professional community being referred to includes preservice teachers or that mentoring preservice teachers might be an element of contributing to an engaging, active and achieving community.

The stated purpose of The Framework is to "shape and critically reflect on … individual pathways, overall practice … and to inform decisions about priorities for new professional learning … so that the leadership capacity in our educational organisations can keep growing" (ECANZ, 2018a, p. 3). There is a strong theme in this document related to strength, capability and capacity for individual organisations. The Strategy (ECANZ, 2018b) states that considerations related to leadership development should include the exploration of teachers' "potential as mentors … within and beyond their own organisations" (p. 17). However, there is no mention in The Framework of the value of leaders contributing to preservice teacher education or that the development of effective mentoring knowledge, skills and dispositions is viewed as part of organisational strength and capacity or leadership capability.

Implications for Mentor Teachers for Preservice Teachers

The increasing policy focus on preservice teacher education has impacted teacher education programme design and delivery, especially since the 2019 Requirements were promulgated.

Preservice teacher education programmes cannot be approved for delivery until conditions related to authentic partnerships with school communities are addressed. As a result, pressure on New Zealand's preservice teacher education programmes for consistency, quality and practice-based learning has been growing for some time. This pressure on preservice teacher education programmes has resulted in increasing responsibility being passed on to those in the role of mentor teacher for preservice teachers. However, policy documents such as *Our Vision: Initial Teacher Education 2021* (ECANZ, 2017b,) and The Requirements (TCANZ, 2019) only outline general obligations. Policy-makers have not yet offered explicit clarification or universal direction for preservice teacher education providers, school leaders or mentor teachers related to the mentoring of preservice teachers.

Expectations related to early-career mentoring can be gleaned from the current *Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teachers* (2015), *Code of Professional Responsibility*, *and Standards for the Teaching Profession* (ECANZ, 2017a) and, to a lesser degree, from the *Educational Leadership Capability Framework* (ECANZ, 2018a). However, at the present time, there are no stated criteria for the professional relationships, knowledge and understanding required for the role of mentor teacher within preservice teacher education. This means that there is no mandated set of standards to guide a mentor teacher's work with a preservice teacher in New Zealand.

Mentor teachers for preservice teachers in primary schools in New Zealand are generally employed as teachers by the school board of trustees and remunerated by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education & The New Zealand Educational Institute [NZEI] Te Riu Roa, 2019). They are appointed to the mentor teacher role by school leadership and approved by the preservice teacher education provider. There is a contractual agreement under the Primary Teachers Collective Agreement (Ministry of Education & NZEI Te Riu Roa, 2019) that these mentor teachers will be paid an additional allowance for their work (Ministry of Education & NZEI Te Riu Roa, 2019). However, this collective agreement does not outline the work expected of a mentor teacher for preservice teachers either. Even though the Ministry of Education, school leadership and preservice teacher education providers are all involved in engaging mentor teachers for preservice teachers (and there are guidelines related to mentoring beginning teachers), there remains a great deal of uncertainty for these mentor teachers for preservice teachers about what their role really is and who they truly report to.

Summary

In Chapter 2 I have provided an overview of the political and practical contexts in which mentor teachers for preservice teachers work in New Zealand. Chapter 3 introduces the beginning of my journey as a hermeneutic phenomenological researcher, and describes the theoretical understandings which underpin this research. Chapter 3 provides an introduction to the hermeneutic phenomenological approach and descrirbes the phenomenological concept of experience.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Understandings Which Underpin This Research

Introduction

In hindsight, it is not surprising that when I began this study, I did not have the language to articulate what I wanted to know and I had not thought about the layers of reflection and understanding that are involved in interpreting how "we exist and perceive our world" (Gadamer, 2008, p. 29) through language. I had been a teacher in primary and secondary schools for over 35 years. The language of "doing" was ingrained. van Manen (1997) noted that "the language by way of which teachers are encouraged to interpret themselves and reflect on their living with students is thoroughly imbued by hope, and yet it is almost exclusively a language of doing – it lacks *being* [emphasis added]" (p. 122). As I began to discover a language for being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, I began to turn to the fundamental question of my study (van Manen, 1997). I was able to progress from full and personal investment, to full and personal investment *and* involvement as a researcher (Magrini, 2012; van Manen, 1997). I cared deeply about how I was in the world as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers and I cared deeply about understanding the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

By engaging in this research, I began a journey of discovery about the world of mentor teachers for preservice teachers; a world to which I belong. Both Magrini (2012) and van Manen (1997) have drawn on Heidegger's philosophies about being in the world (see for example, Heidegger, 1953/1962). Heidegger (1953/1962) believed that a person can only be perceived in relation to the world in which they exist. He introduced the German word *Dasien* – "literally 'being-there'" (p. 27). Heidegger did not see Dasien as a state of singularity for each individual; rather, he emphasised the notion of interweaving: "the situated meaning of a human in the world" (Laverty, 2003, p. 24). From this perspective, *others* cannot be taken to just mean other people; each individual is included in this notion and so while I am an individual, I remain part of Heidegger's (1953/1962) others. As the researcher in this study, being in the world meant that my own experiences and the experiences of other mentor teachers for preservice teachers were our experiences; all of these experiences (past and present) were part of my being-there. Thus, I was able to more

and more deeply understand the realities of this phenomenon as I connected with and analysed the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

However, while I was fully and personally invested with a deep-rooted interest in the lived experiences of mentor teachers for preservice teachers (van Manen, 1997), was sure about my area of focus, and could express my research question from the outset, it took me some time to find the words to describe what I really wanted to know. During this time, I looked at a range of qualitative methodologies. It was this process of going back and forth between my research question and literature about mentoring, adult learning, identity and qualitative methodologies that enabled me to truly orient myself to my fundamental question (van Manen, 1997). I realised that I did not want to examine and generalise the minutiae of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers (van Manen, 2017). I was not interested in investigating and reporting on the sociocultural theories that might be apparent when a teacher takes on the role of mentor teacher for preservice teachers. While scholars such as Clandinin and Caine (2008) advised that narrative inquiry would be an appropriate way to tell the participants' stories, I did not want to report from the outside of the experience. Like Koopman (2015), I wanted to understand the experiences from the *inside* – to explore with the mentor teachers for preservice teachers what it means to "become." The process of finding what I truly wanted to know – and the appropriate methodology to accomplish this – was often frustrating; however, I now see that it was invaluable for me. In a sense, it started a journey that guided me to a hermeneutic phenomenological approach using qualitative methodology.

The Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach

Hermeneutic phenomenology is part of the interpretivist research tradition. Interpretivist researchers work to understand and convey a phenomenon as it presents itself (Benner, 2008; Bryman, 2008). Taking this position meant that I needed to understand the relationship between my research question, my participants, myself, and hermeneutic phenomenology.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a term that has been used to describe a philosophical stance, an overarching perspective, a range of research approaches, and even a movement (Spiegelberg, 1994). Spiegelberg (1994) believed that, "the underlying assumption of a unified philosophy subscribed to by all so-called phenomenologists is an illusion" (p. xxvii). Phenomenology is moving and its origins are varied. This means that the development of

phenomenology is shaped by its basic principles and the circumstances to which those principles are applied (Spiegelberg, 1994).

Phenomenological research aims to understand and describe lived experience (Adams & van Manen, 2008; Henriksson & Friesen, 2012) in rigorous and rich language, precisely as lived experiences give themselves (van Manen, 2016). van Manen (1997) described phenomenology as being, "in a broad sense, a philosophy or theory of the unique; it is interested in what is essentially not replaceable" in those experiences (p. 7). There is not one form of phenomenological research, but rather a variety of intellectual traditions and perspectives (for example, transcendental and hermeneutic) that have been developed and practised by a range of respected philosophers and scholars for more than a century (Adams & van Manen, 2008; Spiegelberg, 1994). Phenomenology is not without its sceptics though. It is no simple endeavour for one person to understand and describe the lived experience of another: to interpret an account of an experience and then represent meaning with integrity and authenticity (Peck, 2012; van Manen, 1997). As Adams and van Manen (2008) and Peck and Mummery (2018) advised, the participants and the researcher rely on, and are limited by, their own beliefs, judgements and emotional responses – and language. For some scholars, phenomenology does not have sufficient "scientific rigour" (Cope, 2014). However, others recognise its value (Adams & van Manen, 2008; Cope, 2014) in that, done well, phenomenology adds interpretive detail and understanding of the human experience, thus enhancing the evolving world of research.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Within the phenomenological sphere of research methods, hermeneutic phenomenology demands that lived experiences are analysed and described in a manner which takes account of the many realities involved in the participants' *and* the researcher's historical, intellectual, attitudinal, emotional and professional position (Adams & van Manen, 2008). Hermeneutic phenomenology is essentially an interpretive, reflexive writing endeavour (Laverty, 2003; van Manen, 1997); it is "as much a disposition and attitude as it is a distinct method or program for inquiry" (Henriksson & Friesen 2012, p. 1). The importance of reflexivity cannot be underestimated. Peck and Mummery (2018) raised an important caution against the belief that a researcher could simply identify what is meaningful and what is meant in a participant's individual description of their experience. Reflexivity is not merely reflecting. It is not the researcher's job to recognise and name experiences. It is the researcher's

responsibility to set aside their prior understandings and, through language, come to an intense understanding of the experience. Palaganas et al. (2017) maintained that, in qualitative research, reflexivity enables the researcher to be mindful of their own influence on the meanings that are drawn from lived experiences. Thus, reflexivity was an essential feature of this study, both with regard to my overall stance and my writing.

Given that I sought to understand and share what it is like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers (as opposed to the experience of becoming a different kind of mentor), I was drawn to van Manen's (1997) focus on understanding that which makes an experience unique. Van Manen emphasised the difference between a hermeneutic phenomenological approach and other similar (but inherently different) approaches (van Manen, 2017). For example, the hermeneutic phenomenological approach does not present stories to explain or analyse an experience, as a narrative study would (Clandinin, 2006), or generalise themes found within and across planned observations of experiences such as in empirical research (Patten & Galvan, 2019). Instead, it enables descriptions of lived experiences to be portrayed in ways that reveal the unique nature of the phenomenon so that new understandings and knowledge can be derived from what is presented.

As the researcher, I drew on my own recollections, perceptions of experience and theories in order to be open to learn from the lived experience of the participants in this study. I did not define a framework of preestablished theories. I followed the example of prominent researchers in the field of hermeneutic phenomenology. In particular I drew on Heidegger's (1953/1962) notion of Dasien, the importance that Gadamer (2008) placed on language, and van Manen's (1997) emphasis on that which is unique. Each of these elements of my approach are described in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis.

While my study was not specifically *about* practice, practice was part of the experience for the mentor teachers for preservice teachers involved in this study. van Manen (2007) asserted that "practice" is an indefinable concept and promoted a different way of knowing the practice of teachers – phenomenologically. Thus, rather than defining (and limiting; Peck, 2012) meaning, the hermeneutic phenomenologist's role is to explore and lay open the possible meaning of and within experiences of practice (van Manen, 2017). The overall purpose of laying the meaning of experience open in this way is to enable the reader to personally connect with what has been offered.

"Performing" Research

The phenomenological researcher's role can be compared to that of a poet (van Manen, 1997). Both the poet and the phenomenological researcher use language to "speak the world rather than abstractly speaking of it" (van Manen, 1997, p. 13), illuminating meaning from experience and involving the reader in a formative process of understanding the world (van Manen, 2007). Whether a poem can be "conflated with its author" (Novak, 2011, p. 189) through its performance (that is, whether it is autobiographical) or not, Novak (2011) asserted that it is the performing poet's action which "breaks down the boundaries between performance and everyday-life" (p. 190). This comparison between researcher and performing poet resonated with me, so I used the metaphor of performance to understand how hermeneutic phenomenological research might be undertaken.

I *performed* the research. It was my role, as the performer of the research, to attentively capture the reader's attention, to sensitively articulate the *authentic voice* of the mentor teachers in this study – and to do so using the appropriate approach. van Manen (1997) referred to Buytendijk's 1947 recount of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche's "Parable of the Madman" to illustrate the importance of approach and tools when seeking the true nature of human experiences. The madman in the parable expected a lit lantern to illuminate "real human beings" during broad daylight (van Manen, 1997, p. 5). For van Manen (1997), the madman's inability to truly find what he was looking for demonstrated the importance of "first finding the lantern": employing the right approach at the right time with the right methodology. Moreover, van Manen (1997) believed that there should be synergy between an intense interest held by the researcher and the research methodology. He believed that hermeneutic phenomenology is a "philosophy of the personal, the individual, which we pursue against the background of an understanding of the evasive character of the *logos* of *other*, the *whole*, the *communal*, or the *social"* (p. 7). I wanted to find the real essence of experiences for real human beings and become an integral "interested and subjective actor" within the research itself (Lester, 1999, p. 1). It was therefore understandable that I was drawn to van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach during this study.

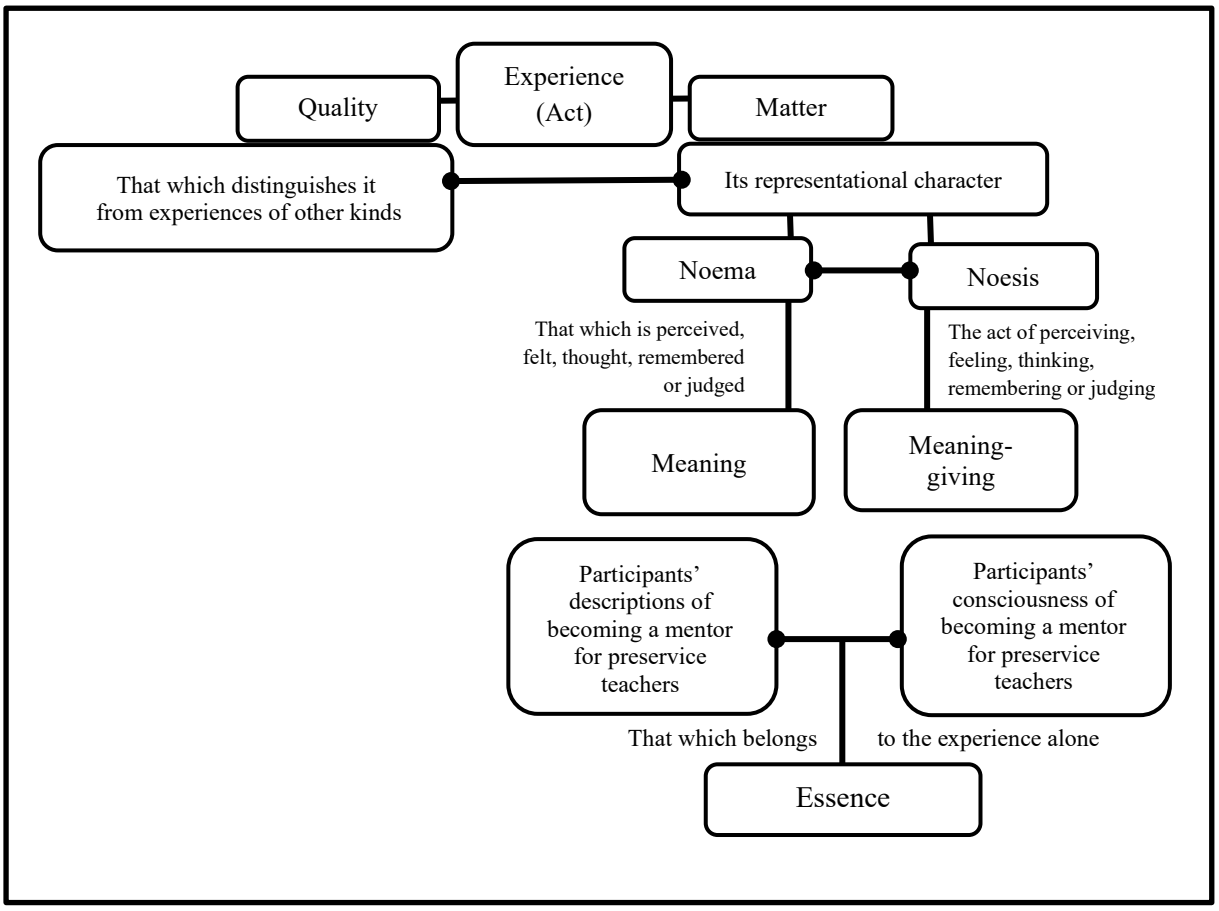
The Essence of Experience

I drew on Husserl's concept of *an act* (the psychological process of conceiving of, remembering, judging or evaluating something; Spear, 2021) to understand the notion of experience with regard to becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Husserl (1964)

believed that "every act is consciousness of something, but every act is also that of which we are conscious" (p. 175). And so, for Husserl, each act – each conception, memory, judgement or evaluation of an experience – has *character*. For example, for a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, the act of recalling an experience might exhibit the character of reviewing evidence, or reflecting on the likelihood that something occurred. Husserl defined two interdependent parts of an act: *quality* and *matter* (McIntyre & Woodruff Smith, 1989) and it is important to understand these parts with regard to the notion of experience. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the phenomenological concept of experience. It is followed by a fuller description of the constituent parts of experience that are represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The Phenomenological Concept of Experience



Note. Adapted from Cilesiz (2011) and Yüksel and Yıldırım (2015)

Act-quality refers to the unique features (qualities) that make conceiving of, remembering, judging or evaluating one experience different from others of its kind (Gardiner & Weisling, 2018; McIntyre & Woodruff Smith, 1989). The experience of becoming a mentor teacher

for a preservice teacher has unique features that make it different from any other experience – even those that have similarities. For example, becoming a mentor for a practising teacher involves working with, and navigating a relationship with, a colleague who is also qualified; becoming a mentor for a teaching assistant involves examination of expectations specific to that role. Becoming a teacher for a primary school child (being a preservice teacher) involves learning, practice and assessment in the classroom of a practising teacher. Becoming a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher involves being the practising teacher who provides the environment in which the preservice teacher is learning, practising and being assessed.

The act-matter of an experience is that which gives it its "representational character" (McIntyre & Woodruff Smith, 1989, p. 147); what it represents and how. The matter of the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is found in the noema and the noesis. The noema is the meaning of the experience for the individual: the perceived, the felt, the thought, the remembered, the judged (Cilesiz, 2011). The noesis is the process of meaning-giving: the *sense* of perceiving, feeling, thinking, remembering, or judging (Cilesiz, 2011, p. 496). It is the combination of noema and noesis that forms the "consciousness (perception, feeling, thought, remembering, judgment) of an experience" (Cilesiz, 2011, p. 496). Thus, understanding the act-qualities and act-matter for the individuals becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers offers unique insight into the *essence* of that experience. Husserl and other more recent scholars (such as Moustakas, 1994) assert that the essence of the experience is those characteristics which belong to that experience alone.

Summary

In the first part of this thesis, I have provided an overview of my background and personal connection with this research and outlined the central question of this study. Chapter 2 provided an overview of the political and practical contexts in which mentor teachers for preservice teachers work in New Zealand, and, in Chapter 3 I have identified the theoretical understandings which underpin this hermeneutic phenomenological study. In Part II, Chapter 4 provides a review of the literature related to being and becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the research, the methodological details related to data gathering and analysis and ethical considerations for this study.

Part II

Chapter 4. Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section outlines what the literature says about mentoring in general and mentoring preservice teachers. This part of the chapter gives information about the introduction of mentoring to the teaching profession and the mentor teachers' role during practicum in preservice teacher education and outlines current understanding of mentoring in this context. The first section also reviews literature about requirements placed on mentors for preservice teachers during practicum and the roles that they are expected to undertake. The second section of this chapter discusses the dynamic process of identity construction for mentor teachers who work with preservice teachers. This section addresses the shift from becoming a teacher of students to becoming a teacher of students *and* a mentor of adult preservice teachers at the same time. The second section of the chapter reviews the nature of *becoming* in relation to identity development and influences on that development for mentor teachers for preservice teachers. The chapter concludes by summarising the gaps in literature that this study seeks to address.

There is a lot of discussion about mentors and mentoring in the education literature. Mentoring is considered, for example, to be beneficial for encouraging school students to be successful in their academic and extra-curricular endeavours, inducting and guiding novice teachers, developing teachers' professional learning and ability, expanding leadership capacity and assisting principals and other school leaders to undertake their role. Mentoring might involve individuals, peers or a group. Mentors seem to come in a range of "makes and models." The relevant experience, age, positional relationship with the mentee/s, time "on the job" and level of mentoring expertise of a mentor vary dependent on a range of factors. These factors can, for example, relate to the context within which the mentoring occurs, the purpose of the mentoring, and the people involved.

Increasing attention has been given to mentoring and mentors for novice teachers in the literature over the last 4 decades. This began with an increased focus on the beginning years of teaching during the 1980s and has more recently turned to mentoring and mentors within preservice teacher education. Practicum is commonly identified as a crucial time of learning

for preservice teachers (Ellis et al., 2020; Rajuan et al., 2008) and the work of mentor teachers is widely considered to be important (see for example, Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Ellis et al., 2020; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Wang & Odell, 2002). Accordingly, mentor teachers for preservice teachers' work are frequently the subject of examination and discussion.

Section 1

Mentors and Mentoring

The word *mentor* comes from Homer's *Odyssey* and it is attributed to the role that Mentor took on when his friend Odysseus went off to war. Mentor was expected to be a trusted guide, counsellor and teacher for Odysseus' son, Telemachus (Colley, 2002; Ellis et al., 2020). While the nature of the role that Mentor truly undertook is not clear (Colley, 2002; Koopman et al., 2021), mentoring has become an important part of professional development in many professions.

The Lack of a Definition of Mentoring for Preservice Teacher Education

Although there has been a lot of writing and theorising about mentoring, a clear and agreed definition of mentoring has not yet emerged. A particular challenge for considering mentoring in preservice teacher education is that it is only one of a number of relationships that can be established between a preservice teacher and a classroom teacher with whom they are working. Without a clear and universally understood definition, notions of mentoring can be easily blended with, or mistaken for, other forms of guidance and support for preservice teachers such as apprenticeship, coaching and friendship. Aderibigbe et al. (2018) warned about the "potential confusions, overlaps or 'borrowing' of approaches" (p. 56) that can result because of this lack of clarity. As Kemmis et al. (2014) explained, the issue is "not so much about a lack of theories but rather about a plurality of theories" (p. 154) and they referred to mentoring as a "contested practice" (p. 154). Further, Dominguez and Kochan (2020) noted the constant pursuit of a definition in the mentoring literature: a search they referred to as "elusive" (p. 3). The lack of a consistent definition for mentoring has been attributed to a lack of well-founded theory (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007; Colley, 2003). Thus, without a clearly theorised definition of mentoring, there seems to be a lot of confusion about what mentoring really is.

Mentor Teacher and Other Terms

In many cases, the term *mentor teacher* has been used in preservice teacher education to identify the "teacher in the field" who supports learning during practicum (see for example, Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Izadinia, 2015; Jaspers et al., 2014). It is a complex role. For example, Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) explained that the mentoring role has "relationship aspects and process aspects" (p. 49). An example of this is that a mentor is both encourager and feedback provider, which increases complexity.

Other titles are used as well in the preservice teacher education literature – such as associate teacher (see for example, Beck & Kosnik, 2000) and cooperating teacher (see for example, Clarke et al., 2014; Stanulis et al., 2019). All of these terms are in common use today. However, there is a difference between a title and a description. Even though we may name some teachers mentors, that doesn't necessarily mean they are mentoring (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Dominguez & Kochan, 2020; Grossman & Davis, 2012). Mentoring preservice teachers during practicum is a highly individualised activity, different for different people in different circumstances. Regardless of what they are called, mentor teachers for preservice teachers are still frequently left to make their own decisions about the approach to mentoring that they wish to take. There still appears to be no clear impetus to shift away from the master–apprentice approach (Clarke et al., 2014). Therefore, a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, by name, may not, in fact, be a mentor teacher in practice.

An Explanation – Not a Definition

In order to use and explore the term mentor in this study, a working model is needed to establish a shared understanding of what mentoring might be. This section uses the research literature on mentoring in education to provide an explanation that frames the study, rather than attempting a definition.

Mentoring engages two individuals or a group of people in a relationship for a particular purpose that is related to growth and development for one, some or all of them. The people involved might be peers with similar learning interests or needs, or one of the people involved might have more experience in areas relevant to the development needs of the other person or people. The people involved in a mentoring arrangement might already know each other from previous circumstances or they might not have any prior connection. They might select each other, or the arrangement might be created for them. Regardless of the way that the arrangement is made or the history between those involved, when a mentoring

arrangement is established, a relationship for the purpose of mentoring is formed (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007; Dominguez & Kochan, 2020).

Mentor Teachers in Preservice Teacher Education

Before the 1980s, a commonly held view was that teaching must be learnt from other teachers in the field. Proponents of this perspective believed that teaching practice was something to be *mastered* and they held limited regard for theoretical understanding (Feiman-Nemser, 2001a; see also, Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008). From this perspective, an *apprentice* learnt to be a teacher by spending time with, and emulating, a *master* (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Stones, 2002). However, during the 1980s greater emphasis was given to understanding the methods and practices of teaching; and teacher learning as a collegial endeavour was recognised. Teachers were viewed as professionals who investigated aspects of practice through reflective inquiries on teaching and learning (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Zeichner, 1990). Mentoring relationships that focused on growth and development began to come to the fore in education literature.

Mentoring was introduced to support and induct beginning teachers in a number of countries around the world in the 1980s. A number of scholars have provided an overview of the circumstances at that time. For example, discussions about the rise in mentoring for beginning teachers in the United Kingdom can be found in Hobson et al. (2009). Similar discussions about the introduction of this support in the United States of America can be found in Hargreaves and Fullan (2000), Wang and Odell (2002) and Feiman-Nemser and Carver (2012). Feiman-Nemser and Carver noted that these changes began to occur because "assigning veterans to assist beginning teachers was seen as a clear improvement over the abrupt, unassisted, 'sink or swim' induction that most beginning teachers experienced, as well as a way to 'reward and renew strong experienced teachers'" (p. 342). However, while support for beginning teachers was being provided, many mentors for beginning teachers lacked clear understanding about the links between the methods and practices of teaching school students and beginning teacher learning (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000), and there were corresponding issues in preservice teacher education.

During the 1980s, researchers and scholars began to recognise preservice teachers' knowledge and past experiences as valuable, and so preservice teacher education programmes began to take a more individual and personalised approach. Learning agendas were drawn from preservice teachers' own sense of reality and what they believed they

individually needed to learn and practice (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Zeichner, 1983). However, while a strong base of literature which challenged the master–apprentice approach in preservice teacher education was developing, in many instances, teachers who were supporting preservice teachers were left to make their own decisions about the approach to mentoring that they wished to take, so there was no clear impetus to shift away from the master–apprentice approach (Zeichner, 1983).

In 1990, Zeichner wrote about the "emerging trends" that he had seen occurring in the United States of America and read in literature about Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Zeichner noted organisational, curricular and structural changes – and he was concerned. While he did not disagree with organisational and curricular change, Zeichner argued that neither were effective on their own. He believed that substantial structural change was required. By structural change, Zeichner was referring to the "resources supplied to support the practicum and the contextual conditions in which it exists" (p. 107). Zeichner recommended greater connection between theoretical and practical learning for preservice teachers. He believed that:

> The most serious problem in teacher education today … is the way we have isolated ourselves into little communities composed of those with similar orientations and then only communicate with those who share the same general orientation. (p. 109)

Zeichner asserted that the notion of apprenticeship was an obstacle to quality preservice teacher education and he called for greater consistency during practicum "supervision" as well as formal preparation for those who worked with preservice teachers during practicum. Since the 1990s, calls for structural change and consistency have continued (for example, Ferrier-Kerr, 2009; Grudnoff, 2011). However, alongside negligible widespread structural change, the lack of clarity about the role of mentors and mentoring in preservice teacher education has remained.

Personal Implications of the Mentoring Relationship

It is important to recognise the complexities of the mentor teacher–preservice teacher relationship from the mentor teacher's personal perspective. Teaching, in itself, is an emotional undertaking (Hargreaves 1998), and becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers expands those emotions (Hastings, 2008). As Bullough and Draper (2004) put it, "like successful teaching, mentoring, as a form of teaching, requires deep emotional investment that inevitably spills out" (p. 286). Each individual has a particular way or ways

of operating as a teacher and a mentor (for example, being positive, nurturing, motivating or challenging) and mentor teachers form judgements about how their preservice teachers align with their expectations (Hastings, 2008). Hargreaves (1998) discussed the notion of "emotional understanding" (p. 839); that which helps an individual to identify and manage emotions in relation to the circumstances in which they occur. Accurate emotional understanding between individuals occurs when feelings about what is expected and what occurs align. The interrelationship between expectations, judgements and way/s of operating can influence a mentor teacher's "sense of control" in a particular circumstance (Hastings, 2008, p. 503).

Mentor teachers are expected to develop accurate emotional understanding (Hargreaves, 1998) and a professionally familiar relationship with another adult (Bullough & Draper, 2004), often in a very short period of time. Hastings's (2008) qualitative case study of the emotional aspects of the practicum for mentor teachers found that developing accurate emotional understandings during a short practicum can be extremely challenging for mentor teachers and their preservice teachers. She gave the example of Therese, who experienced a sense of "powerlessness" when she struggled to develop emotional understanding between her preservice teacher and herself as the mentor (p. 501). Moreover, the interactions in the preservice teacher–mentor teacher relationship have a specific purpose and are often directed by the brief provided by the preservice teacher education provider; for example, observations (both observing and being observed), and providing feedback and direction. While observing, being observed and discussing feedback may seem straightforward for one mentor teacher, another might find it personally challenging to have their work critiqued or to provide candid feedback to another adult (Margolis, 2007). There are a number of possible reasons for such emotions, ranging from the challenges of working with confident preservice teachers to uncertainty about the content of what they should be modelling or saying.

Research on preservice teacher and mentor teacher views of their relationships suggest that mentors might hold different perspectives to their mentees. For example, Ambrosetti (2010) investigated Australian preservice teachers' perceptions of their mentor teachers' work and how they felt this work impacted on their learning. She looked at relational, developmental and contextual elements of the mentor teachers' work. The contextual element (factors related to where the mentor teacher worked) did not appear to be of particular concern to the preservice teachers when they thought about their learning. However, the expectations that the preservice teachers held of their mentor teacher were critical. All of the participants in

the study believed that their mentor teacher had credibility if, through their actions, they were able to help the preservice teachers feel confident. In another example, Alemdag and Simsek (2017) interviewed six preservice teachers in Turkey. They too, found that the preservice teachers' expectations of their mentor teachers influenced the judgements that were made about the mentor teachers' performance. Moreover, if the preservice teachers felt that they were not getting what they needed from their assigned mentor teacher (that is, there was a discrepancy between what they felt was promised and what was delivered), they were disappointed. When this situation occurred, the preservice teachers tended to seek the particular type of support they were looking for from someone else. Both of these studies only involved the preservice teachers. However, Fairbanks et al.'s (2000) investigation into what made a successful mentoring relationship sought data from both preservice teachers and mentor teachers. They found that both mentor teachers and preservice teachers were responsible for the development of the mentoring relationship and that together they "construct and negotiate for a variety of professional purposes and in response to the contextual factors they encounter" (p. 103).

Hargreaves's (1998) discussion about teachers' emotions described how an individual's emotions can affect how they feel about the relationships and practices they are involved in. Similarly, an individual's emotions can have an impact on how others feel about the way/s those relationships and practices affect them. When mentors are unsure about what they are expected to do and where they fit in as teacher educators (see also, the sections Mentoring Preservice Teachers During Practicum, and Determining How to Mentor, in this chapter), as the participants in Nielsen et al.'s (2010) study did, they can feel inadequate and uncertain. Hargreaves (1998) described how emotions can be influenced by an individual's sense of "moral purpose" (p. 840). Emotions (such as happiness or guilt) can be linked to whether and how the individual feels they are able to achieve the purposes they feel strongly about. In her qualitative case study of mentor teachers' perceptions of their mentor teacher role during practicum, Hastings (2004) found that her 20 secondary school participants experienced a wide range of emotions: from anxiety and guilt to sympathy and satisfaction. Hastings's (2004) participants also talked about the generally positive emotions that resulted from relationships with visiting lecturers. However, one of her participants felt intimidated even though she could not think of any specific element of the relationship that generated that feeling. Additionally, the degree to which mentor teachers feel that they are supported

in their school context may add another layer of conflicting emotions (Hastings, 2008). And so, mentor teachers can feel vulnerable.

There are many reasons why a mentor teacher for preservice teachers might feel vulnerable. Conflicting expectations between the mentor teacher and preservice teacher can be unsettling (Rajuan et al., 2007). Making or contributing to decisions about the preservice teachers' success can be emotional. Becoming a mentor teacher is a commitment to another adult's success and mentor teachers can become intensely invested in ensuring success. As Bullough and Draper (2004) asserted, "both success and failure are understood to reveal something profound about one's self, moral standing, and ability" (p. 286). It is therefore a big decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. To do so opens the teacher up to emotions that can be not only confusing and disrupting but also welcomed and enriching.

The "Right" Person to Mentor a Preservice Teacher?

Knowing that mentoring is important, but that it is ill-defined and can be a challenging task for teachers to take on, the question that arises is "who is the 'right' person to mentor a preservice teacher?" What do teachers need to do, know and be to be effective mentors? How can they be identified? This section summarises research about mentor teacher knowledge and experience, the selection of mentors by school leaders, and the characteristics of teachers who offer to be mentors, to address these questions.

There is a growing body of literature about the type of knowledge, wisdom and experience which scholars believe is required for a teacher to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. It is clear that the ability to demonstrate exemplary teaching practice is important (Grossman & Davis, 2012). However, knowledge, wisdom and experience related to teaching students are not enough on their own. There is agreement in the literature that effective mentor teachers should have a clear philosophy of good teaching and learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Stanulis et al., 2019), show commitment to preservice teacher education and be able to share their thinking with preservice teachers (Stanulis et al., 2019). Their philosophy should be underpinned by the principles and practice of effective teaching (Ellis et al., 2020; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b); for a diverse range of students and adults (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Wang & Odell, 2002). Effective mentor teachers demonstrate inclusive teaching practices (Wang & Odell, 2002) that are supported by valid theories (Wang & Odell, 2002), and they can articulate their beliefs about why this is important

(Stanulis et al., 2019; Timperley, 2001). As well as modelling exemplary decision making and teaching practice (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wang & Odell, 2002), effective mentor teachers have a continuous improvement mindset, for themselves, preservice teachers, students and educational settings (Stanulis et al., 2019; Timperley, 2001). To this end, they demonstrate a strong belief in constructive, future-focused, evidence-based, solution-focused, reflexive inquiry.

Moreover, effective mentor teachers demonstrate their deeply-held belief in the value of respectful, nonhierarchical relationships in the way that they share their "space" as a teacher and learner, and thoughtfully question, guide, challenge and provide opportunity for preservice teacher learning alongside their own (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Hudson, 2013; Stanulis et al., 2019).

As well as knowing, doing and being, the idea of "experience" is often part of selecting mentor teachers. Experience is seen as a foundation for successful mentoring practice. The notion of experience is also complex, however, because the term can be used in different ways in different circumstances. Teachers *experience* (live through) first-hand involvement in the everyday activities of their work and gain *experience* (knowledge, skill, and practice) from that involvement (Berliner, 2001). Berliner (2001) outlined a five-stage theory of developing expertise: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. Experts, according to this theory have an "intuitive grasp of the situation and a non-analytic and non-deliberative sense of the appropriate response to be made" (pp. 23–24). Expert teachers instinctively know what to do, when to do it and why. However, experienced teachers and expert teachers are not necessarily the same people. While experience might make some teachers experts, this is not an automatic process (Timperley, 2013).

While it is clear that knowledge about teaching, wisdom in and of the field, and experience are important for mentor teachers for preservice teachers, something more is necessary for effective mentoring of preservice teachers. Indeed, Margolis (2007) advised that careful research was needed into what and how preservice teachers learn from their mentor teachers. His caution reflects the sentiment of many other scholars (see for example, Feiman-Nemser et al., 1993; Gardiner & Weisling, 2018). Expert teachers do not necessarily make expert mentor teachers for preservice teachers. As Margolis (2007) noted,

> while such exemplary environments may be very good for the mentor's students and the mentor, they alone are not always beneficial for the learning of the new teacher-

> learner. Bearing witness to high levels of teaching success does not automatically transfer teaching skills to the observer. What is also needed is access to and participation in the teacher thinking and reasoning that makes this classroom hum. (p. 76)

However, demonstrating "strong" teaching practice (Grossman & Davis, 2012; Margolis, 2007) and length of service, and having attained a position of responsibility in the school (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006), are frequently considered to be key criteria for assuming the mentor teaching role. As Lammert et al. (2020) noted, "school spaces have their own social practices around what it means to be a mentor" (p. 2). While it is possible to develop some sense of why particular mentor teachers are selected and the sorts of practices that they might be admired for, these are impressions only.

The literature suggests that selection of mentor teachers for preservice teachers requires careful scrutiny. For, example, Bullough (2005) presented a case study of one mentor for intern teachers in the United States of America. His participant, Barbara, offers a useful illustration of the influence of school leaders' decisions about mentoring in their schools. When Barbara chose to take on the mentor teacher role described by Bullough, she was promised targeted release time in recognition of her role. In reality, Barbara received only two thirds of that time. Barbara felt misled and that mentoring was undervalued at her school. While Barbara had mentoring experience with preservice teachers, mentoring interns was new for her. However, no expectations of the role were communicated to Barbara or the interns with whom she worked, so neither Barbara nor her interns really knew what they were meant to be doing. Even though the practical recognition that she had been offered did not eventuate, Barbara dedicated herself to the role and hoped that her work would be valued by the school leaders. Such recognition was not to eventuate and Barbara worried about what her colleagues thought of her work as a mentor.

In New Zealand, Langdon et al. (2014) conducted a national survey about perceptions related to the induction and mentoring of beginning teachers in primary and secondary schools. They found that there was often strong agreement between mentors and mentees about the overall effectiveness of mentoring and induction programmes. School leaders' perceptions of these programmes did not align with the mentor and mentees' opinions and tended to be significantly more positive. Langdon et al. (2014) wondered whether school leaders' sense of administrative responsibility and desire for community approval was a

contributing factor to this difference between perceptions. Both Youngs (2007) and Langdon et al. (2014) recommended greater emphasis on studies about the impact of school leaders on the support mechanisms (such as mentoring) for novice teachers in schools. Langdon et al. (2014) suggested that gathering data from all parties related to the mentoring process in a school setting (as they did in their study) could increase the likelihood of a balanced view of the impact of school leadership being presented.

School leaders' decisions are not the only source of variability in relation to finding the "right" mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Some scholars, such as Ellis et al. (2020) have suggested that mentor teachers who choose to take on the role may be more likely to hold altruistic perceptions about their contribution to preservice teacher education than those mentor teachers who feel that they were given the role by others. Langdon et al. (2014) linked the attributes of motivation and commitment to "self-efficacy, a sense of identity, emotional investment and agency" (p. 103). They contended that mentor teachers who volunteer may be more inclined to be open to learn about mentoring – and about themselves in that role – than those who do not feel that they had a choice. Thus, there may be some disparity between approaches of mentor teachers for preservice teachers who volunteer to take on the role and those who have not volunteered.

Mentoring Preservice Teachers During Practicum

Mentoring Preservice Teachers is Different to Teaching Students

While it is clear that there are many similarities, mentoring preservice teachers is not the same as teaching students. As Timperley (2013) explained, both teachers and mentor teachers need to be able to identify and understand what their students/mentees know and are able to do in order to be effective in their teaching/mentoring role. However, mentoring adults involves different (and additional) activities and requires different (and additional) knowledge and skills to those required for teaching students (Timperley et al., 2007). Timperley et al. (2007) coined the term "provider pedagogical content knowledge" (p. xv) to refer to

> the knowledge and skills that providers of teacher education need if they are to assist teachers to make a difference to students. This includes knowledge of the pedagogical changes teachers need to make in order to improve their practice, as well as knowledge of how to make the content meaningful to teachers and manageable within the context of teaching practice. (p. 284)

Preservice teachers are adult learners (Brookfield, 1986; Kram, 1983), so mentoring preservice teachers involves navigating specific domains of expertise, interpersonal relationships and knowledge development, and making judgements which inform decisions in a context that does not replicate that of teaching students (Margolis, 2007; Timperley, 2013). In Margolis's (2007) study, seven mentor teachers discussed their approaches when working with preservice teachers and their attempts to be explicit in their practice, discussions and feedback. These mentor teachers discussed the pedagogy that was involved, recognising that "their responsibility is not only to teach but to support the development of a professional …. 'teaching, but a different kind of teaching'" (p. 13).

Mentoring Preservice Teachers is Different to Other Forms of Mentoring Teachers

Mentoring preservice teachers is not the same as mentoring other colleagues. Mentor teachers for preservice teachers share their students, physical work space, colleagues, and community with preservice teachers (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Margolis, 2007). While some similarities can be drawn, the competencies and dispositions required to mentor preservice teachers are distinct from the competencies and dispositions required in other mentoring roles (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1993; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). Mentoring a preservice teacher involves working with an individual who does not, and cannot, belong to the school setting in the same way that mentor teachers do. Additionally, a preservice teacher is not yet eligible to take full responsibility as a teacher on their own (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1993) and a preservice teacher may not prove suitable to become qualified at the end of their preservice teacher education (Haigh & Trevethan, 2017). While the responsibility of assessing preservice teachers' "readiness to teach" (Haigh & Trevethan, 2017, p. 4) varies depending on the arrangements and expectations outlined by preservice teacher education providers, mentor teachers frequently hold at least some responsibility for making contributions to the overall judgement that is required. Including assessment as part of a mentor teacher's role can create complexities that need to be carefully managed so that they do not adversely affect the mentor teacher–preservice teacher relationship (Ambrosetti et al., 2017) or the reliability of the assessment (Lammert et al., 2020).

Ambrosetti (2014a) highlighted the critical importance of shared understandings between the mentor and preservice teacher about the nature and processes of assessment. Haigh and Trevethan (2017) reviewed the role of mentor teachers in preservice teacher education in New Zealand. They referred to the role of assessing a preservice teacher's readiness to teach

as being the "gatekeeper to the profession" (p. 4). Thus, mentor teachers for preservice teachers are selected to undertake a role that has demands, expectations and requirements related to preservice teachers' learning that are distinct from any other mentoring role for teachers.

Models of Practicum Can Vary

When a teacher becomes a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, they cannot assume that they will be involved in one unchanging model of practicum. Practicum models, requirements and relationships vary depending on the preservice teacher education provider. Models of practicum and expectations can also vary within one qualification. As Ambrosetti et al. (2014) noted, preservice teachers at the early stage of their programme require different learning opportunities to preservice teachers in the later stages. Mentor teachers for preservice teachers may be expected to become familiar with a range of different approaches to placement processes for preservice teachers, length of the practicum, the practicum curriculum, requirements placed on the preservice teachers and themselves during the practicum, and interactions with administrative personnel from the preservice teacher education provider. Moreover, mentor teachers for preservice teachers may need to navigate a range of relational expectations with preservice teachers, any visiting lecturers assigned to the preservice teacher, and their own school colleagues. These relationships may vary depending on the expectations placed on the visiting lecturer involved (and how that supervisor interprets those expectations) and how each school has agreed to engage with the preservice teachers during the practicum (Whatman & MacDonald, 2017).

Practicum models can differ in preservice teacher education, internationally and in New Zealand. Often practicum placements are arranged between one mentor teacher and one preservice teacher during a short practicum "block" (see for example, Ferrier-Kerr, 2009) but this isn't always the case. Some programmes use the traditional mentor–mentee pair during extended practicum placements. Bradbury and Koballa (2008), for example, described a secondary school year-long internship in the United States of America that comprised regular time in school for two interns (preservice teachers) alongside on-campus courses. In consultation with visiting lecturers, the mentor teachers "were expected to provide guidance about pedagogical issues and support to the interns working in their classroom based on their teaching experience and training as mentors … [and] evaluate the interns' progress" (p. 2136). Sometimes alternative practicum placement models are created

for the purposes of trial and evaluation; and it is not uncommon for practicum models in different programmes within a single preservice teacher education provider to vary (see for example, University of Auckland, 2021).

Ambrosetti et al. (2017), in Australia, described mentor–mentee arrangements that vary from the traditional paired model. They examined a model where two preservice teachers were placed for a 7-week practicum with one mentor teacher. This study had nine participants (in three groups). The preservice teachers were at different stages of their preservice teacher education programme. In each case, the mentor teacher for the preservice teachers took responsibility for leading the relationship and they also made sure that there were peer mentoring opportunities for the preservice teachers as well – particularly the more experienced preservice teacher. In essence, the mentor teacher was focusing on supporting the development of teachers *and* the development of *mentor*-preservice-teachers.

Grudnoff and Williams (2010), in New Zealand, reviewed a practicum model that established a team of practicum participants at each contributing school (mentor teachers, school-appointed adjunct lecturer, university liaison lecturer and the school principal). Preservice teachers were assigned to a school; the adjunct lecturer selected the way that mentor teachers and preservice teachers were matched and the "form of assessment [for each preservice teacher] was to be determined by the individual school" (p. 35).

This small selection of examples shows that alongside negotiating the relationship with a mentee at a personal and professional level, mentor teachers negotiate relationships with teacher education providers and provider structures as well. Ways of working, and even the aims of the work, can change over time and between mentees.

One example of expectations placed on mentor teachers for preservice teachers that has changed over time relates to the increased focus on integrating theory and practice during preservice teacher education. While theoretical learning related to preservice teacher education was once viewed as separate to practical learning, it is now widely agreed in the literature that theoretical and practical learning are most effectively achieved together (see for example, Allen et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2020; Grudnoff & Williams, 2010; Korthagen, 2010; Mena et al., 2017; Whatman & MacDonald, 2017; Zeichner, 2010). As the education literature has identified a *theory–practice divide* (see for example, Ambrosetti et al., 2013; E. Cohen et al., 2013; McGarr et al., 2017), preservice teacher education providers have made changes to their programmes. There has been discussion about how preservice teacher

education providers and school colleagues might work together to address this divide (Grudnoff et al., 2017; Le Cornu, 2010; Whatman & MacDonald, 2017) and develop shared understanding, practices, and professional language in an attempt to offer cohesive preservice teacher education programmes. Accordingly, mentor teachers' responsibility to support preservice teachers' practical and theoretical learning has gradually increased. Mentor teachers for preservice teachers have been asked to help bridge the theory–practice divide for some time; however, what they are being asked to do is complex and may not be very clear to them (Allen et al., 2013; Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). E. Cohen et al.'s (2013) substantial review of preservice teacher education literature published between 1996 and 2009 found that a key rationale for practicum was "reducing the gap between theory and practice" (p. 369). However, their review also revealed reported tensions between preservice teachers and their mentor teachers "due to the latter's inability to bridge the dichotomy between theory and practice" (p. 365).

Whatman and MacDonald (2017) argued that a high-quality practicum needed to be part of a programme that had every aspect integrated so there was "not a sense of 'theory' and 'practice' being enacted separately in different institutions" (p. 4). They found that this was not uniformly the case. However, Whatman and MacDonald also identified a range of examples across a number of different countries (including New Zealand) that were reported to be providing high-quality practica (see for example, MartinJenkins, 2018), and often with robust professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers.

It Is Not Clear What Quality Mentoring Might Be. Sometimes, terms such as *quality* and *high quality* have been used to describe mentor teachers in the preservice teacher education literature. E. Cohen et al. (2013) and Whatman and MacDonald (2017) illustrated the varied expectations that are placed on mentor teachers for preservice teachers during practicum and the varied ways in which the mentor teachers might be meeting those expectations. A quality mentor teacher for one programme, or one preservice teacher, might not be a quality mentor in other contexts.

Ellis et al. (2020) conducted a review of literature about the elements of a quality mentor teacher for preservice teachers and found seven themes. Ellis et al.'s themes included important knowledge, practices, dispositions, ways of thinking, and ways of interacting with others. Interestingly, the first of Ellis et al.'s seven themes related to the need for collaborative and collegial relationships between the mentor teacher and visiting lecturers.

Some of the literature that Ellis et al. reviewed highlighted the mentor teacher's role in "advocating for" and "fostering" these relationships. There seems to be an expectation that a quality mentor teacher will think about and connect with more than just the mentee. Other literature reviewed by Ellis et al. (see for example, Grudnoff, 2011; Trevethan, 2017), highlighted the importance of shared vision between preservice teacher education providers, schools and mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Grudnoff (2011), for example, noted the call for mentor teachers to be considered "full partners … rather than viewed as providers of classrooms for students to teach in" (p. 231). She observed that if such a partnered approach was to be adopted, adjustments would be necessary for all of the parties involved. Another of Ellis et al.'s (2020) indicators of a quality mentor teacher involved encouraging preservice teachers to "engage in theory–practice reflection" and to "examine & analyse academic- & practitioner-generated knowledge related to particular aspects of teaching" (p. 7).

Some examples of knowledgeable and effective mentor teachers can be found in the literature but they tend to be case studies of mentors for beginning teachers or other experienced colleagues. Feiman-Nemser's (2001b) examination of one mentor for a beginning teacher's "principles and strategies" is a well-cited example (p. 17). Orland-Barak and Hasin (2010) looked at what "constitutes exemplary mentoring practice" (p. 435) when mentoring experienced teachers. In the preservice teacher education literature, the analysis and discussion in a few studies such as Ambrosetti et al.'s (2017) examination of the benefits of triadic practicum relationships and Beck and Kosnik's (2000) search for clarity about the mentor teacher's role provided instances of effective mentoring practice. Orland-Barak and Wang (2021) discussed one mentor teacher's practice to exemplify an "integrated approach" to mentoring.

This literature suggests that for those mentor teachers who have been working with preservice teachers for some time, expectations related to quality in the role are substantially different to what they might have been when they made the decision to take on the role and worked with their first preservice teachers. For those who are deciding to become mentor teachers for preservice teachers now, there is a clear call in the education literature that they will provide quality mentoring (see for example, Gardiner & Weisling, 2018; Sewell et al., 2017). Mentor teachers for preservice teachers need to be supported to understand what quality means for their work with the preservice teachers, in the contexts in which they will

work; and with regard to their relationships with preservice teacher education providers and their representatives.

Shifts in What Mentor Teachers Are Being Asked to Do. The increased focus on collaboration and partnered practicum models in the preservice teacher education literature has signalled a shift in what mentor teachers are being asked to do (Ellis et al., 2020). The literature provides a range of examples of different mentor teacher–visiting lecturer working relationships. For example, Talbot et al. (2018) examined Talbot's experience as a university-based teacher educator as she and a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher worked collaboratively with one preservice teacher. Talbot et al. were particularly interested in how and what each of the participants involved learnt as they worked "dialogically in a hybrid 'space-time' [dedicated space and time]" (p. 48). Opportunities to consider "each other's personal philosophies of teaching, learning and mentoring" (p. 58) were noticeably different to previous models that Talbot had experienced. As a result of their study, Talbot et al. recognised the need for wider organisational changes to the practicum model should this type of collaborative work become common. Grudnoff et al. (2017) responded to concerns in the literature about the privileging of theory over practice in preservice teacher education programmes. They used the notion of "third space" to examine the relationships between participants from the university and schools in their study. Third space rejects binary or collaborative notions and recognises new possibilities: what Zeichner (2010) termed a "both/also point of view" (p. 92; see also, Forgasz et al., 2018). Grudnoff et al. (2017) found third space was created in two ways: "relationship and role transformation" and "collaborative practices during the practicum" (p. 184). While they noted that the development of an authentic third space would take more time and investment of resources, Grudnoff et al. recognised the level of sharing and mutual acknowledgement of knowledge that was achieved during this project.

Mutual recognition of knowledge is an important feature of collaborative actions related to the practicum. There needs to be a clear focus on avoiding conflicting expectations and achieving integration of roles and expertise. A theory–practice divide can obstruct progress towards collaboration, and the reasons for such a divide are complex and often deeply entrenched. McGarr et al. (2017) argued that "the 'theory–practice divide' can be viewed not as a simple acceptance of relevant knowledge [held by one group or another] but instead an acceptance of the authority of others to determine what knowledge is relevant" (p. 2). This divide can occur, as E. Cohen et al. (2013) found, when mentor teachers have difficulty

integrating academic learning into their everyday practice (Stenberg & Maaranen, 2020). Resistance by preservice teacher education provider lecturers to acknowledging the depth of professional knowledge and practical wisdom that mentor teachers for preservice teachers can bring to preservice teacher education can also contribute to sustaining a theory–practice divide (O'Neill, 2013; Sewell et al., 2017).

There are at least two perspectives in the literature on whether or not mentor teachers are teacher educators. On one hand, some scholars reserve the title of teacher educator for preservice teacher education lecturers alone (see for example, Cameron & Baker, 2004; Izadinia, 2014). From this perspective, preservice teacher education provider-based research expertise and practitioner expertise offer separate contributions to preservice teacher education; university lecturers provide the research and the mentor teachers provide the environment for preservice teachers to practise provider-directed learning. From this perspective, mentor teachers are *not* teacher educators. Other scholars (see for example, Dengerink et al., 2015; Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Timperley, 2013), have taken an alternative perspective, recognising practitioner experts' mentoring of preservice teachers in schools as contributing to teacher education together with their visiting lecturer colleagues. The expertise of practitioners is valued as contributing to preservice teachers' learning and development in a meaningful and equivalent way (Feiman-Nemser, 1998). From this perspective, acknowledging that both visiting lecturers and mentor teachers are teacher educators is more accurate (Clarke et al., 2014; European Commission, 2013). In 1998, Feiman-Nemser expressed concern that "classroom teachers do not see themselves as school-based teacher educators" (p. 64). She reasoned that it was because of how knowledge about teaching is viewed and where the *power* related to that knowledge was held. Two decades later, Andreasen et al. (2019) observed that even though it appeared that progress had been made in relation to collaborative activities between schools and preservice teacher education providers, "collaborations between these two educational contexts are too often based on traditional, hierarchical relationships, with weak school integration in the evaluation and development of [preservice] teacher education" (p. 282). The ways that *teacher educator* is defined by preservice education providers and visiting lecturers influence the expectations that they have and communicate to mentor teachers for preservice teachers. These expectations frame the collaboration between mentor teachers and professional supervisors and their programmes. However, there still appears to be a division of opinion about what is believed to be the requisite knowledge and experience to earn

someone the title of teacher educator, meaning that there can be differences in positioning among the people who are supporting the preservice teacher.

Learning to Be a Mentor

It cannot be assumed that providing documentation and offering explanations is sufficient to ensure that mentor teachers of preservice teachers know what is required of them in their role. Indeed, development of clear, accessible and supportive professional learning guidelines and opportunities for mentor teachers of preservice teachers seems to be a recurring recommendation in the literature (e.g., Aderibigbe et al., 2018; Clarke et al., 2014). Moreover, attending to the specific details of individual practicum expectations does not appear to be sufficient.

Feiman-Nemser et al. (1993) pointed out that mentor teachers of preservice teachers frequently undertake their role with limited, if any, understanding of what preservice teachers learn in their classes on campus. Additionally, it cannot be assumed that all mentor teachers for preservice teachers will wish to, or be able to, engage in professional learning related to the role (McDonald, 2004). Sanders (2005) offered some possible reasons for some mentor teachers' hesitancy to engage in professional learning related to their role. She posed several possibilities: lack of interest, a sense that they already know what they need to know and the constraints imposed by already busy lives.

My review of preservice teacher education literature revealed a number of themes related to mentor teachers learning about their role:

- it is often assumed that teachers already know how to mentor others (Ambrosetti, 2014b; Sanders, 2005; Stanulis et al., 2019);
- professional development for mentor teachers for preservice teachers is provided (Ambrosetti, 2014b; Hudson, 2013; Stanulis, et al., 2019; Trevethan; 2014), but not consistently (Clarke et al., 2014);
- the activity of mentoring is, in itself, believed to be professional development (Ambrosetti, 2014b; Hudson, 2013; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Stanulis et al., 2019); and
- mentoring is (e.g., Timperley, 2001), can be (Wang & Odell, 2002), and should be (Stanulis et al., 2019; Wang & Odell, 2002), learned as it is practised.

Additionally, the literature identified inconsistent resourcing of, and for, mentor teacher professional development (Ambrosetti, 2014b; Wang & Odell, 2002) and often calls for

greater research and resourcing in this area (see for example, Timperley, 2001; Wang & Odell, 2002).

The assumption that teachers already know how to mentor others was a common theme in the literature. Some scholars (such as Sanders, 2005) have addressed this assumption from the perspective of the mentor teachers themselves: recognising that mentor teachers for preservice teachers may genuinely feel adequately prepared and well informed. Other scholars have approached this assumption more generally (Ambrosetti, 2014b; Nyanjom, 2020; Stanulis et al., 2019), noting that there appears to be a common belief that teachers will know how to mentor.

Some researchers have examined how learning about mentoring for preservice teachers can be achieved while mentoring: commonly after a particular intervention (such as a course or dedicated study group) has been attended by the participants. In separate studies in Australia, Hudson (2013) and Ambrosetti (2014a) examined the learning that occurred for mentor teachers of preservice teachers in situ over time when their participants applied knowledge gained through targeted professional development programmes to their practice. In the United States of America, Stanulis et al.'s (2019) research focused on 10 mentor teachers for preservice teachers who participated in a dedicated study group. These researchers wanted to know how their participants translated their learning into educative practices. Stanulis et al. concluded that their mentor teachers benefited from an emphasis on "concrete practices with opportunities to develop over time in educative ways" (p. 1). Ambrosetti (2014a) found that the opportunity to understand the "nature and process of mentoring" (p. 40) in context could effect change in how the mentor teachers were equipped to evaluate effectiveness of their mentoring practices and make modifications. Hudson (2013) argued that learning through mentoring could be a "cost effective" way of achieving professional development for mentor teachers, particularly with regard to "reflecting and deconstructing teaching practices for mentors' own pedagogical advancements" (p. 771). While Langdon and Ward's (2015) and Langdon's (2017) participants mentored beginning teachers, their research is worth noting. Both of these articles reported on the results of a 2-year professional development programme in New Zealand that included participant action research in context. Langdon "found that despite good intentions, mentors' preconceptions of their role were difficult to change" (p. 528). She noted that

> development of mentoring expertise requires: (a) not only a commitment to learning but a willingness to unravel treasured beliefs and practices; (b) time to build

> knowledge and to inquire, assess and enact new knowledge and learning; and (c) a school community that supports and recognises the work of mentors. (p. 541)

Like Hudson (2013), Ambrosetti (2014a) and Stanulis et al. (2019), Langdon and Ward (2015) saw benefit in aligning guided professional development with opportunities to learn in context. Langdon and Ward concluded that for mentoring skill to be developed, "mentors need the opportunity to reconceptualise themselves as learners" (p. 250). There is evidence in the education literature that it is unlikely that mentor teachers for preservice teachers can make such changes on their own and deep learning is unlikely to be simply the result of one-off professional development courses (Wang & Odell, 2002). For some (such as the participants in studies by Ambrosetti, 2014a; Hudson, 2013; and Stanulis et al., 2019), mentoring is being learned while mentor teachers for preservice teachers work with preservice teachers. These individual studies, and others (see for example, Timperley, 2001) show that with the right support and in the right context learning while mentoring is, and can be, effective. Wang and Odell (2002) recommended a "collaborative inquiry model" (p. 529) of professional learning for mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Such a model positions every party involved during the practicum as learners (while mentoring is being practised) and recognises the importance of the contexts in which the learning occurs.

Becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is clearly a complex undertaking. As Sanders (2005) held, professional development for mentor teachers for preservice teachers must support them to become confident and competent (p. 130). Literature that has informed current policy in New Zealand (such as Timperley, 2013; Whatman & MacDonald, 2017) has emphasised the importance of the mentor teachers' role in high-quality practica. However, the way that mentor teachers for preservice teachers are supported to become confident and competent does not appear to be clear in the literature. Orland-Barak and Wang (2021) commented on the challenges that are involved in supporting mentor teachers for preservice teachers when resourcing for such an endeavour can be limited and mentor teachers themselves each bring "a different theoretical assumption about teacher learning and … entrenched ideologies are hard to change" (p. 95). It seems that many mentor teachers for preservice teachers (including those who have recently decided to become a mentor teacher) are left to learn what a mentor teacher does, largely on their own. Moreover, many mentor teachers for preservice teachers may see this as appropriate and unproblematic and feel they are competent enough teachers to take on the mentoring role.

Determining How to Mentor

This section presents six different approaches to mentoring that new mentor teachers might adopt, as they begin to work out for themselves what their mentoring role is. Mentor teachers can draw from practices that are prevalent in their particular context (Bullough, 2005), and from their own experience of being mentored (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Lammert et al., 2020). Researchers have emphasised that an integrated view of such a complex task is most appropriate. Ambrosetti et al. (2014) concluded that mentoring is a "complex, multifaceted process" and a "holistic" approach is necessary (p. 326). They offered a "theoretically based framework" (p. 224) with relational, developmental and contextual components (p. 243). Similarly, Orland-Barak and Wang (2021) determined that "teacher mentoring in practice cannot be perfectly boxed" and "needs to draw on mentoring practices emanating from different approaches" (p. 92). They proposed an integrated approach to mentoring preservice teachers.

These six approaches are therefore not mutually exclusive and mentors might move between them, or take actions that come from more than one approach; but separating out six approaches serves to emphasise the variability in how mentoring is conceived of and might be practised.

Focusing on Socialisation

Socialisation is a process by which a person learns the way that teachers should think and behave, and the expected knowledge, skills and norms of the profession. Socialisation offers preservice teachers the opportunity to spend time connecting with school contexts and others in the profession. Clarke et al. (2014) emphasised the power that mentor teachers can have when it comes supporting preservice teachers' initiation into the profession. On its own, socialisation involves an informal relationship between the mentor teacher and preservice teacher which can include socioemotional support. Focusing on socialisation can help mentor teachers align their preservice teachers' expectations with the norms of the school in which they teach (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021); however, it may or may not provide the opportunity for new learning. Socialisation is part of mentoring; however, on its own socialisation is not mentoring (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007) because there is no focus on growth and development.

Focusing on Emotional Support

The importance of emotional support during practicum is a common theme in the preservice teacher education literature. Emotional support is often discussed in relation to what preservice teachers and others expect from mentor teachers (see for example, Haigh & Ward, 2004; Izadinia, 2017). The preservice teachers in Haigh and Ward's (2004) study expected their mentor teachers to be (among many other things) their "buddy, … counsellor, … encourager, … helper, … listener, … rescuer, … sage, … supporter … and welcomer" (p. 138). Emotional support for preservice teachers during practicum is also discussed in relation to what researchers expect and what mentor teachers for preservice teachers expect of themselves (see for example, Ambrosetti, 2014a; Izadinia, 2017; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). The term *interpersonal* is used a great deal in descriptions of, and discussions about, the type of mentoring skills that are expected (see for example, Ambrosetti, 2014a; Ellis et al., 2020; Izadinia, 2017; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005).

Mentor teachers can focus on emotional support for preservice teachers for a wide range of practical and personal reasons. Teaching and mentoring are both emotional and relational. It follows, therefore, that mentoring involves "more than guiding protégés through learning standards and skill sets and extends to providing strong and continuous emotional support" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 53). Moreover, complex relationships such as those between mentor teachers and preservice teachers can be stressful and difficult to manage, and so it can be easier for a mentor teacher to support a preservice teacher than to challenge them. Conversely a mentor teacher may genuinely believe that "paying attention to the development of self-esteem" (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021), is critical to preservice teachers' learning. In that instance, when the mentor teacher is listening or counselling, for example, they may believe that they are demonstrating the interpersonal skills that are required.

Focusing on Training

When a mentor teacher is providing structured direction related specifically to achieving the defined objectives and goals of the practicum as defined by the preservice teacher education provider, the school context and/or the mentor teacher themselves, this can be considered to be training. Activities that occur between the mentor teacher and preservice teacher during training are driven by a sense of obligation to transfer knowledge (Larsen-Freeman, 1983) reflecting a "behaviourist orientation" to teacher education (Zeichner, 1983, p. 4). There is

an expectation that the activities enacted through this relationship will direct the preservice teacher towards attaining understanding and skills, and developing their ability to be a teacher in line with recognised policies and performance benchmarks for that particular practicum in that particular context (Zeichner, 1983). Mentor teachers for preservice teachers who have a training focus can think that they are being helpful (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). The mentor teacher is positioned as the provider and the preservice teacher is positioned as the receiver of the knowledge, so, for example, the mentor teacher models and the preservice teacher observes and imitates what they have seen. Current knowledge and norms are reinforced: either through direct instruction and guidance about, or facilitated reflection on, "correct" practices (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007; Zeichner, 1983).

Training holds a time-honoured place in fields where complex skills are to be learnt (Moon & Shelton Mayes, 1995) – such as preservice teacher education. Training can be useful in the early stages of preservice education (Maynard & Furlong, 1995). However, preservice teachers' preparedness to learn from their observations and experiences can be significantly influenced by their own circumstances. For example, Maynard and Furlong (1995) found that new preservice teachers "frequently refer[red] to the problem of not being able to 'see'.... [indicating that, having little experience] they do not know what they are supposed to be looking for" (p. 12). Moreover, when mentor teachers for preservice teachers act as *trainers,* preservice teachers can become overly focused on performing to assessment expectations (Maynard & Furlong, 1995) at the expense of their learning needs (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Zeichner, 1983).

When training is the key focus, personal "fit" is not important, and so the strengths, needs or preferences of preservice teachers might not be considered. Thus, training aligns with the view that was challenged during the reforms of the 1980s: teaching practice is something to be mastered. From this perspective, preservice teacher *apprentices* must interpret and assess the value of their *master's* modelling and guidance and imitate what they see (Stones, 2002), and so the range of teaching practices that each preservice teacher experiences can be limited by the breadth of skill offered by the mentor teacher in each practical circumstance.

Focusing on Promoting Competence

When competence is the focus of a mentor teacher for preservice teachers' work, attention is given to certain benchmarks that can be broken down into small steps which must be achieved in order for a preservice teacher to demonstrate expertise (Boydell, 1986). Rather

than the concept of master, this approach assigns to mentor teachers the roles of instructor, observer, and feedback provider (Moon & Shelton Mayes, 1995). There can be benefits in a strong focus on competency for preservice teachers who are ready to use the knowledge and skills that they have already developed. A focus on competency offers them the opportunity to demonstrate their growing independence and responsibility as a teacher (Maynard & Furlong, 1995). However, this approach relies on the formation and assessment of a valid and accepted set of skills and capabilities. While some programme designs incorporate the development of shared contextual agreement about the skills and capabilities required for a becoming a teacher, this isn't always the case. Ellis and Loughland (2017) provided a useful example of the type of feedback that preservice teachers receive during practicum from their mentor teachers and visiting lecturers. Ellis and Loughland were particularly interested in how well the feedback given provided direction about the preservice teachers' competency and next learning steps. Nearly 230 preservice teachers responded to their questionnaire. Many of Ellis and Loughland's participants described the variability of feedback that they received in relation to its quantity, timing and value. They found that the predominant type of feedback given to the preservice teachers related to how the preservice teachers were performing against the feedback-giver's interpretation of competence. Thurlings et al. (2013) described a range of different purposes and characteristics of feedback – each dependent on the theory of learning involved. Ellis and Loughland (2017) observed that much of the feedback in their study "resembled monologues" (p. 58). Clarke et al. (2014) called this a "traditional follow-me model" (p. 175). Feedback related to the practicum requirements or the preservice teachers' professional goals or suggested next steps for learning was far less evident in Ellis and Loughland's (2017) study (see also, Clarke et al., 2014). Ellis and Loughland (2017) emphasised the importance of mentor teachers (and visiting lecturers) furnishing feedback that is clear, targeted, useful and related to preservice teachers' goals.

The preservice teachers in Ellis and Loughland's (2017) study wanted feedback. Feedback is commonly believed to be an important outcome of the mentor teacher–preservice teacher relationship (see also, Clarke et al., 2014; Copland, 2010). However, an effective focus on competence requires the mentor teacher (and preservice teacher) to understand "the distinction between feedback about the task (FT), about the processing of the task (FP), about self-regulation (FR), and about the self as a person (FS)" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 90). Copland (2010) suggested that clear and agreed understanding between the mentor

teacher and preservice teacher about the purpose of feedback is required. If clarity and understanding is lacking then tensions can arise and the purpose can be lost. Moreover, lack of clarity about the purpose of feedback affects consistency related to what competency really is for preservice teachers, across teacher education providers' programmes, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, Boydell (1986) argued that an excessive focus on competency can distract mentor teachers for preservice teachers from giving attention to other aspects of teachers' work such as reflection and consideration of what it means to be a teacher.

Focusing on Facilitating Reflection for Deeper Understanding

The significance of reflection for teachers has been widely recognised for some time. Dewey (1910/1933) believed that a teacher's ability to reflect critically on their practice was vital and that learning to reflect critically would enable teachers to demonstrate deeper understanding of their role and effect change in schools. Dewey viewed reflection to be "an active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds supporting it and future conclusions to which it tends" (p. 6). To be reflective involves open-mindedness (to demonstrate the desire for, and to question for the purpose of, deeper learning). A reflective approach also involves responsibility (to vigorously seek certainty) and whole-heartedness (to put aside doubt in order to genuinely engage in deep personal learning; Yost et al., 2000).

A mentor teacher's focus on reflection can encourage preservice teachers to critically examine and justify their views about how people learn, their understandings of teaching and how they see themselves as a teacher (Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Maynard & Furlong, 1995). Thus, when mentor teachers guide preservice teachers to reflect for deeper understanding, there is less emphasis on imitating routines and learning strategies to gain practical competency and more emphasis on their mentoring capability (Schön, 1987). In Schön's (1987) view, the mentor teacher is a *facilitator* of learning for the preservice teacher, and this facilitator

> is both a part of the learning environment and will influence other aspects of the learning environment. They will understand the nature of reflection, how it relates to the qualities of learning (deep and surface learning) and will be clear about what they are attempting to achieve in the learners. (p. 167)

While Copeland et al. (1993) established 12 critical attributes evident in literature that *could* be a sign of reflective practice, they raised the – still prevalent – concern that there is a lack of clarity around how reflective practice should be enacted (see Clarà, 2015; Marcos et al., 2011). Facilitating reflective learning is a complex undertaking and this lack of clarity challenges mentor teachers as well as the preservice teachers (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Trevethan, 2017).

Focusing on Educative Mentoring

An educative approach to mentoring positions the preservice teacher and mentor teacher together as co-learners who question and challenge the existing teaching norms (Feiman-Nemser, 1998). This approach is different to other approaches because it does not just focus on the support that preservice teachers need now to gain skills and understandings. Rather, an educative approach takes a long-term focus, with attention given to long-term developmental needs and goals (Stanulis et al. 2019; Wexler, 2019). This means that mentors who work in educative ways also support preservice teachers to reflect critically on their current knowledge, beliefs and practice. The mentor is mindful of the teacher that each preservice teacher aspires to be – and that students will need them to be in the future.

A mentor teacher with an educational focus approaches their relationship with each preservice teacher pedagogically (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b). They make decisions that are underpinned by their own theoretical knowledge and with reference to theoretically sound practice. They dedicate time to skilled facilitation of learning conversations (see Earl & Timperley, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 1998; Orland-Barak & Klein, 2005) that are based on evidence and focused, and challenging, reflective practice. Thus, an educative mentoring focus supports co-constructed professional learning that is guided by identified criteria. Tensions can arise when the mentor teacher and preservice teacher's understandings and beliefs about those criteria differ. Bradbury and Koballa's (2008) case study of two mentor teacher–preservice teacher pairs investigated the impact of "differing conceptions of mentoring, expectations related to communication, and beliefs about teaching" (p. 2132) on the ability for an educative focus to be achieved in their relationships. Like other examples that Bradbury and Koballa reviewed (such as Hobson, 2002, and Maynard, 2000), there were tensions to be navigated in each case. Bradbury and Koballa (2008) concluded that there is work to be done by preservice teacher educators to support the development of an educative approach to mentoring before the practicum begins.

The mentor teacher who is able to take an educative focus, prioritises each individual preservice teacher's ability to address present and future challenges – to develop *adaptive expertise* (see for example, Langdon & Ward, 2015; Timperley, 2013; van Tartwijk et al., 2017). When a preservice teacher demonstrates adaptive expertise, as opposed to *routine* expertise (Timperley, 2013; van Tartwijk et al., 2017), they show that they can recognise cues for their own learning, interpret and reflect on these cues, and adjust their practice as required in order to meet their students' learning needs – *while* they are teaching (Männikkö & Husu, 2019; Timperley, 2013; van Tartwijk et al., 2017). Routine expertise denotes an ability to use established skills and conventions when circumstances are familiar (Anthony et al., 2015; van Tartwijk et al., 2017). Adaptive expertise requires knowledge and skills that make it possible for the preservice teacher to review each individual situation and draw on their understanding of the learners, content and context simultaneously. Adaptive expertise is developed over time.

Therefore, in order to support preservice teachers effectively, mentor teachers need to demonstrate adaptive expertise themselves (Timperley, 2013; van Tartwijk et al., 2017). Taking an educative approach to mentoring means that the mentor teachers and preservice teachers must commit to a reciprocal relationship and collaboratively question, challenge, reflect on and co-construct professional knowledge and practice (Langdon & Ward, 2015; Stanulis et al., 2019). Developing such a relationship is not simple because success depends on personal insight, openness and trust: the willingness and ability of both the mentor teacher and preservice teacher to understand and be open about their beliefs, experiences, reflections, concerns and needs (Langdon, 2014; Timperley, 2013). Mentor teachers and preservice teachers have little or no choice of partner in the mentoring relationship during practicum – they are just put together. These relationships are generally developed quickly and often for short periods of time. To achieve genuine openness and trust in a short period of time under such constructed circumstances can be challenging particularly if there is no/limited support for the development of an educative approach to mentoring from the preservice teacher education provider.

Summary

Section 1 of Chapter 4 has explored the literature on mentoring preservice teachers. Throughout this review, the recurring theme has been lack of clarity – about definitions, about roles, about tasks and relationships and about what quality or effective mentoring

might be for preservice teachers. This lack of clarity derives from the complexity of the task, the huge range of contexts in which it occurs and taken-for-granted assumptions about what mentoring a preservice teacher means and consists of. Section 2 of Chapter 4 addresses the shift from becoming a teacher of students to becoming a teacher of students *and* a mentor of adult preservice teachers at the same time.

Section 2

There is a growing literature base about the development of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hong et al., 2018; Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018). Within this literature, considerable focus has been given to identity development for preservice and early-career teachers (see for example, Alsup, 2018; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Cherrington, 2017; Izadinia, 2016; Ovens et al., 2016; Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018) and teacher identity in general (see for example, Beijaard et al., 2000; J. L. Cohen, 2010; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018; Schutz et al., 2018; Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018). However, while some scholars such as Bullough (2005), Kwan and Lopez-Real (2010) and Lammert et al. (2020) have written about the identity development of mentor teachers for preservice teachers, the literature base is smaller by comparison.

Understanding who teachers believe themselves to be (their identity as teachers and as mentors) is important because their sense of self impacts on how they feel and how they perform in their role. Mockler (2011) contended that "teacher professional identity, [is] formed and re-formed constantly over the course of a career and mediated by a complex interplay of personal, professional and political dimensions of teachers' lives" (p. 518). While Mockler (2011) and other scholars such as Richardson and Watt (2018) and Zembylas and Chubbuck (2018) have brought teacher professional identity into focus, their attention appears to have been on teachers in general as well as politics and context. Zembylas and Chubbuck (2018) described how politics and power relations influence teacher identity. Similarly, Richardson and Watt (2018) explained how teacher identity is formed within the political context of work and professional structures and expectations. While Richardson and Watt wrote about teachers taking a "lifespan approach" (p. 38) to their professional learning, Zembylas and Chubbuck (2018) proposed that knowledge of teachers' identity can support the design of professional development programmes. If a lifespan approach is to be taken, opportunities for understanding identity development might be integrated into teacher education (starting at the preservice stage). Mockler (2011) argued that the impact of such a move might have a positive influence on what might be achieved by the profession as a whole.

As Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) noted, while there is a body of literature about teacher identity, in the preservice teacher education literature the focus tends to be on preservice teachers' identity development. When mentor teachers for preservice teachers are discussed, it tends to be in relation to how they can support the preservice teacher's identity

development. The following sections review the nature of *becoming* in relation to identity development and influences on that development for mentor teacher for preservice teachers. The chapter concludes by summarising the gaps in literature that this study seeks to address.

Identity Development: The Nature of Becoming

While identity lacks a clear definition in the literature, identity can be considered in a number of ways. Identity can be considered to be a combination of features that together present a way of perceiving and describing oneself in a given moment and context (see for example, Gee, 2000): the characteristics that make a person unique. For example, an individual may define themself in relation to a particular background, culture, gender or ethnicity (Reeves, 2018; Richardson & Watt, 2018); or describe themself in relation to certain skills (Reeves, 2018; Richardson & Watt, 2018) or dispositions (Beijaard et al., 2004; Gee, 2000; Richardson & Watt, 2018) such as being articulate or compassionate. Gee (2000) proposed that, as well as maintaining a core identity (that is consistent across contexts), individuals have "multiple identities connected to … their performance in society" (p. 99). He identified four ways to view identity:

- Nature-identity: features by which we can be identified and which have occurred naturally such as being a *young* teacher (these only become features of our identity if they are recognised as such);
- Institution-identity: aspects which are ordained because of roles we take on which are authorised within organisations, such as being a teacher;
- Discourse-identity: characteristics which we and others recognise as integral to our identity such as being nurturing (however, there may not be agreement as to how "nurturing" we are); and
- Affinity-identity: attributes we ascribe to ourselves because of connection to a group of other individuals and agreed practices for this group, such as mentors.

And so, while it might be believed that a "core" element of identity provides a sense of consistency, identity is constantly transforming because of the different roles that we play.

Some scholars believe that development of identity is influenced by each individual's experiences and their emotional responses to those experiences (Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Schutz et al., 2018). Experiences throughout life provide new contributions to each individual's unique description of themself. Thus, an individual's identity is at once tentatively formed (and perceived) in a particular moment and context, *and* continually

forming through the unpredictable and multidimensional process of *becoming* (Sfard & Prusak, 2005; Ovens et al., 2016; Scanlon, 2011).

While there is agreement that the development of identity involves a process of creating and recreating, there are different perspectives about how identity develops. For example, Erikson's developmental theory focused on how an individual adjusts and develops at stages throughout their life as a result of interpreting problems and challenges (Day et al., 2006; Erikson, 1959/1994). This perspective would see teacher identity as related to how an individual *perceive*s their *self* as they become more competent (see for example, Kelchtermans, 2018), develop their depth of subject specialisation (see for example, Reeves, 2018), and engage in thinking about educational change (Beijaard et al., 2000; Knowles, 1992). Other theorists, such as Wenger (1998), conceived identity to be reliant on the transactions between self and the sociocultural environment in which an individual functions. From a sociocultural view, identity is developed and strengthened when a teacher is part of a community and/or network of communities that enable a sense of belonging and shared purpose, mutual benefit and investment, and the opportunity to feel their own sense of social worth (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Sachs, 2005; Wenger, 2000).

However, even with variation in definition and different perspectives on how identity develops, common features can be found. Identity is consistently believed to be "not a fixed attribute of a person" (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 108); "a process of becoming rather than being" (Hall & Du Gay, 1996, p. 4); "a relational phenomenon" (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 108); heterogeneous; "constituted in interpretations and narrations of experiences" (Luehmann, 2007, p. 827); and gained through being recognised in a certain way by self and others within a particular context (Gee, 2000).

While some scholars refer to a *sense of self* as identity, others believe that notions of self *contribute* to an individual's identity. Rodgers and Scott (2008) suggested that the relationship between identity and self is "murky" (p.733). In this study, I have aligned with scholars such as Day et al. (2006), who proposed that an individual's understanding of self contributes to the development of their identity. From this perspective, an individual's understanding of self contributes to their developing identity as a teacher *and* as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. How each individual understands their sense of self, in turn influences the ways in which their sense of self as a teacher and mentor teacher is shaped and reshaped. Each individual perceives their self as a teacher and mentor teacher in a range

of ways. For example, there is the teacher and mentor teacher that they aspire to be; the teacher and mentor teacher that they and significant others believe that they "ought" to be, and therefore they strive to be, in certain circumstances; and there is the teacher and mentor teacher that they are recognised to be at a particular moment in time (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Day et al., 2006; Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005).

Considerations about identity do not just relate to education. Identity is the subject of study across a range of fields such as philosophy and psychology and from a range of theoretical perspectives (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Richardson & Watt, 2018; Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018). For the purposes of this study, in the following sections, I have reviewed recent identity literature that is focused on teaching and mentoring in order to outline current understanding of the nature of identity development for teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

The Nature of Becoming a Teacher

The identity of each mentor teacher for preservice teachers was "under construction" before they had even considered a career as a teacher – and this process will continue throughout their professional lifetime and beyond. Discussion about the identity development of mentor teachers for preservice teachers must therefore include recognition of their developing sense of self as a teacher. And so, this section focuses on literature about becoming a teacher.

Becoming a teacher does not follow a defined agenda (Buchanan & Olsen, 2018; Ovens et al., 2016). It is a life-long, dynamic process of identity construction, from preservice teacher (see for example, Britzman, 2003), to teacher (see for example, Buchanan & Olsen, 2018; Ovens et al., 2016) to professional (see for example, Day et al., 2006; Mulcahy, 2011). The process of becoming intertwines personal and professional elements of the individual's own sense of self in an ongoing, emergent and unique act of "reinventing" (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Day et al., 2006; Richardson & Watt, 2018). Richardson and Watt (2018) proposed that teacher identity is shaped by their personal and professional goals. They suggested that a teacher's commitment and motivation, and the choices that they make in order to achieve these goals, influence their sense of identity. Richardson and Watt reviewed motivational theories to shed light on what teachers might be motivated to do at different stages of their career. Like many other scholars, Richardson and Watt found development of teacher identity to be complex, and influenced by contextual factors.

Contextual Factors

The construction (shaping and reshaping) of a teacher's identity occurs as a result of their own examination and adjustment of their self in a range of social contexts. First and foremost, a teacher examines and constructs their identity in the context of their interactions with their students because, as Freire (1998) proposed, there can be no teacher without learners. It is commonly believed that teachers also examine and construct their identity as the result of being in a collegial environment and members of a community (Alsup, 2006; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; J. L. Cohen, 2010). For example, perception of their professional identity in J. L. Cohen's (2010) ethnographic study was influenced by the way that teachers felt their ideas, discussion and interactions were viewed as being appropriate by their colleagues. J. L. Cohen likened these activities to moves in a game. She described the teachers' ideas, discussion and interactions as "identity bids" and suggested that the "ways in which these bids are recognised by other relevant players influence both the determination of the game being played and the stakes of the game" (p. 475). In Alsup's (2006) view, teachers' identity development is closely linked to their sense of personal power and vulnerability within the communities to which they belong.

It is not difficult to find examples, such as J. L. Cohen's (2010) study, of the research focus on knowing and understanding teachers' identity. In another example, Beijaard et al.'s (2000) study of 80 experienced secondary school teachers investigated perceptions of professional identity over time. They found that their participants' identity perceptions at the time of the study differed from their memories of their sense of identity at the beginning of their careers. While the influence of context and other factors (such as experiences and learning opportunities) were seen to influence these differences, Beijaard et al. found that no clear patterns of influence could be found. In essence, in Beijaard et al.'s study, each individual teacher's changing sense of self was unique to them; they had their own story. In their article about school students' identity, Sfard and Prusak (2005) suggested that there is never one version of a story about a person's identity. They supported Wenger's (1998) view that "the experience of identity in practice is a way of being in the world" (p. 151).

For each teacher, it is the process of examination and connection within their multifaceted "world" that enables the continued construction of their identity to occur in the present moment. Some scholars highlight the importance of reflecting and talking with others in the shaping and reshaping of teacher identity (see for example, J. L. Cohen, 2010; Danielewicz, 2001; Lammert et al., 2020). Other scholars, such as Ovens et al. (2016), emphasise the

teachers' complex and ever-changing professional role – in often unpredictable and demanding settings. Each individual establishes ways of reflecting on their work, understanding and explaining themselves, and talking with others (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The thinking, reflections and discussions, in which a teacher engages, shape, and are shaped by, their developing sense of self. At the same time, the developing sense of self initiates the thinking, reflection and discussion (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Lammert et al., 2020) in which they are involved. Becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is one way that a teacher's professional role can change, thus changing the ways that they reflect on their work and their sense of self in that work.

Becoming a Mentor Teacher

It can be presumed from the general teacher identity literature that when a teacher becomes a mentor teacher for preservice teachers it changes the way that they are in the world and broadens and deepens the identity that is already developing. However, as I noted earlier, while there is a substantial body of literature about identity development as a result of the mentor teacher–preservice teacher relationship, the focus on identity is often on preservice teachers (see for example, Cherrington, 2017; Danielewicz, 2001; Izadinia, 2016). There is significantly less attention given in education identity literature to the identity development of preservice teachers' mentors.

Yet it is agreed that the identity development of mentor teachers for preservice teachers deserves attention. When a teacher becomes a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, identity development becomes a *multi*-multifaceted process. The "facets" of a mentor's personal-, teacher-, and mentor-self overlap and intertwine but they can also be uniquely distinguishable (Bullough, 2005; Davey, 2010; Lammert et al., 2020). There are elements and attributes of their self that an individual might describe as teacher and elements and attributes that they might describe as mentor. The way that the mentor teacher understands, explains and talks with others about themselves can become more complex because they are developing and drawing from an expanding range of knowledge, conventions, behaviours, and dispositions – and they are involved in a broader range of experiences with a wider range of others.

In Bullough's (2005) study of mentor teachers for preservice teachers, he drew on Gee's (2000) general identity literature to frame and analyse identity formation. Bullough found that affirmation from a range of perspectives was important. His focus participant, Barbara,

wanted to be recognised as a capable teacher and mentor by everyone in her professional world. In 2010, Kwan and Lopez-Real noted the limited attention given to mentor teacher identity. They too, drew on general identity literature; and used Wenger's (1998) modes of belonging and qualities of identity to analyse how two mentor teacher identities were being formed during the process of mentoring preservice teachers. More recently, Lammert et al. (2020) also turned to teacher identity literature to understand the notion of becoming for one mentor teacher. They found that their participant's intentional engagement with the range of contexts in her world as a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher enabled her identity development in each context. This engagement strengthened her sense of becoming.

While some attention to mentor teacher identity development can be found, studies are scarce. Lammert et al.'s (2020) collaborative and reflexive focus on investigating the notion of becoming a mentor teacher has begun to address the gap in literature where the voices of mentor teachers for preservice teachers belong. However, Lammert et al. took a case study approach to investigate how one experienced teacher's involvement in becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers enabled the construction of teacher identity. They then reported their findings about their participant. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach to understanding mentor teacher identity does not report findings about participants. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach to understanding identity development describes the participants' experiences in an attempt to portray what the experience is like for them. This is why a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to this study was so important.

When a teacher decides to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, their relationships and experiences within their own work context change. Who mentor teachers see themself to be in that context changes (Bullough, 2005), and so they have a new sense of belonging (Bullough, 2005). These changes within their work context are not instantaneous and they build on changes that have already occurred. For example, a mentor teacher for preservice teachers has been a preservice teacher and they already belong to an educational learning community (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010). They have been, and are likely still being, mentored in some form. But it is difficult to find information in the literature about how elements such as progression through their career and their own mentoring experiences influence mentor teacher identity.

By becoming a mentor teacher, they have the opportunity to be recognised, by themself and others, as "more than" a teacher (see for example, Bullough, 2005). As a teacher becomes a

mentor teacher for preservice teachers, they have the chance to view themselves as part of a new group of teachers with recognised mentor group norms and behaviours as Barbara in Bullough's (2005) study may have done. Barbara's sense of self was strongly linked to being viewed as a mentor and needed in this capacity by her mentees. Moreover, Bullough cautioned that "teachers do what they know and mentor as they teach" (p. 153). He believed that it was difficult for teachers to truly see themselves as mentors and concluded that there was a need to "offer opportunities for those who mentor to expand and enrich their senses of self as teacher educators" (p. 154). The lack of agreement in education literature about whether mentor teachers for preservice teachers are indeed teacher educators (discussed in Shifts in What Mentor Teachers Are Being Asked to Do, in this chapter) highlights an area where research might bring clarity about who mentor teachers for preservice teachers see themselves to be and what it is like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. By using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, this study seeks to contribute to that body of literature.

Each individual negotiates becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers in their own complex environment. For a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, that environment is composed of many and varying contexts. For example, there are immediate contexts within their school site where they relate in person (with their students, preservice teachers, other colleagues from within the school and education community, and colleagues from the preservice teacher education provider) and there are times when they connect in other ways (such as through written or online communication). For each mentor teacher, it is the process of examination and connection within their multi-multifaceted environment – (for example, in relation to expected models of mentoring while teaching their students; Lammert et al., 2020) – that enables the continued construction of their identity to occur in the present moment. Thus, when preservice teachers become part of a mentor teacher's teaching contexts, their entire work environment changes.

Preservice Teachers

There is a substantial research focus on preservice teachers and mentors in teacher education. Some studies have focused on preservice teachers' expectations of their mentors during the practicum (see for example, Aderibigbe et al., 2018; Haigh & Ward, 2004) and how to enhance the practicum experience (see for example, Heeralal, 2014). Other studies focus on the conversations between mentors and new teachers and the types of advice given by

mentors (for example, Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005). There are studies about the difficulties and tensions that arise as mentor teachers and preservice teachers negotiate these relationships (for example, Bradbury & Koballa, 2008), and there are studies about the development of preservice teacher identity during practicum (see for example, Izadinia, 2015). While many scholars have included both the mentor teacher and preservice teacher in their studies, the emphasis appears to be on preservice teachers. As Lopez-Real and Kwan (2005) pointed out, there is "no doubt that the major focus of mentoring is on the mentee. After all, the verb is a transitive one and implies that one is mentoring somebody" (p. 16).

Professional relationships with preservice teachers place a range of expectations on mentor teachers. The expectations can come directly from preservice teachers and/or reflect the expectations of a preservice teacher education provider. While preservice teacher expectations of their mentor teachers vary from person to person and context to context, a review of education literature showed that the following expectations are communicated to mentor teachers by, or on behalf of, preservice teachers. While navigating their own identity development (and class and school contexts), preservice teachers' expectations of mentor teachers include being

- friendly and supportive (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Bullough, 2005);
- respectful of the preservice teacher as an individual and as a teaching colleague (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Patrick, 2013); Beck and Kosnik (2002) noted preservice teachers' desire to not be interrupted by mentor teachers while they were teaching. The context for this expectation (direct interruption or co-teaching, for example) was not defined;
- proactive in facilitating the establishment of complex practicum relationships (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Bullough, 2005; Ferrier-Kerr, 2009); Bradbury and Koballa (2008) and Ferrier-Kerr (2009) noted the impact that this and other expectations have on mentor teachers as well as preservice teachers;
- responsible for and providing opportunities for the preservice teacher to feel comfortable to learn in their classroom with their students (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). Ambrosetti et al. (2014) noted that these opportunities should take account of the preservice teachers' progress within their qualification and be targeted in line with this understanding;
- collaborative and open to preservice teachers' input and innovation (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Patrick, 2013); Patrick (2013) noted that this is the first obligation;

- aware of, and understanding about, both the mentor teacher and the preservice teacher roles (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009);
- committed to the mentoring role and the preservice teachers' development (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). Ferrier-Kerr (2009) noted the links between both mentor teachers' and preservice teachers' understanding, motivation, commitment, satisfaction and identity development;

Preservice teachers also expect mentor teachers to be

- expert in their practice and knowledgeable (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). Ferrier-Kerr (2009) noted that this was an expectation that mentor teachers also held of themselves, and in Beck and Kosnik's (2002) study, teaching "style" was a focus. Some preservice teachers in Beck and Kosnik's study noted the impact on them psychologically when they perceived their mentor teacher was demonstrating "poor" teaching practice. No comment was made in this study as to the impact on mentor teachers should this situation be reversed;
- skilled at giving feedback to preservice teachers (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Bradbury & Koballa, 2008). While Beck and Kosnik (2002) only gathered preservice teachers' opinions about feedback, they did note a lack of consensus between preservice teachers, mentor teachers and preservice teacher educators about what might constitute constructive feedback. However, Bradbury and Koballa (2008) commented on the frustrations that mentor teachers may experience if novice teachers are disinclined to accept and act on their feedback.

Alongside all of these preservice teacher expectations, Ambrosetti et al. (2014) suggested that mentor teachers are frequently expected to be both mentor and assessor during the practicum. They noted concern expressed in the literature about the difficulties that can arise when a mentor teacher is expected to be both mentor and assessor (such as preservice teachers' possible disinclination to be innovative).

There is a substantial amount of literature about what preservice teachers expect from the practicum experience. Bradbury and Koballa (2008) outlined several conceptions of mentoring resulting from their study into the "tensions that can interfere with the development of effective [mentoring] relationships" (p. 2144) during an intern year. Each person involved holds their own views about what a mentoring relationship should be like, and both preservice teachers and mentor teachers may look to previous experiences to find

a guide for their expectations. Situations can be complex when these views do not align and "disillusionment and tension can result" (p. 2134). As Bradbury and Koballa identified, the reality of mentoring relationships is not simple for preservice teachers or for mentor teachers.

Mentor teachers share their personal work space, their practice, and "their" students with preservice teachers. While it is important for expectations to be communicated to mentor teachers so that they can understand what a mentor teacher is and does, it is equally important that a teacher becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers understands who, what and how they are becoming. The studies reviewed in this chapter outline preservice teachers' dispositional expectations of the mentor teacher such as friendliness, respectfulness, responsibility and awareness as well as expectations related to alignment of beliefs and teaching style. These expectations are commonly generated from the preservice teachers' personal experiences related to teaching, preservice teacher education programme learning and previous practicum experiences. While some studies can be found that present comparisons of mentor teacher and preservice teachers' expectations (see for example, Haigh & Ward, 2004), it is difficult to find research that focuses on expectations that mentor teachers have of preservice teachers from their professional perspective as experienced practitioners and teacher educators.

While mentor teachers' expectations appear to be poorly represented in literature, preservice teachers provide feedback to and about their mentor teachers directly and indirectly in the practicum context. Preservice teachers engage mentor teachers in discussion, talk to other colleagues in the school, speak to visiting lecturers, report to preservice teacher education provider practicum coordinators, and contribute to research and reports in literature such as those reviewed in this chapter.

The Gaps That This Study Seeks to Address

Working with preservice teachers can be extremely rewarding, satisfying and affirming for mentor teachers; however, navigating these expectations and the relationships that go with this work can also be challenging (Mackisack, 2011). While there may be some information from preservice teacher education providers when it comes to identifying and navigating expectations and relationships, researchers have noted that it is often left to the mentor teachers and preservice teachers to find their own way (see for example, Ambrosetti, 2014a; Hoffman et al., 2015; Sewell et al., 2017). Scholars such as Feiman-Nemser (1998) and

Cameron and Baker (2004) recognised that navigating the challenges of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers may be detrimental to the development of a mentor teacher's belief in their ability to contribute in the role.

The identity as a teacher and as a mentor teacher of new mentor teachers for preservice teachers is affected by their belief in their ability to contribute in the role. While there is a growing body of literature about the type of knowledge, wisdom and experience believed to be crucial to becoming an effective mentor teacher for preservice teachers (see for example, Margolis, 2007; Timperley, 2013; Timperley et al., 2007), there is also a lack of clarity about what a mentor teacher really is and should do (Kemmis et al., 2014). This lack of clarity can create confusion for new mentor teachers for preservice teachers and they often turn to other colleagues and their own past experiences (see for example, Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Bullough, 2005; Lammert et al., 2020) in order to understand this newly developing sense of their selves.

The importance of understanding identity development has been discussed in the education literature and a clear focus on preservice teacher identity can be found. Both Bradbury and Koballa (2008) and Patrick (2013), for example, identified the vulnerable position that preservice teachers are in as they navigate "the boundary of student and teacher identity" (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008, p. 2132). By contrast, there is less attention in the literature about the identity development of mentor teachers for preservice teachers – even though they are also navigating the boundary of their own identity. It is troubling that recognition of the transition from teacher to mentor teacher does not appear to have been afforded the same attention in literature that preservice teachers' identity transition has received. This is troubling because the education literature recognises the critical role that mentor teachers for preservice teachers play in supporting preservice teachers' identity development and yet there is limited discussion about what is going on for the mentor teachers themselves.

There are also gaps in the literature about what mentor teachers for preservice teachers should know and be able to do, how they are expected to come to this understanding and how they can develop the appropriate skills to be effective in their role. When there is a lack of understanding about the role of a mentor teacher for preservice teachers there is an impact on the mentor teacher's developing sense of identity. By conducting this study, I sought to contribute understanding of mentor teachers' experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers to the body of preservice teacher education literature so that new

understandings and knowledge can be derived from what is presented. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach was taken so that the study could present descriptions of the participants' lived experiences, portrayed in ways that reveal the unique nature of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

Summary

In Chapter 4 I have outlined what the literature has said about mentoring in general and about mentoring preservice teachers. Background related to mentoring and the mentor teachers' role during practicum in preservice teacher education has been provided along with an overview of current understanding of mentoring in this context. Literature about requirements placed on mentors for preservice teachers during practicum has been reviewed and the roles that mentor teachers for preservice teachers are expected to undertake have been explained. Chapter 4 has also addressed the shift from becoming a teacher of students to becoming a teacher of students *and* a mentor of adult preservice teachers at the same time. I have reviewed the nature of becoming in relation to identity development and influences on that development, and I have identified the gaps that this study seeks to address. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the hermeneutic phenomenological approach to the research along with descriptions of methodological details related to data gathering and analysis, and ethical considerations for this study.

Chapter 5. Research Approach

Introduction

Chapter 5 describes the foundations of my hermeneutic phenomenological approach to this research. The design of my study is explained and the six participants, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, are introduced. The processes that were involved in the organisation of this study are described. Ethical considerations related to approval and consent and confidentiality are outlined. This chapter also introduces the data gathering protocols and procedures for this study and discusses practical complexities related to hermeneutic phenomenological research.

Foundations of My Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach

In this research, I sought to understand the phenomenon of transition for teachers becoming mentors of preservice teachers, asking: What is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers? This question required a method that enabled me to seek both a description of the phenomenon and an interpretation of it (van Manen, 2016; Yüksel & Yıldırım, 2015), to pursue a profound sense of *knowing* (van Manen, 1997) about the lived experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. The following sections outline important tenets taken from the lineage of phenomenology to provide a basis for understanding the design, methods and analytical approach used in this study.

Phenomenology: Brentano (1838–1917) and Husserl (1859–1938)

While use of the term phenomenology dates back to philosophers in the 18th century (Dowling, 2007), it was the German philosopher and psychologist, Franz Brentano (1982/1995) who introduced descriptive phenomenology. Brentano sought to distinguish what set psychology apart from other sciences. His particular focus was on differentiating between physical and mental phenomena. Brentano viewed physical phenomena as objects that could be tangibly present for a person (such as a red book or birdsong). He contended that physical phenomena could be tangibly present in two ways; they could exist at a time and place in reality or a person could imagine them (Brentano, 1874/2014). Red books and birdsong do not have an inner awareness, but minds do. According to Brentano (1874/2014) mental phenomena were an inner awareness *about* an object. He proposed that "intentionality" related to the mind's ability to be conscious of, or represent, an object (Antonelli, 2021), or, as Ashworth and Chung (2007) explained, "to be aware is necessarily

to be aware of something" (p. 19). Brentano (1874/2014) maintained that "every idea or presentation that we acquire through sense perception or imagination is an example of a mental phenomenon" (p. 83). Thus, his definition of mental phenomenon included such things as hearing, seeing and feeling. Brentano noted that a mental phenomenon cannot be achieved without awareness of a physical phenomenon.

The example of birdsong can be extended to provide clarity between Brentano's physical and mental phenomenon. When a person hears a bird sing, they experience an "object" (physical phenomenon) and they recognise it as such: birdsong. The inner awareness that arises for that person as a result of hearing birdsong is a mental phenomenon. In this case, the inner awareness may consciously present itself through the emotion of joy. Birdsong does not generate joy. The act of hearing birdsong generates joy. In this instance, the mental phenomenon is the feeling of joy that is caused by hearing birdsong.

Edmund Husserl studied mathematics before turning his attention to philosophy and studying with Brentano (Moran & Mooney, 2002). He is considered to be the "founder of phenomenological philosophy in the modern sense of the term" (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010, p. 169). Husserl was particularly taken with Brentano's intentionality and descriptive phenomenology (Dowling, 2007) and developed his own interpretation of intentionality. He was concerned that a simplistic understanding of physical and mental phenomena might engender a sense of within and without of oneself. Husserl emphasised that both physical and mental phenomena "are mine, they are both within personal experience or awareness" (Ashworth & Chung, 2007, p. 19).

Husserl believed that meaning is constructed through the process of being deliberately and consciously attentive to piecing together the limits and form of a recognised object or "thing" – whether real or imagined (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010). Being deliberately and consciously attentive involves stepping back from regular common-sense ways of thinking and moving to a relevant phenomenological attitude. Husserl believed that the reality of a phenomenon from a researcher's perspective was not relevant unless it had been subjected to rigorous examination. The researcher must enact the *epoché*: attempt to be entirely objective and *turn off* all human consciousness by blocking or "bracketing" all of their own associated opinions and experiences (Ashworth & Chung, 2007; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Giorgi et al., 2017), thus leaving the researcher free from presuppositions (Spiegelberg, 1994).

Husserl believed that "the psychological reduction [seeing a phenomenon as the sum of its parts] leads to a phenomenological science, whereas the transcendental reduction [without interpretation, describing a phenomenon by the conditions that make it possible] leads to a phenomenological philosophy" (Theodorou, 2015, p. 19). Initially Husserl valued both approaches to phenomenology; however, during the latter part of his career he favoured the transcendental approach (Spiegelberg, 1994), and he also rated knowledge and description (an epistemological perspective) over the nature of being and existence (an ontological perspective; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010).

Husserl's final phenomenological philosophy therefore emphasised description of a phenomenon by the conditions that make it possible, without influence of any untested researcher preconceptions. There were three steps to Husserl's philosophical phenomenological method: focusing on and describing the phenomenon, assuming the attitude of the *transcendental phenomenological reduction* (stepping back and looking at the conditions that make it possible), and describing the essence or unique characteristics (Giorgi et al., 2017; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

The Example of Birdsong. Returning to the example of experiencing joy when hearing birdsong: a Husserlian approach would aim to block any personal phenomenologically unproven theories of joy or birds singing and describe and analyse the limits and form of the experience of hearing birdsong and joy experienced by participant/s during that moment. The researcher would be seeking to know the essential elements of the experience of hearing birdsong that makes it unique. Focus would be on how participants perceive and talk about the phenomenon (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014); data would be gathered using qualitative methods (such as interview or participant journaling) that enabled themes to be identified and developed systematically.

Connecting Phenomenology and Hermeneutics: Heidegger (1889–1976)

While Husserl valued an epistemological perspective over an ontological one, Martin Heidegger, one of Husserl's students, took the alternative view (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010). As Laverty (2003) explained, "Husserl was interested in acts of attending, perceiving, recalling, and thinking about the world and human beings were understood primarily as knowers" (p. 24). Heidegger contended that description was a distinct form of interpretation (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010). The essential meaning was to be found in the relationship between the reporting of a phenomenon and the researcher's perceptions of that phenomenon as a result

of the reporting (Heidegger, 1975/1988). In Heidegger's view, the participant/s and the researcher created data together (Laverty, 2003) and so Husserl's notion of bracketing was not conceivable.

Heidegger's focus on ontology is credited with connecting phenomenology and hermeneutics (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Henriksson & Friesen, 2012). Hermeneutics is a term drawn from stories of Hermes, the Greek messenger. It was Hermes' job to interpret messages from the gods and deliver them in a way that mortals could understand them. Hermeneutics is therefore predicated on the belief that (even though they are commonly practised) communication and interpretation are complex (Farrell, 2020; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Giorgi and Giorgi (2010) explained:

> Because Heidegger (1962) emphasized Dasein rather than consciousness, and Dasein is the place where the question of being arises and its task is to interpret the meaning of being, Heidegger advocates an interpretive methodology, which converges with the tradition of hermeneutics. (p. 168)

Where Husserl would have looked for knowledge of the qualities of a phenomenon, Heidegger's approach to reduction was to seek themes related to the nature of being and existence. A person's presence in the world meant that they had prior understanding and experiences of the world, which they then continued to simultaneously form and be formed by (Laverty, 2003). For Heidegger, the "space" in which a person is present in the world is important; where we are in the world influences our experiences (Heidegger, 1962). Moreover, he proposed that "being cannot be grasped except by taking time into consideration" (1962, p. 19); each person is affected by the time that they are "in" in any given moment as well as what has gone before and will happen in the future.

Heidegger believed that a researcher needed to recognise and carefully consider their own prior understanding and experiences of the phenomenon before undertaking research, have a clear grasp of the phenomenon and any related theoretical approaches, and decide on an appropriate *angle* with which to analyse the data gathered. Moreover, concerned that earlier interpretations of intentionality simply inferred an intellectual process, Heidegger developed his own term, preferring the notion of *comportment* as he believed that it included the action of moving towards that which was the focus of intention (Klaskow, 2011). Heidegger's interpretative approach simply brought what was understood at that point in time out into the open. Newly discovered understanding at various stages through the study leads the

researcher back into this process in a cycle of movement between the whole phenomenon and its parts – the hermeneutic circle (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Laverty, 2003). The process stops when the researcher feels that satisfactorily unambiguous meaning has been found (Laverty, 2003).

The Example of Birdsong. An Heideggerian approach to investigating joy when hearing birdsong would involve detailed and cyclic consideration of participants' prior understandings and experiences of hearing birds singing and feeling joy. The researcher would examine research into theoretical approaches related to what it is to feel joy when hearing birds singing and other forms of singing in the world. Alongside this process, the researcher would give detailed consideration to their own prior understanding and experiences of hearing birds singing and feeling joy in order to combine all of this information in the service of an appropriate angle for the study. An appropriate angle would facilitate descriptive interpretation that represents the current connections between the researcher's and participants' collective experiences of the unique nature of feeling joy when hearing birdsong.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology: Gadamer (1900–2002)

Hans-Georg Gadamer studied with Heidegger. Gadamerian hermeneutic phenomenology focused on how "language reveals being" (Sloan & Bowe, 2014, p. 7). For Gadamer, what was said, and how it was said, mattered. While Heidegger was an interpretivist, Gadamer believed that "dialogue, rather than individual phenomenology, and interpretation permeates every activity" (Dowling, 2007, p. 134) and "the commonality of language ensures a shared acceptance of meaning and ability to vocalise thoughts" (Regan, 2012, p. 288). Like Heidegger, he recognised the value of the hermeneutic circle.

Gadamerian hermeneutics is a dialogical process between researcher and participants intended to clarify the conditions for understanding (Laverty, 2003), resulting in a melding of boundaries so that the "horizon of the interpreter and the phenomenon being studied are combined together" (Dowling, 2007, p. 134). Within this process, the researcher is obligated to explore all elements of past understandings from all perspectives and not just perspectives to which they are naturally drawn.

However, Gadamer (2008) questioned whether it was possible for any person to hold a truly neutral understanding of experiences, and he believed that it was more appropriate for researchers to acknowledge this rather than attempt to find an impartial and removed

standpoint. He cautioned against merely looking for significant understandings as "it could very well be that only *insignificant* things in historical scholarship permit us to approximate this ideal of totally extinguishing individuality" (p. 6). Gadamer was also interested in the impact of distance in time on a person's recollections of and relationship with past experiences. He believed that we view recollections of experiences through "everything we want, hope for, or fear in the future" (p. 9). For Gadamer, hermeneutics acknowledged bias. He conceived the hermeneutic circle to be a process which, through the support of familiar and common understandings, enabled the researcher to be "opened up for the new, the different, the true" (p. 9). He emphasised the importance of eliminating "every element through which a misunderstanding can creep in" (p. 8). For Gadamer, the critical role of hermenuetics was to avoid assumptions and connect in a open and genuine way.

The Example of Birdsong. Had Gadamer investigated joy when hearing birdsong, he would have recognised the "central interpretive relationship of the researcher within the qualitative research" (Regan, 2012, p. 287). He would have taken account of tradition and history; presupposition and areas of agreement; the influence of time on recollection, understanding and emotion; and the nature of the language used. He would have utilised a cyclical process of reflective interpretation to write a descriptive interpretative account of the participants' and researcher's new shared sense of what it was to hear birdsong.

Table 1 outlines the type of question that might have guided the research should Brentano, Husserl, Heidegger or Gadamer have investigated the joy of hearing birdsong.

Table 1

Type of Question That Might Have Guided Research – Brentano to Gadamer

To investigate joy when hearing birdsong…	…these researchers might have asked:
Brentano	What is it about the act of hearing birdsong that generates joy?
Husserl	How can I know (describe and analyse) the qualities of joy in the act of hearing birdsong?
Heidegger	How can we understand the meaning (describe and interpret the sense) of joy in the act of hearing birdsong?
Gadamer	How can we conceive a new and unique shared understanding of the joy felt when we hear birdsong?

Hermeneutic Phenomenology: van Manen (1942–)

Max van Manen also took a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. He blended descriptive phenomenology and reflective interpretation, and situated and connected researcher involvement with a focus on language. However, for van Manen, there were some significant refinements.

Like Husserl, van Manen employed descriptive phenomenology; however, where Husserl's aim was to study and describe a phenomenon, van Manen (2016) viewed phenomenological research as providing an interpretive description of phenomena as a "possible human experience," as described and encountered by the reporter and the researcher together. Both Heidegger and Gadamer looked for meaning, and reflection was an important part of this process. Where Heidegger sought to interpret, Gadamer pursued shared interpretation. van Manen (2007) argued that "only through reflection can we *appropriate* [emphasis added] aspects of lived experience" (p. 16). While van Manen did not directly define his use of the term "appropriate," the context in which he used it in his writing suggests that he was thinking of the Latin word appropriāre: to make one's own (Collins, n.d.). Rather than merely taking meaning (or finding shared meaning), the researcher uses a reflective interpretation process to find understanding: to make the meaning their own. So, like Heidegger before him, van Manen questioned Husserl's view of bracketing. van Manen (1997) believed that it was not possible to "simply try to forget or ignore what we already 'know,' we might find that the presupposition persistently creep back into our reflections" (p. 47). While it is critical that the researcher does not allow their own biases to cloud the search for the essence of an experience, hermeneutic phenomenology champions the place of researcher reflexivity.

For van Manen (2016), phenomenology provides the way for a researcher to analyse a phenomenon for what it is and for its difference to other phenomena around it. By embracing hermeneutic phenomenology, the researcher discards the need to theorise and becomes involved in the process of uncovering the meaning of an experience, enabling the opportunity to expose its origins and veiled facets. However, his approach to becoming involved is more complex than that of Heidegger and Gadamer. Heidegger's methodology includes the participant in the process; Gadamer's joins the participant in a dialogic process – van Manen (1997) spoke of "being-given-over to some quest" (p. 31). van Manen was invested in the process because of a deep personal connection to the research.

In keeping with Gadamer, van Manen (1997) felt that it was critical that the researcher aimed to fully understand the language used to describe a phenomenon. He asserted that human science research is "the curriculum of being and becoming" (p. 7), and that "phenomenology describes how one orients to lived experience, hermeneutics describes how one interprets the 'texts' of life" (p. 4). For van Manen, understanding the language used when describing phenomena was more than agreeing on definition. Where Gadamer looked for shared acceptance of meaning, van Manen (2016) believed that it was the language that was "implicit in the constitution and experience of meaning" (p. 52).

However, van Manen (1997) acknowledged that his hermeneutic phenomenological approach to human science was "decidedly unmethodological in a purely prescriptive or technocratic sense" (p. 3). Rather, he focused on the meaning and purpose of studying human experience and recognised philosophers and researchers who had gone before as providing a "source and methodological ground for present human science research practices" (p. 30). In fact, van Manen presented no specific method but rather a "methodological structure of human science inquiry" (p. 34), offering a "dynamic interplay among six research activities, not to be learned as a set of procedures," but rather to guide the researcher to their own unique understanding (Hultgren, 1990, p. 362). van Manen's (1997) activities were:

1. turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
2. investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualise it;
3. reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;
4. describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
5. maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
6. balancing the research context by considering parts and whole. (pp. 30–31)

van Manen and the Example of Birdsong

van Manen would have been intensely curious and have had a deep personal investment in understanding the nature of joy (van Manen, 1997). If he was to have investigated the joy a person experiences when hearing birdsong, he would have drawn on his own experience and chosen participants who had had this experience. He would have talked to them on a number of occasions, going in and out of their stories and his own; making connections with what he previously knew to be true, to help make sense of this phenomenon. He would have used and listened to language very carefully, reflecting on what was said and how. And he would

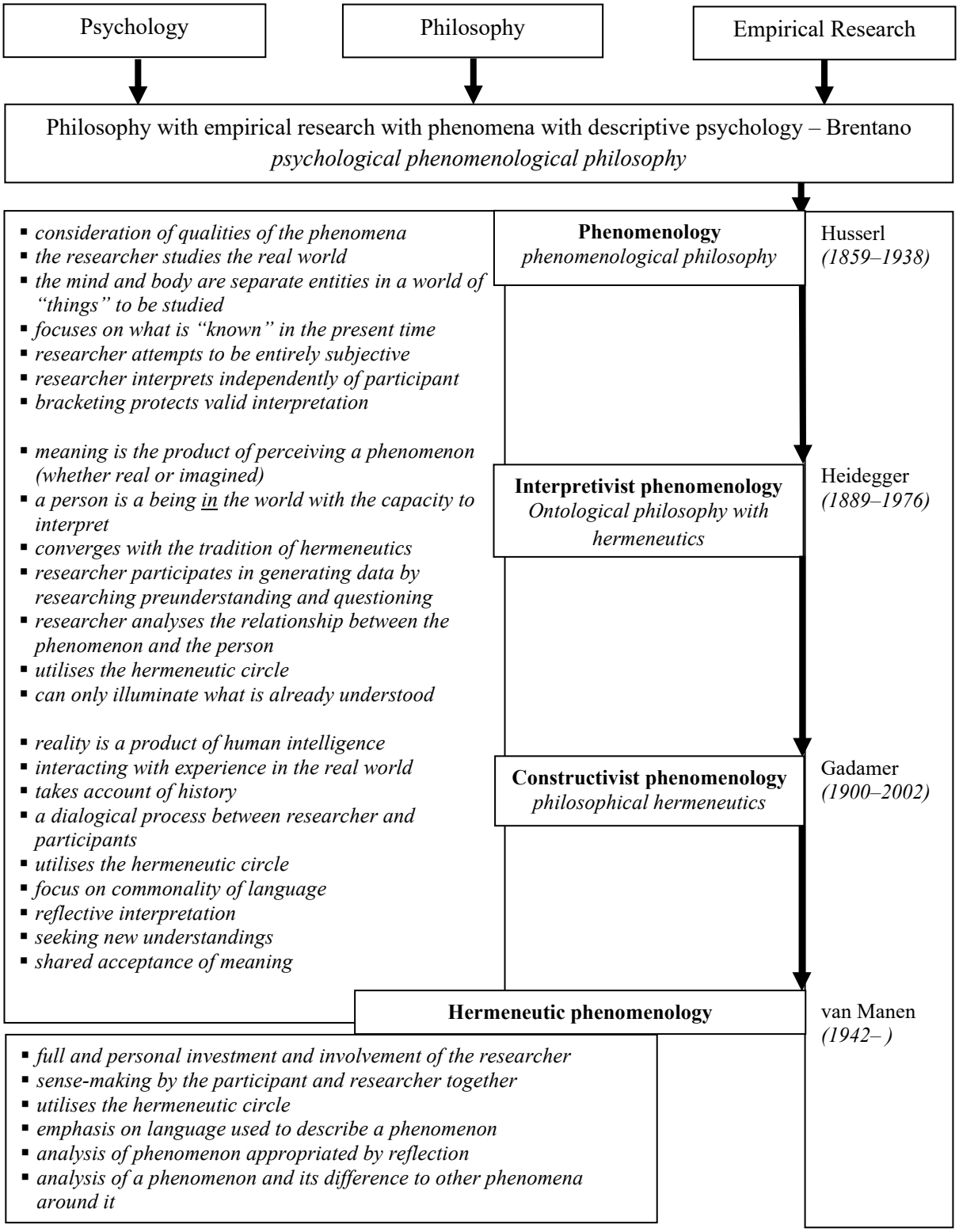
have written. He would have written and rewritten: interpreting and continuously reflecting as he looked for understanding of joy in this instance and its difference to joy at other times. van Manen's research question might have been: What is the distinctive nature of the joy felt when hearing birdsong?

Summary of the Lineage of Phenomenology: Brentano to van Manen

Since Heidegger's development of hermeneutic phenomenology out of Husserl's descriptive phenomenology at the beginning of the 20th century (Gadamer, 2008; Sloan & Bowe, 2014), a range of traditions of phenomenological inquiry have been developed, each giving a unique understanding of the nature of some "things" (van Manen, 2016). Figure 2 gives an overview of the foundations of my research methodology from Brentano to van Manen, detailing the key features of Heidegger's, Husserl's, Gadamer's and van Manen's approaches.

Figure 2

Foundations of My Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach Including van Manen



My Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach

The process of exploring and laying open possible meaning in hermeneutic phenomenological research has no set prescription or predetermined system (Ironside, 2005; van Manen, 1997). It aims to contribute new understanding to a shared and dynamic body of knowledge. Hermeneutic phenomenological research draws this understanding from the experiences of those involved in the study and invites the reader to engage with these understandings, creating an environment for analysis and reflexive learning for everyone (Ironside, 2005).

Hermeneutic phenomenological research does not follow constructivist thought. Constructivist thought involves the researcher and participants in a process of co-constructed meaning. This process leads to the development of a theory or theories based on what has been revealed (Mojtahed et al., 2014). Hermeneutic phenomenological research does not generate new theories or specific results (van Manen, 2017) and the methods that are used for gathering data are seen as more than just instruments. The methods are valued for how they influence, and are influenced by, the researcher's understanding of the particular phenomenon (Ironside, 2005). Moreover, each hermeneutic phenomenological study is unique and must be understood for its uniqueness. This is both a potential disadvantage and an opportunity. If the researcher does not adhere carefully to the principles of hermeneutic phenomenology, what may have been intended to be a process of exploring, laying open and inviting the reader *in,* may inadvertently, and erroneously, become a process of examining and explaining (Diekelmann & Ironside, 2006; Ironside, 2005; van Manen 2017).

Based on these premises and ideas, the sections which follow describe the hermeneutic phenomenological study as I conceived and carried it out. These sections present the design of my study and introduce my participants. I also outline ethical considerations related to approval and consent and describe the methods used for gathering, interpreting and presenting the data.

Beginning My Research

The process of turning to the phenomenon (van Manen, 1997) was complex and difficult for me – largely because of my inexperence in aligning my question to an appropriate research approach. I knew what I wanted to know, but I did not know how to "get there." At the beginning of this study I knew that my question "deserved" a qualiative approach but it was during the study that van Manen's work on researching lived experience opened up a deeper

way of thinking. It is fair to say that beginning my research was a progressive – and transformational – experience of turning to the phenomenon for me. I began by reviewing literature about qualitative research approaches, believed that my research related to a sociocultural context, selected a semistructured interview methodology and designed – and piloted – my first interview guide. During this time, I discovered literature about the hermeneutic phenomenological approach in general. I also found literature that employed a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to research about practice that was focused on mentoring, education, guiding, leading or caring for others in a professional capacity (see for example, Bernay, 2012, 2014; Sohn et al., 2017; Wilson, 2012, 2014). I kept coming across van Manen's work. While not all studies about lived experience utilised van Manen's approach (see for example, Thurgate, 2018), my review of international literature found that a considerable proportion of recent studies about lived experience at least referred to his work. I recognised an alignment between this work and the approach that I was trying to take in my study, and so I looked further. I found that van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach had been applied to research about practice internationally for some time and at the time of this study there was a strong presence of this form of research in medical and health science in particular (for example, Porteous & Machin, 2018; Rutberg & Öhrling, 2012). I also found some evidence of van Manen's influence in fields such as human resource development and business. For example, Coates (2017) utilised the six research activities proposed by van Manen in her study of how Generation Y perceived their experiences of work. Saghafian and O'Neill (2018) took van Manen's thematic approach to conducting a phenomenological study into Iranian business education students' experiences of teamwork during learning. Saghafian and O'Neill's focus on business education students appeared to be representative of a wider trend. Many of the hermeneutic phenomenological studies utilising van Manen's approach that I found focused on experiences of learning, often within the practice domain. It was therefore no surprise to find that educational researchers also utilised van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach when the focus of the study was on lived experiences.

I heeded Sohn et al.'s (2017) assertion that "many contemporary researchers claim to use a phenomenological approach but seldom connect their methods to tenets from phenomenological philosophy" (p. 121). I wanted to clarify my understanding of how van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach had been applied by others so that I could have confidence in the design of my study. I selected three theses to review closely.

The three theses that I selected were Davey (2010), Bernay (2012) and Wilson (2012). Each of these researchers had used van Manen's (1997) *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy* – a text that had greatly influenced my own developing thinking. Davey (2010) outlined a phenomenological study which aimed to take steps towards theorising a professional identity for teacher education in New Zealand. Bernay (2012) reported on a hermeneutic phenomenological study of five beginning teachers who were introduced to mindfulness during their initial teacher education programme. Wilson (2012) described a hermeneutic phenomenological study which searched for insights into how mentors for student nurses could be better prepared and supported. While each of these researchers referred to van Manen's work and used a number of his texts (and there were some similarities because of this), it was also interesting to see how different each of these studies were.

Each of these researchers was personally committed to and connected to the "world" of their study. They all investigated lived experience and they all turned to the phenomenon (van Manen, 1997). Davey (2010) and Bernay (2012) investigated the phenomenon as they lived it with their participants (van Manen, 1997). Davey's (2010) position as a teacher educator gave her the sense that she had "insider status" (p. 59). She undertook her study in order to understand her own experiences alongside the experiences of others. Bernay's (2012) personal journey and practice in mindfulness led him to introduce his students to mindfulness exercises which, in turn, led to the development of his study. However, Wilson's (2012) situation was different. Her participants were mentors for student nurses and she was the clinical placement facilitator. For Wilson (2012), there was a degree of conceptualisation involved. She knew about the world of her participants and she participated in that world, but she was also clear that she did not have, and had not had, lived experience (van Manen, 1997) of being a mentor.

There was a small number of participants in each study. Each of these researchers used interview as their data-collection method; two of them also used participant journaling. In each of these studies it was clear that the researcher saw both the parts of their phenomenon and the whole context involved (van Manen, 1997). All three researchers emphasised the importance of "reflecting on the essential themes which characterised the phenomenon" (van Manen, 1997, p. 30) and they each approached this aspect of their study in a study- and self-specific way. Writing and rewriting was an important feature of all of these studies; although, again, different approaches were taken for different purposes. Davey (2010)

worked within a constructivist-interpretive paradigm and took a "grounded, inductive approach to data analysis" (p. 60) "to frame the parameters and dimensions of a professional identity" (p. 62). She used researcher journaling to support her development of descriptions of the phenomenon. Bernay (2012) "viewed the beginning teachers' experiences as 'text'" (p. 105) and he turned to "contemplation through meditation and other mindfulness exercises to assist the thinking process" (p. 107). He valued the use of "poetry as a way to express understanding as it comes from the interpreter's own language … to see the key parts, and relationships within a text or experiences that are the basis of the description" (p. 95). Wilson (2012) applied Heidegger's (1962) Dasein, and van Manen's (1997) four lifeworld existentials as interpretive lenses to analyse her data. She used the "process of writing and rewriting as insights and understandings developed and deepened" (p. 98).

All three of these studies were phenomenological; however, only two of the researchers, Bernay (2012) and Wilson (2012), took a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. While each of these studies were quite different to the others and none of these researchers specifically noted that they were using van Manen's (1997) six research activities, the elements of his six activities are apparent in all cases. While each of the studies selected referenced van Manen's work, none of them adopted his approach entirely. There was good reason for this in each case and I found this realisation reassuring. As Spiegelberg (1994) noted, the development of phenomenology is shaped by its basic principles and the circumstances to which those principles are applied. Davey (2010) sought theory related to teacher educators within the field of teacher education. Bernay (2012) was keen to support beginning teachers' wellbeing and Wilson (2012) wanted to promote greater understanding of mentoring practice and workplace learning.

I reviewed these three theses in order to evaluate whether I could claim to be taking a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. I did not want to be a researcher asserting an approach without a connection to tenets from phenomenological philosophy (Sohn et al., 2017). I came to the conclusion that my study did not need to be like any other. My study needed to be authentically itself. While ardent hermeneutic phenomenologists might challenge my initial data-gathering protocols as being too structured, the foundation of my study was "philosophical in nature" (Earle, 2010, p. 286). Each of the three theses reviewed had taken a different approach – because that is the nature of hermeneutic phenomenology. This process strengthened my certainty. Moreover, throughout the study, in keeping with van Manen's (1997) six research activities, I worked to preserve:

- an unbiased, systematic, intentional approach to uncovering meanings and remaining oriented to the fundamental question: what is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers?
- focus on a broad scope of current knowledge which was well examined for its ability to strengthen the research;
- meticulous and thorough attention to all aspects of the research, from the construction of questions through to the interpretive descriptions;
- the application of logos: listening carefully to what could be learnt about what that kind of experience was like for the mentor teachers in my study;
- thoughtful, self-critical, continuous examination of the research goals and methods.

This means that my thesis documents my consistent ontological (Bryman, 2008) stance throughout this study, with an iteratively developing data-gathering approach (the more that I listened and learned, the more open my questioning became) and deeply invested in a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to analysis.

The Design of My Study

The design of my study is founded on Husserl's, Heidegger's, Gadamer's and van Manen's work and follows van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological guidelines for performing human science research. I began by turning to a phenomenon which seriously interested, committed and challenged me to reflexively consider my view of the lived experience of mentor teachers for preservice teachers. The process of orientation to the question led me through a cyclic process, adjusting to suit everyone involved as I moved in and out, drawing on current knowledge and listening carefully and reflectively to the lived experiences recounted by my participants.

Throughout this process it was my responsibility to remain oriented to the fundamental question, to diligently attend to all of the necessary aspects of the research, and to constantly seek the understanding that lay in the space between me as invested researcher and the participants. It was my role to step back, focus on the phenomenon and understand the conditions that make it possible in order to find and describe the essence of the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. This cyclic reflexive process enabled me to benefit from the knowledge and understanding that came from the world view of others (researchers and the participants), This whole process resulted in new understanding

of the unique essence of the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

While there is no definitive method of data gathering and analysis for hermeneutic phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1997) there is a foundation of respected approaches from which to draw. Moustakas (1994), for example, presented two modified methods: one from van Kaam's work in 1959 and 1966, and a second method developed from the work of Stevick in 1971, Colaizzi in 1973, and Keen in 1975. Moustakas was a frequently cited phenomenologist who drew from the work of Husserl to develop a "design for obtaining and collecting data that explicates themes, meanings and essences of human experience" (p. xiii). I looked to Moustakas's phenomenological research methods as I developed and confirmed my method (see Chapter 5, Gathering the Stories: Organisation, Considerations and Processes, onwards, and Chapter 6).

Participants in the Study

Because this was a phenomenological study, it was important to consider an appropriate number of participants. The sample needed to be small enough to manage and large enough to support the integrity of the study (Creswell, 2014). It was important to get the right people who could share their experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, because the group of participants needed to have experience with the same phenomenon (Bryman, 2008; Punch, 2005).

While recommendations about the suitable number of participants for phenomenological studies range from five to 25 or more, opinions vary and there are no specific rules (Creswell, 2014; Punch, 2005). Malterud et al. (2016) recommended that focus is kept on *information power*: the contribution possible from the participants involved, through careful attention to the research design during the study. For this study, I privileged Malterud et al.'s view and sought a small number of (six) participants who were preparing to work with their first preservice teacher during practicum. Each of these participants had responded to an invitation (which included a participant information sheet and consent form) that had been forwarded to them by their school principal (see Chapter 5, Confidentiality for further details about the process). Once six teachers had responded and agreed to participate in the study, no further participants were sought.

Demographic Information

It was important that I gathered sufficient demographic detail so as to inform the study without impinging on the participants' privacy and confidentiality. For example, I limited demographic data gathering to details such as the participants' gender, ethnicity, preservice teaching qualification and years of teaching experience. The six participants who shared their experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers in this study were all teaching in primary schools in a large city in the North Island of New Zealand.

All of the participants were fully registered teachers, with teaching experience ranging from 2 to 8 years. They had all gained their teaching qualification in New Zealand. Five of them had embarked on careers and other study before gaining their qualification and had come to teaching later on. None of them had undertaken the role of mentor teacher before becoming involved with this study; however, some of them had coached or tutored others during previous careers. They all taught in schools where preservice teachers were commonly placed for practicum. Table 2 provides an overview of the participants' demographic information.

Table 2

Demographic Information at the Beginning of the Study

Pseudonym	Teaching experience	Ethnicity	Experience before teaching	New Zealand qualification	Other school responsibility
Tahi	8 years	Māori/NZ European	Previous study after high school and career	Yes	Curriculum leadership
Rua	2 years	Other European	Previous study after high school and career	Yes	Curriculum leadership
Toru	5 years	New Zealand European	Previous study after high school and career	Yes	Curriculum leadership
Whā	2 years	Pasifika	Previous career	Yes	Curriculum leadership
Rima	5 years	New Zealand European	Previous study after high school	Yes	Curriculum leadership
Ono	6 years	New Zealand European	Previous study after high school	Yes	Curriculum leadership

Introducing the Participants

As Micsinszki (2014) acknowledged, "the language of another is embedded in the writing process" (p. 44) of a hermeneutic phenomenological study. This study is not my voice alone; it gives voice to the participants' "personal life stories" (van Manen, 1997, p. 67). For the same reason that I introduced myself in the introduction of this thesis, I will introduce the six mentor teachers in this study now to give background to the significance of their individual experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Each mentor teacher is known by a pseudonym, using the numbers 1 to 6 in te reo Māori (the indigenous language of New Zealand). I have kept these descriptions close to the participants' descriptions of themselves.

Tahi

Tahi gained a 1-year Graduate Diploma in Teaching having graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, with education and psychology majors, some years earlier. Initially Tahi embarked on a 14-year career as a community psychologist; however, when Tahi and her husband discussed the options for travel that his career as a teacher might offer, she decided to gain a teaching qualification too. This decision was both acknowledgement of her deep-seated commitment to teaching and learning and a pragmatic one. She knew that by qualifying to be a teacher she could pursue a career and accommodate the needs of their own children – that she was taking "a family-friendly career path."

Tahi had been a teacher for 8 years when she took on her first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers: 4 years at an international school and 4 years in the school in which she worked. At that time, she was teaching in a large, urban primary school and it was common for this school to host preservice teachers throughout the year. For Tahi, being a teacher was being needed and being responsible. She was the person who was responsible for looking after the students. Students in her class needed her to know each of them well, to know their needs and to have the knowledge, skills, and time to support them as learners. Being a teacher was a collaborative experience for Tahi and it was hard work; it was her role to ensure that there was space for all of the students in the class to be heard and to be involved in relevant, authentic learning.

Tahi encouraged the students in her class "to speak their mind" – to "think about what's happening in their environment and in the classroom and have a say." She knew that co-construction was an important feature of learning today and that focus fitted with her beliefs

about teaching and her style as a teacher. Tahi tried to "mould the students' energy and enthusiasm" because she knew that "research said that you should get them motivated and energised for learning." Tahi wanted the students she taught to experience "positive, creative and productive" learning opportunities in her class. But that was a "hard thing" to do; it is "not easy moulding energy and enthusiasm for a full class of students. They've all got energy and some of them have got energy for three."

Rua

Rua gained a 1-year Graduate Diploma in Teaching when she was in her late 20s after graduating with a bachelor's qualification in sociology. Initially Rua embarked on a career in retail and she had been managing a store when she decided to go back to university. Rua found working in retail "demoralising"; she felt that there was "a kind of capitalist culture" involved and this wasn't a good fit for her. During her time in retail, Rua met "a lot of young girls who just had no direction and no skills." She sensed that these girls were not "really motivated." "Lack of motivation and enthusiasm and positivity was a really big thing" for Rua. It stood out for her "as a massive contributor to a person's place in society." Rua "wanted to do something positive and helpful to others and the world around" her.

Rua had been a teacher for almost 2 and a half years when she took on her first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. At that time, she was teaching in a large, urban primary school and supporting the school as "head of the Māori curriculum team." It was common for this school to host preservice teachers throughout the year. Being a teacher was contributing to something Rua valued highly: education. Being a teacher meant making a difference and that really mattered to her. The students in her class needed her to listen to them and to contribute positive learning opportunities to their lives so that they could in turn experience motivation and enthusiasm for their own learning. Being a teacher was also frustrating for Rua, particularly in relation to those things that limited her ability to help: being overly restricted by schedules and requirements and lack of time.

Rua believed "that [students] could achieve anything they wanted as long as they were passionate about it." She wanted to "instil the idea of passion into students" so that they could "find a direction and a 'place.'" When Rua thought about what influenced her approach to being a teacher she looked back to her own education and "the girls" she "managed while she was in retail." She felt that her degree in sociology was relevant to teaching and "definitely relevant to working with others." For Rua it was about how the

students she taught were able to "convey passion and motivation in the work that they did." Too much "teacher-made stuff and too many guidelines" resulted in "your voice through the students as opposed to the students' thoughts and their perspectives showing through." Seeing the students' voice in their work was what made Rua "most satisfied."

The biggest challenge for Rua was "that feeling that there isn't enough time to do things the way" that she "really want[ed] to do them" and so she felt that nothing was done as well as she'd prefer. Rua thought that "the inflexibility in school timetables inhibited kids from being able to really sink their teeth into a lot."

Toru

Toru "did camp counselling in the USA" when he left school and "that kind of led" him to "working with kids." He "previously studied both IT [information technology] and digital photography" at "certificate and diploma level" and "worked a lot of odd jobs." For one of the jobs, Toru "ended up being manager … having a team of about seven or eight at two stores." Toru felt that these experiences "helped with working with people, working within a team and especially time constraints." When Toru was studying digital photography, he found that he "picked up things pretty quickly." He found that he would "be helping people who didn't pick it up as quickly" and he would end up "seeing the progress and seeing the spark and the click when somebody gets something." Toru would think, "Wow, that's really quite cool." And so, when it came to photography, "it didn't really kind of spark an interest" in him. But, having an interaction between somebody learning and being the person that does that, Toru thought, "alright, cool, I'll see what teaching is like." And so, this led Toru to begin his studies towards a 3-year Bachelor of Education (Teaching) Primary degree.

Toru had been a teacher for 5 years when he took on his first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers: "3 years at this school and … 2 years doing ESOL [English for speakers of other languages] teaching overseas." Toru taught in a large, urban primary school where hosting preservice teachers was common throughout the year. For Toru, being a teacher was all about learning. It meant being a learner himself and that he was able to share those moments when another person learnt. There wasn't another feeling like that. Toru's own negative experiences with teachers as a student contributed to the way he was as a teacher now. Teachers had a responsibility in the community and he was motivated by a desire to do things better. Being a teacher took effort and it could be demanding. Creating progress was an important element of the experience for Toru and he looked for this on a daily basis.

Toru measured his own success as a teacher by being able to recognise progress for the students he taught: whether that was "leaps and bounds" or "just one tiny little thing." He liked "to focus on improving something each day," even if it was "something tiny, like realising that yesterday didn't work so well." "Having a classroom that is respectful of each other" was important to Toru. It was important to remember that "you are a role model and that you have expectations" of the students "so that they know how they are supposed to behave towards each other." Toru thought about that feeling of "juggling so much at once ... picking and choosing where you want to spend your energy," and how sometimes that meant "a lot of coffee!" He thought that "there's always areas that you identify as places to improve" and about "realising that it's all not going to be perfect."

Whā

Whā had always wanted to be a teacher but she "ended up working for about 3 years instead of going straight into study." The desire to become a teacher stayed with Whā, though. She loved working with students and that was "a big driver" for her. Whā took on administration work, and there were definitely roles that included teaching junior colleagues and providing them support. When she thought about what she wanted to do, Whā knew that teaching was something that she had always been passionate about. Whā was "passionate about social justice, or rather … injustice," and wanted to do what she could to try to help people who were struggling. She believed that school could provide "a constant for them" and a place that's safe.

Whā started her studies, took a year off when her daughter was born, and then completed a 3-year Bachelor of Education teaching qualification. She counted herself as lucky. She knew that she had a lot of support and didn't think that she could have done it otherwise. But at the same time, Whā knew that her experience "kind of made" her. Her daughter was a real driver for Whā to finish her degree, and that feeling was something that "pushed" her "along when it was fairly hard." Whā's daughter had just turned 3 when she began her teaching career.

Whā had been a teacher for 2 years when she took on her first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. At that time, she was teaching in a large, urban primary school and supporting the school leading the Pasifika group and she was "on the Māori curriculum team." She valued being able to work collaboratively with, and learn from, the teachers in her current school. In the past, Whā had had some leadership responsibility for physical

education. It was common for this school to host preservice teachers throughout the year. Being a teacher was hard for Whā: there was a lot to do. Teaching gave her the opportunity to make a difference in the world, to help address injustice. She cared and she wanted to help and to be connected. This desire ran deeply for Whā because she believed that education was a powerful tool for change. As a teacher she was needed; her students needed her to provide a safe place where they could develop trust and gain the opportunity to become well-rounded, fulfilled and happy. The students' families needed her too; for Whā, being a teacher meant being involved with families and helping them to make connections for their children.

Whā liked to "create a learning space that felt exciting and new," but that was quite hard – and she had "a huge range of abilities in the classroom." Whā taught a lot of "learners who needed a lot of support, including contact with [her] every day for reading, writing and maths." She found it hard to reach everyone, to give those learners everything they needed to boost them up to where they need to be, and to support the ones she wanted to extend. Whā "put a lot of time and effort into creating learning experiences that were going to be really exciting for the kids and engaging for them, as well as meeting all their learning needs." That could be quite difficult at times because there's so much other stuff that had to happen in those hours where the students weren't there. There was always a lot to do. There was "a huge amount of assessment and reporting" – lots of paperwork. Whā felt that "sometimes it was quite disheartening," trying to do it all.

Whā needed to have strong relationships with the families of the students in her class. But there was "new pedagogy around teaching" that wasn't the same as when some parents were at school. Sometimes they found it quite hard to see what Whā and the students were doing – and why they were not doing things the way they used to get taught. She thought about the "real balancing act, trying to do it all." Whā believed that there "needed to be more emphasis on being empathetic, and work ethic, and relating to others and all those other kinds of things" in schools, because when she "thought about people who were happy and fulfilled and successful as adults – it's not all about their reading, writing and maths."

When Whā thought about what influenced her approach to being a teacher, she recalled memories of "those really awesome teachers that you hold onto and the ones that you connect with." She thought that "having really passionate teachers" when she was younger "made coming to school really fun" and made her "want to learn, just in their approach to things and their approach" to her. Whā had "certain teachers who really went out their way"

to get to know her and she "genuinely felt like they cared" about her, were interested in her – "and that made coming to school so much fun." But, "on the flip side," Whā remembered teachers who made her "feel like she wasn't always meeting expectations." She "didn't think it was deliberate," but Whā just didn't feel comfortable. The teachers' approaches in those cases, "could have such a profound effect" on Whā "wanting to come to school and how much effort" she put in. Those experiences made Whā want to teach – and helped her learn about how she didn't want to be.

Rima

Rima was not sure what she wanted to achieve when she left high school. She studied business to begin with and then science. Without a clear sense of direction, Rima stopped her studies and "tried to think about what it was" that she "really wanted to achieve." She knew that she "wanted to work with people" because she "liked to move around, to help other people out." Rima thought that this made teaching and nursing possible options for her. "Working with students was kind of a passion" for Rima. She felt that it was "more positive and you can see change, so that's why" Rima "ended up doing primary teaching." And so, having taken other directions initially, "falling into" teaching hadn't been Rima's "first choice but it's been the best choice." She graduated with a 3-year Bachelor of Education (Teaching) Primary degree.

Rima had been a teacher for 5 years when she took on her first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. At that time, Rima was teaching in a large, urban primary school where hosting preservice teachers was common throughout the year. Being a teacher brought Rima happiness. Working with the students in her class meant that she was around positive people and she was involved in a positive endeavour. She was constantly learning: from the students and for the students; she was part of the students' progress. Rima was busy and challenged, and that was satisfying.

Rima knew that she had learnt "huge" lessons from the students she had taught. She had "had lots of special needs kids" in her class, and she thought that had taught her "a lot in terms of how to handle kids and what sort of programmes to run … and what they're going to value." Rima felt that "those sorts of kids just bring you joy every day because they're so positive – and they give 100%, and they move forward quite a bit as well."

The students Rima taught had challenged her "to think about how to fill their gaps and what they needed to learn." These students are "not always 'at' the curriculum level and they have

different ways of learning, so you have to find those different ways to hook them in." Rima thought that it was "about building confidence." She knew that the students in her class were providing her with opportunities for "professional development." She reflected on the likelihood that "the gaps that the kids had are probably the gaps" that she had in her own "content knowledge." Rima had noticed that she had "bridged those gaps now" and the students in her class were "moving forward." With the huge commitment that was needed, Rima worked to maintain balance in her life. She knew that teaching could take over "if you let it."

Ono

Ono had "always been interested" in teaching. Her parents said that, even when she was younger, she would "always be trying to help with younger family friends" when they visited. She started doing babysitting as soon as she could and was a nanny from the age of 16. Ono just "really, really enjoyed looking after kids and hanging out with them." And so, Ono completed a 3-year Bachelor of Education teaching qualification. Ono "looked after a Down's syndrome boy for about 6 years" and had "completed some papers to do with IHC [a group which advocates for and supports people with intellectual disabilities]." She felt that she had a responsibility to try to be "that person who's positive and everything's great and it's amazing and trying not to let what you've got going on affect your teaching." But that was hard to continue sometimes "especially when there was stuff going on in your life."

Ono had been a teacher for 6 years when she took on her first role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. At that time, she was teaching in a large, urban primary school and supporting the school with e-learning leadership. It was common for this school to host preservice teachers throughout the year. Being a teacher, for Ono, was when she was making the right connections with students so that they were enjoying their learning. It involved professional relationships and genuinely knowing the students. Liking all of the students wasn't necessary – but loving them unconditionally was.

Knowing the students, "like really getting to know the students: how they learn, what their personalities are like" was the most important thing for Ono as a teacher. She thought that was "the best way to teach students. There's no point trying to teach a visual learner by talking at them." Ono felt that she was successful as a teacher "when the kids were actually having fun while learning."

When Ono thought about what influenced her approach to being a teacher, she recalled memories of when she was at high school. Ono had a teacher who "kind of singled" her "out" and she "went from being the top of her class for maths to the bottom within 6 months." That influenced the way that Ono treated students. She was "really careful about not individualising," not "pulling out kids." That teacher at high school "didn't really pick on" Ono "but it was pretty obvious" that she "wasn't one of the teacher's favourites." And that's one thing that really influenced Ono. She believed that "you've got to love all kids regardless of who they are." Ono had "noticed since becoming a teacher there are those kids that just drive you insane" and she knew that there were going to be "those kids who somehow just continuously bug you – but you can't let them see that."

Gathering the Stories: Organisation, Considerations and Processes

Using a Research Assistant

In this section I describe the processes that were involved in the organisation (including involvement of a research assistant and ethical considerations) and data-gathering methods for this hermeneutic phenomenological study. As this study exemplifies multiple voices (Micsinszki, 2014; van Manen, 1997), I adopted Vagle's (2018) preference for the term *data gathering* for my study. Vagle preferred the term data gathering over data collection because he felt that gathering was "more free, open and inviting" and carried with it a sense that "we could just as easily be taken up by the phenomenological than doing the taking" (p. 18).

The decision to work with a research assistant was not made lightly and was the result of a substantial review of the intent of this research as well as a search of literature for examples. I read literature about the use of language translators and literature about research organisation involving team work (see for example, Al-Amer et al., 2016; Berman & Tyyskä, 2011; Sohn et al., 2017; Temple & Young, 2004). It was clear that there were potential complexities when another person is involved in translating between more than one language (see for example, Al-Amer et al., 2016; Temple & Young, 2004); however, such concerns did not apply to this study as it was conducted in English. Studies conducted by teams of researchers were of more relevance. A number of disciplines such as health science and education routinely work in teams and dialogic communities to broaden and enrich research (see for example, Sohn et al., 2017). I found that the research focus has the potential to benefit from this approach and so does each individual researcher (Sohn et al., 2017). Ultimately, my review of literature reinforced my decision to use the support of a

research assistant; I would not have been able to progress with my study if I had not. In reality, working with a research assistant strengthened my examination of the research goals and methods and deepened my recognition of the critical worth of material from the lived experience of the participants. I argue that my use of van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach – with a research assistant, Sarah – positively challenged and enabled my ability to be an *integral actor* within this study and to broaden and enrich my own experience of the world (Gadamer, 2008).

Sarah. The selection of the "right" research assistant was critical and could have been an impossible task. Being the research assistant also meant becoming my dialogic companion through the data-gathering stage: a person with whom I could read and discuss the participants' transcripts, question, clarify, and consider perceptions and interpretations. I was fortunate to be able to find a person who was open to take this journey with me, bring her own story to the research, and remain oriented to *my* fundamental question.

Sarah had completed her own doctoral studies and so she was familiar with the general expectations of the role. Sarah did not have any teaching experience and therefore had never been a mentor for preservice teachers. A member of Sarah's family was a teacher and one of her children started school during the time that Sarah was involved in data gathering for this study. This gave her knowledge and insight that was helpful, but no personal agenda in relation to the study. Sarah was therefore *a naive outsider* in relation to mentoring preservice teachers; she was not influenced by her own experiences. The benefits of this position when gathering phenomenological data is often noted in the research literature (for example, Davis et al., 2004; Taylor et al., 2015).

Having Sarah conduct the interviews meant that she was the person to develop the researcher–participant relationship. Developing this relationship was important so that the participants felt secure and trusted both Sarah and me when they shared their experiences.

Sarah gathered the data. She assisted with the recruitment phase, ensured that the participants and I had no contact or knowledge of who they were (or of each other), arranged interview appointments, prepared for the interviews in advance with me, practised before interviewing, attended to questions and clarification and developed rapport with each participant. Sarah was careful to protect the recounts of the participants' experiences from any bias that she might have by limiting her intervention, using the participants' own language, avoiding assumptions by checking for understanding, recording the interviews

and discussing each transcript with me. Sarah also took careful notes and ensured that her written record keeping was accurate (Chenail, 2011). And so, throughout the data-gathering phase of this study, Sarah's involvement contributed to important occasions of examination and awareness, and helped me to remember my obligation to the research and the participants (Vagle, 2018). I knew that I was not immune from constructing my own theories as the researcher (van Manen, 1997). Constant vigilance was needed.

Sarah quickly developed a personal investment in, and commitment to, my question and to helping me to check and recheck what was said and how it was said. Involving Sarah kept me honest and helped me to understand. Sarah's position as research assistant was invaluable. Her involvement was an important mechanism for holding me accountable to my decision to know the lived experience of others, to remain oriented to the question and to interpret the "texts" of their lives (van Manen, 1997). Moreover, the ability to declare and name the research assistant as integral to this research was part of my attraction to van Manen's approach.

Researcher Memoing

Memoing supports the integrity of qualitative research by providing a record of the researcher's learning and judgements (Groenewald, 2008). I used memoing as a way to personally connect to the study and as a tool to help me sort and re-sort data. Memoing helped me to review my thoughts as I worked to make sense of the participants' experiences. As I describe in Chapter 6, The First Interview Guide, I created a number of Excel spreadsheets, each one becoming the basis for others. I used each of the spreadsheets with my associated memos to help me recognise the details of the participants' experiences, identify themes and see the flow of questioning and responses between interviews. I found the memoing process of writing and rewriting my thinking helped me stay oriented to the research question during the data-gathering phase, which supported the development of my ability to ensure that during the data-analysis phase I truly enacted a hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

Ethical Considerations Related to Approval and Consent

This research was conducted in accordance with the ethics approval gained from The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee (012903: Approved, 16 September 2014). As well as receiving assistance from Sarah, the research assistant, I was supported during this study by a research administrator and transcriber. Three further levels

of consent were obtained. Firstly, consent was obtained from the dean of the university faculty to access the database of all primary schools in the region which regularly hosted preservice teachers during practicum (see Appendix A for sample consent form). Secondly, the participant information sheet (see Appendix B for sample participation information sheet) and the consent form were emailed by a research administrator to the principal of each school on the faculty's database, seeking permission to access staff at that school site. Once the principal's consent was secured, the research administrator sent the principal a participant's invitation email, with the participant information sheet and consent form as attachments (see Appendices A and B). The principal was asked to forward the email and attachments to interested and eligible teachers within their school. Teachers who were interested in participating in the study were invited to contact the research administrator by phone or email for further information and then contact details were forwarded to Sarah.

Confidentiality

Sarah, the research administrator and the transcriber all signed confidentiality agreements (see Appendix C for sample confidentiality agreement). All data gathering was done with one person at a time. Document-collection processes and meeting protocols were established between Sarah and me to protect confidentiality. As I have noted, one of the appealing factors of this research model was my freedom to acknowledge Sarah's work as the research assistant. I am indebted to Sarah, and I am grateful that she agreed to be named in this thesis.

Protocols for confidentiality were outlined in the participant information sheet and consent form (see Appendices A and B) and these were discussed with each participant prior to, and during, their first meeting with Sarah. However, when research involves recruitment of a small number of participants from within a specific community of practitioners, there is potential for natural sharing to occur and therefore anonymity was not offered. The mentor teachers were alerted to this prior to giving consent.

As the researcher, I had no access to the identifying details of any school or individual involved in the study. Sarah de-identified all data and so no participant or school was named in any discussion or record that I used. Gender identifiers for the participants (as given by them) are used in this thesis when relevant in order to assist the reader to connect with the essence of the experiences presented and to honour the individual voices in the mentor teachers' stories. When another person is mentioned in the report it is only in relation to the mentor teacher and the mentor teacher's experience. Remaining generic was important

because neither the preservice teachers nor the school colleagues with whom the mentor teachers worked were the subject of the study. Pseudonyms and the pronoun "she" (which I used generically) for each mentor teacher, their preservice teachers and colleagues, were used when I worked with the stories that are presented in Section 2 of Chapter 7.

The Semistructured Interview

In order to perform this research effectively, I needed to construct data-gathering protocols and procedures that would encourage the participants to share their experiences freely with me (Taylor et al., 2015) – through Sarah.

The interview is a commonly used method of data gathering in qualitative – and phenomenological – research. Researchers interview participants in order to hear about their lived experiences (Punch, 2005; Seidman, 2013; van Manen, 1997). Seidman (2013) argued that "there is no single approach to interviewing research that could be called phenomenological" (p. 15). Referring to his own work as well as that of others, such as Heidegger and van Manen, Seidman noted four important considerations. He called these considerations *phenomenological themes*. Through the phenomenological interview the researcher is:

- seeking the essence of an experience that the participant has already lived,
- attempting to gain understanding of the participants' experience from the participants' perspective,
- focusing intensely on the details and the words that the participants use to describe experiences,
- obliged to understand the context of the participants' experiences in order to understand the experience (Seidman, 2013).

Seidman (2013) believed that these themes were important because they enabled the researcher to justify the "rationale and the logic" for the interview schedule and procedures (p. 19). I knew that I was asking participants to examine an experience that they were no longer immediately connected to. As the researcher, I can never truly know another's lived experience and so these attitudes and obligations were critical to my authenticity and trustworthiness as a researcher using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

While there are several other types of interview procedures that I could have employed (for example, unstructured, structured and focus group), I chose to use semistructured

interviewing. It has been argued that unstructured interviewing is more appropriate for phenomenological studies (Ayres, 2008) because there is a more specific requirement on the interviewer to avoid leading questions. The unstructured interview "has many of the characteristics of a prolonged and intimate conversation" (Punch, 2005, p. 171). However, in both cases (semistructured and unstructured interviewing), the onus is on the interviewer (and in the case of this study, the researcher) to "understand, interpret, and respond to the verbal and nonverbal information" (Ayres, 2008, p. 811) offered by the participants. By utilising the semistructured interview method, I had the opportunity to develop an interview guide that gave Sarah prompts for gathering some specific initial detail and remaining oriented to my research question (Bryman, 2008), as well as the freedom to encourage the participants' free-thought responses (Ayres, 2008; Punch, 2005). Moreover, the structured nature of the interviews moved along the continuum from semi- to unstructured during the study as the relationship with each participant and my knowledge of hermeneutic phenomenology developed; that is, the last interview was less structured than the first interview.

Practical Complexities

van Manen (2016) described the difficulties that people often have when trying to recall and talk about experiences. He noted a common tendency for people to talk about detail, observations and views about a situation rather than describing the circumstances as they experienced them personally. The researcher must be mindful that "phenomenology tries to show how our words, concepts, and theories inevitably shape and give structure to our experiences as we live them" (p. 58). van Manen's reflective phenomenological method aimed to reveal and challenge conjectures and theories that lead us to form closed understandings, so that "the nature of the now, as we live it" is revealed (p. 56). A key role for me in this study was to retain focus – and ensure that Sarah retained focus – on the nature of the transition for the participants – how they existed in the world – and not their actions as mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Moreover, van Manen's (2007) emphasis on the importance and timing of reflection is critical. He delineated "experience-as-we-live-through-it in our actions, relations and situations" and "retroactive phenomenological reflection" (p. 16). It is through the reflection on, and telling of, the reporter and reflecting by the researcher after the experience that aspects of lived experience can be appropriated and thus interpreted. However, there is a

problem involved with trying to capture moments in time: recollections occur after the fact. This means that it is not possible to truly comprehend an experience. Regardless of the difference in time between experience and recollection "the past is always too late to capture the present as present … and therefore, we will never know its full meaning and significance" (van Manen, 2016, p. 59). Hermeneutic phenomenological researchers must understand, acknowledge and embrace this. Hermeneutic phenomenology is only able to capture experiences as they are recollected, reflected on and reported, after they have occurred. van Manen (2016) viewed hermeneutic phenomenological research as "the most radically reflective and most demanding approach to the study of life as we experience it" (p. 60).

This study had two stages of data gathering:

- Stage 1: Pilot study – first interview "trial run" with three experienced mentor teachers for preservice teachers
- Stage 2: The study – three semistructured interviews with each participant over a period of 2 years.

These will be detailed in the next chapter.

Summary

In Chapter 5 I have described the foundations of my hermeneutic phenomenological approach to this research. The design of my study has been explained and I have introduced the six participants in this study. The processes that were involved in the organisation of this study have been described and ethical considerations related to approval and consent and confidentiality have been outlined. This chapter also introduced the data gathering protocols and procedures of this study and discussed practical complexities related to hermeneutic phenomenological research.

Chapter 6. Research Procedures

Introduction

Chapter 6 outlines the research procedures employed to gather and analyse data in this hermeneutic phenomenological study. My cyclic process of finding understanding through the hermeneutic writing process is explained. The pilot study and the study are outlined and matters related to rigour and trustworthiness are described.

Research Procedures

From the outset, I committed to continuous and iterative reflection (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Laverty, 2003) on the research question and my orientation to that question (van Manen, 1997). And so, connecting to the "world" of mentoring preservice teachers, listening carefully, and scoping current knowledge, were an integral aspect of my study design from the outset. Moreover, I needed to take an open and exploratory position (seeking the vibrations of meaning implicit in the phenomenon; Vagle, 2018) during this study – and I needed to do that without experiencing the interview process with my participants.

Stage 1: Pilot Study

While carrying out a pilot study does not guarantee that the study will be a success, it does offer the opportunity for important learning to occur (Kezar, 2000; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The manner in which interviewing began would influence the protocols and procedures of subsequent interviews and so it was important that I was prepared. It was therefore critical that I conducted a trial run of the first interview with some experienced mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Meeting Informally With an Experienced Teacher

I began the pilot study by meeting informally with an experienced teacher who was relatively new to the role as mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I knew the experienced teacher as a colleague and we had recently worked together to support a preservice teacher's practicum. I trusted that this colleague would understand the focus of my study, share her experiences and thoughts freely with me; that I would be comfortable asking her questions and she would be comfortable giving me advice. I drafted ideas for my first interview schedule before meeting with this colleague so that we had a point of reference during our discussion. By talking with this colleague and articulating the question for my study, I was able to

understand how the questions that I was developing were perceived by someone "in the field" and gain clarity about my thinking. I took notes during the meeting and referred to them as I moved to the next step of my data-gathering stage. I found from this informal meeting that I was developing questions that would encourage the participants to speak freely about their experiences but that I needed to ensure that each question was worded in a way that avoided possible multiple interpretations.

Four themes emerged from my discussion with this colleague. These themes related to teachers and mentor teachers for preservice teachers and included their

1. decisions and experiences
2. activities and practices
3. sense of self
4. thoughts about their future self

While my research approach required open questioning, I knew that I needed to gather some background in the first interview in order to understand the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher for preservice teacher in context. This meant that the first interview was the time when demographic data and information about the participants' experiences as preservice teachers, being mentees, and supporting/mentoring others needed to be gathered. I knew that I also needed to gather detail about the participants' decision to become a teacher as well as their decision to take on the role of mentor teacher for preservice teachers. The participants' experiences as teachers and before they had embarked on their teaching career might also provide useful information. Lastly, during the first interview, I needed to begin to understand the participants' thinking about their activities and practices – and sense of self – as a teacher. It would be important to understand their beliefs about teaching and learning and who they thought they "were" or should be as a teacher. Details about what they valued about being a teacher and their understanding of effective pedagogy would also be useful. Additionally, it would be helpful to know what their aspirations were, particularly the sort of teacher and mentor they wanted to be. All of this information could inform subsequent data gathering about their experiences as each of them transitioned from being a teacher only to a teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I drew on this informal meeting and the themes that emerged, as well as my prior research and literature, to construct a semistructured interview guide and protocols for the pilot study (see Appendix D for sample).

Preparing and Piloting the First Interview and Interview Guide

Preparation. I approached three experienced mentor teachers who all agreed to participate in the pilot study. I had worked with each of these colleagues when they had mentored preservice teachers in the past and I trusted each of them to give me clear and honest feedback. They all worked in the same school and were comfortable to discuss my study together and so we arranged to work as a focus group. While the pilot study interview questions were designed for teachers who were not experienced mentor teachers, I recognised the critical and useful perspectives these experienced mentor teachers would be able to offer me.

We met after school at the school where they worked. The mentor teacher who had initially advised me was one of these three colleagues and this gave a useful link between these two steps in this pilot study. All three of these colleagues were happy for Sarah to be involved and so we conducted the pilot interview together, with me modelling the interview and protocols using the interview guide – and discussing questions and approaches with the pilot study colleagues and Sarah throughout the process. This gave Sarah the opportunity to work alongside me. At the same time, working alongside Sarah gave me the opportunity to directly experience and critique the interview protocols and guide with her after the pilot interview (Bryman, 2008).

Guide for the Pilot Interview. The pilot interview was designed to elicit demographic and background information about the participants and introduce the orientation of the study. I created a table using the themes that had arisen from my reading and discussion with the experienced colleague (decisions and experiences, activities and practices, sense of self, thoughts about their future self). I then used these themes to create prompts for questions, focusing on decisions and emotions, approaches and beliefs, and what the participants were anticipating the experience would be like for them. The pilot interview guide included a substantial amount of background notation for Sarah: reminders about information for the participants and the orientation of the study.

Stage 2: The Study

Using Feedback From the Pilot

Feedback from the pilot interview and dialogue with Sarah informed my review and refinement of the first interview in the study (see also, The First Interview Guide, p. 104). In particular it became clear that greater attention to introducing each section of the interview

was needed in order for the participants to understand the intention of the study and to facilitate connection between the participants and Sarah. Additionally, some of the vocabulary choices were examined. For example, use of the word *significant* was discussed; what did I mean by significant?; significant in relation to what? The word *memorable* was suggested as an alternative. While it was acknowledged that an open approach to questioning was required for this study, it became clear that questions related to previous opportunities were more easily understood when an example was provided, thus confirming my decision to use a semistructured interview approach.

Preparation for, and Conducting, the Interviews

As Seidman (2013) pointed out: "technique isn't everything, but it is a lot" (p. 81). In preparation for the interviews in each interview phase, Sarah and I discussed, and she practised, the interview protocols. We reviewed the importance of active listening, following up on detail in responses and asking to hear more, and summarising. Sarah knew that her role was to help each participant to explore their experiences as they remembered them rather than probing for detail that she identified (Seidman, 2013).

Sarah met with each participant at a time and place of their choosing. In each case, the interviews were conducted at the participant's school during their working day. Each interview was digitally recorded and Sarah took field notes to supplement the data gathered. Recordings were transcribed by a transcriber, who signed a confidentiality agreement. Sarah shared the transcripts of previous interviews with the participants when they next met or via email so that the details recorded could be verified, and she ensured that no identifying material was left on the transcripts. The transcripts were then sent to me.

Sarah and I kept in touch via emails, meetings and phone calls between each interview. As well as reviewing participant experiences and reflecting on the essential themes and future questions together at these times, Sarah kept me informed of progress related to the interview schedule and participant availability. After each interview phase, I constructed a new interview guide (see Appendix D for sample) and reviewed it with Sarah and my supervisors. At each stage, my interview design process was guided by the question: what do I need to know and attend to now? Each interview guide was designed with a combination of closed prompt questions, and open questions that gave opportunity for free dialogue. However, on its own, each interview guide appears to be more structured than the resulting interview. This is because each interview guide for this study must be read with the understanding that

it was only one tool in this study and designed to allow for flexibility (Bryman, 2008). During each of the interviews, Sarah drew on detailed conversations with me and her own skill as an interviewer to ensure that the focus was on open questioning that enabled the participants to share their experiences.

Sarah knew that it was important that the interview felt like a conversation for each participant; she was aware of the importance of considering and responding to the emotions that arose and she managed her own input (Seidman, 2013). This personal, sometimes unrecorded, aspect of the interview process was something that I could have missed out on because at times this detail was shared during the incidental settling-in discussion that occurred between Sarah and each participant before the recorded/transcribed interview began. However, Sarah was consistently mindful of these important moments, and ensured that they were recorded in her field notes and shared with me.

A Series of Three Interviews

Seidman (2013) proposed that Schuman's concept of a series of three interviews enabled the researcher to "establish the context … reconstruct the details of the experience … [and] encourage participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them" (p. 21). Although I did not set out to follow the prescribed protocols and procedures of Seidman's method, I found his themes to be very useful when I thought about gathering the participants' stories for my longitudinal hermeneutic phenomenological study. I believed that when participants are being asked to share their experiences in such a personal way, one or two interviews are not sufficient. It is necessary for the researcher to develop relationships of trust and a foundation of knowledge about the phenomenon. This foundation of knowledge can then be used by both the researcher and the participants in the service of open communication about the participants' experiences. I adopted a three-interview approach for the main study to establish the context, reconstruct the details and encourage reflection. Table 3 outlines the schedule for the pilot and main study interviews.

Table 3

Interview Schedule

Participant	Pilot study interview 1.5 hours	First interview 1 hour	Second interview 1 hour	Scoping interview 1 hour	Final interview 1 hour
Waru, Iwa, Tekau*	March 2015				
Tahi		March 2015	October 2015	December 2015	February 2017
Rua		March 2015	October 2015		February 2017
Toru		March 2015	October 2015		February 2017
Whā		March 2015	October 2015		
Rima		March 2015	October 2015		February 2017
Ono		March 2015	October 2015		

Note: *Pseudonyms for the three experienced teachers who participated in the pilot study; First interview occurred before the first mentoring event; second interview occurred after the first mentoring event; final interview occurred after two to three mentoring events.

During the main study, the participants were interviewed between two and four times over a period of 24 months, depending on their availability. The interview schedule included:

1. A first interview with each of the six participants to establish the context and their experiences prior to beginning their work as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers;
2. 2a. A second interview with each of the six participants that was designed to gather data about the details of their early stages of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, explore what these experiences meant for the participants and build researcher understanding. At this time, each participant had been a mentor for one preservice teacher;

   2b. One researcher-scoping interview designed so that I could probe more deeply into the data gathered and use that learning to design the final interview;
3. A final interview with the available participants to continue to gather data about the details of their early stages of mentoring, construct and reconstruct the details, and encourage reflection at a time when they had mentored two or more preservice teachers.

Only four of the participants were available to be interviewed at the end of the study. It is important to note that once consent had been given and the second interview conducted, employment circumstances changed for two of the six participants. This meant that they

were no longer mentor teachers for preservice teachers and participation was no longer possible. Neither of these participants requested that their data be withdrawn from the study. Table 4 details the number of preservice teachers each participant mentored during this study.

Table 4

Number of Preservice Teachers Mentored During This Study

Participant	Number of preservice teachers
Tahi	2
Rua	3
Toru	2
Whā	1
Rima	3
Ono	1

As the focus of this research was on each participant's experience, it was "not comparative, or correlational" (Vagle, 2018, p. 87) and therefore there was no imperative that all data were gathered at the same time. I identified key intervals during the study for the participants and myself as the researcher. These intervals were

- before the participants undertook the mentor teacher role;
- after the participants had worked with their first preservice teacher;
- after the participants had worked with more than one preservice teacher; and
- in line with Vagle's (2018) view that there did not need to be a regimented timeframe for each interview, Sarah scheduled interviews when the participants were ready.

The First Interviews

The first interviews gave me the opportunity to establish the context (Seidman, 2013); and to gain demographic information, and a foundation of detail about the participant's prior experiences related to mentoring, as well as an understanding of the participants' interpretations of their new experiences. As this was the first time that Sarah met the participants, she took some time to introduce herself, so that the participants could make a personal connection with her, relax, and feel at ease (Punch, 2005). Sarah also used this opportunity to get to know the participants to help her feel comfortable as the interviewer. During this initial part of establishing the participant–interviewer–researcher relationship it was critical to remain mindful of Taylor et al.'s (2015) caution that setting an expectation of

"the right or wrong thing to say … can make it difficult if not impossible to get at how [the participants] really see things" (p. 118).

Sarah talked about me and the focus of the research at this point. She used my name at this time and through each subsequent interview so that I was introduced as, and continued to be, an integral partner in the process. During the first interview, Sarah reiterated the purpose of the study and explained how the interviews would be conducted. The first interview provided an initial opportunity for the participants to clarify any questions that they had and Sarah explained the terms of participation and confidentiality. She reminded the participants about how they could make contact with her.

The First Interview Guide. The first interview guide (see Appendix D for sample) aligned very closely to the guide for the pilot interview – including the reminders about information for the participants and the orientation of the study for Sarah (see Appendix D for sample). It began with a series of structured questions in order to gather the required demographic information and establish the context for each participant (Seidman, 2013). As noted previously, the demographic information gathered was limited in order to maintain anonymity. The focus on context was intended to reveal only the participants' prior and current experience as a teacher, some "conversational" information about the school situation (to support Sarah's connection with each participant and my general understanding), and the participants' broader experience related to mentoring.

I reused the table of themes that I created for developing the pilot interview guide to help me create the first interview guide for this first interview. I used the themes (decisions and experiences, activities and practices, sense of self, and thoughts about their future self) to review the questions and prompts that I had included in the pilot interview guide. I copied all of the questions from the pilot interview guide on to an Excel spreadsheet. I then created an additional column so that I could categorise the questions using the themes. For each question, I asked myself: had the comparative pilot interview question gathered any information about the participants' context, decisions, emotions, recollections and expectations – and how had this occurred? As I worked, I recorded my own impressions and connections that I found between the questions and pilot interview responses and feedback (van Manen, 1997). As a result of this work, the first interview guide focused on exploring the participants':

- past experiences of being mentored (particularly as a preservice and beginning teacher),
- experiences of activities and practices that had impacted their current practice and sense of self as a teacher,
- expectations of experiences that might occur for them as they became a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

Second Interviews

The second interviews gave me the opportunity to gather data about the participants' experiences up to that point: as they transitioned from being teachers of students to being teachers of students *and also* mentors for preservice teachers. The second interviews were scheduled at a time when the participants had worked with one preservice teacher. This meant that each participant had some experience to draw on, but they were still very new to the role. The second interviews had some semistructured questions and some opportunities for free dialogue. To prepare for the second interviews, Sarah and I discussed the participant's responses, intonation and demeanour during the first interviews. I returned to the interview transcripts, Sarah's field notes, the record of our discussion, notes from the pilot study, related literature and my own experiences, continually mindful of the fundamental question (van Manen, 1997): what is it like for these participants to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers?

I created a second copy of the Excel spreadsheet that I used for developing the first interview guide. I transferred all of the participants' responses from the first interview to this second spreadsheet and added two further columns. In one column I recorded whether each question was open or closed, so that I had a visual overview of how each question fitted into the purpose of my interviews. In the second column I categorised the questions using the themes (decisions and experiences, activities and practices, sense of self, and thoughts about their future self). This review of the transcripts from the first interviews confirmed that the first interviews had gathered data about

- how the participants were beginning to define the role of a mentor for preservice teachers;
- the opportunities for their own learning that the participants were mindful of;
- the participants' own experiences of being mentored and supporting others who were not preservice teachers;

- judgements that the participants were making about themselves as people, teachers and their forthcoming role as mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

While this was important data for establishing my foundational understanding, the second interviews needed to elicit more substantive detail and begin to enable greater understanding (Seidman, 2013) about the nature of the participants' experiences. I specifically identified closed questions and the themes (of decisions and experiences, activities and practices, sense of self, and thoughts about their future self) on the second interview guide (see Appendix D for sample) so that Sarah could be aware of, and deal with, closed questions appropriately. This meant that she had a constant visual reminder of the importance of maintaining the focus on open questions and free dialogue when gathering data during these interviews.

Researcher Scoping (Interview 2a)Following the second interviews, I asked Sarah to arrange an additional interview with one participant. I wanted to explore avenues for my own learning (van Manen, 1997) so that I was clear about the guiding questions for the final interviews. At this point of the study, I was becoming more conversant with phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. As a result, I repeatedly questioned my approach to gathering data in the first two interview phases and I was very conscious that the final interviews would be my last opportunity to gather crucial phenomenological data.

I examined the first and second interview transcripts, spreadsheets and notes, discussed them with Sarah and made further notes (van Manen, 1997). In her first interview, Tahi had referred to *knowing from other teachers* and I wanted to understand this aspect of Tahi's experience of learning about becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Brookfield (1986) advised that adult learning is both self-directed and influenced by the context in which a person works. He saw self-directed learning as both a process and a product: the process of "understanding and awareness of a range of alternative possibilities" (p. 58) and the product of this process. I wanted to know more about where awareness of the range of alternative possibilities might come from and whether I needed to rethink my considerations about context in this study.

Tahi agreed to participate in an additional interview and I created an interview guide designed to support Sarah to draw out more information about the statements that Tahi had made. I wanted to know whom someone who was new to mentoring preservice teachers talked with about the role, and why these people were chosen; experiences that had that

prompted conversations with others; and other types of support received from other mentor teachers. The guide for this interview looked more like a set of notes shaped by Tahi's first transcript than an interview script. I included notes about adult learning and references to literature, drawn from my own memoing, as prompts for Sarah.

For example, one of the questions that I included in the guide was: Could you please think about the conversations that you have had about mentoring preservice teachers and talk to me about what these conversations were about? My notes on the guide beside that question included:

1. Prompts from things Tahi had touched on in her first interview, for example:
    - Relationships,
    - Sharing the class with another adult,
    - The range of things that a preservice teacher needed to be helped with,
    - The tasks of being a mentor teacher (for example, observing preservice teachers, giving feedback, guiding the preservice teachers' learning, and having hard conversations),
    - Perceived expectations from the preservice education provider.

2. Notes from my memoing:
    - need to know what *needs to be done*;
    - opportunity to understand the nuances of convention and semantics which guide practice in each particular context;
    - focus on teaching techniques and strategies which promote learning for preservice teaches and him- or herself;
    - *developing* set of attitudes about the relationship between teaching and learning, and how together they lead to growth in knowledge and understanding are integral to overall learning;
    - accountability for guiding and ensuring the establishment and recognition of achievement of purpose/s.

As described earlier, Sarah and I discussed the interview guide in detail before she used it to interview Tahi. From this interview I gained some interesting insight into why Tahi sought support and how she received support during her first practicum experience as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. For the most part, however, this interview focused on Tahi's experiences of the situations that arose during the first practicum and how and why she

sought support featured as supplementary discussion. It was clear to me that, having undertaken the role of mentor teacher for a preservice teacher, Tahi's focus was on what she had experienced and what she thought about the preservice teacher's approach and learning. While the additional information about support was interesting, this researcher-scoping interview helped me decide that it was not necessary to pursue that line of data gathering further. I felt that intentionally pursuing information about mentor-teacher support would restrict the participants' voices and go against hermeneutic phenomenological principles, because the intention of the final interviews was to explore the *meaning* in each of the participants' experience (Vagle, 2018), so that I could gain understanding of their perspective (Seidman, 2013). The key value of this researcher-scoping interview was in the writing and rewriting that I did, my consideration of the parts and purpose of this study (van Manen, 1997) and in how it reinforced my decision to offer as much free dialogue opportunity as possible in the final interviews.

Final Interviews

As I noted earlier, final interviews were conducted with four of the participants. The purpose of these interviews was to encourage each participant to reconstruct the details of their experiences and encourage reflection (Seidman, 2013). To prepare for the final interviews, I discussed each of Tahi, Rua, Toru and Rima's previous interview transcripts and notes with Sarah in detail. I reexamined the introductory and second interview transcripts, my spreadsheets, and the researcher-scoping interview with Tahi. I reviewed Sarah's notes and my memoing and noted my reflections on the data gathered so far (van Manen, 1997). I wanted to gain as clear an understanding of the details of their experiences as possible (Seidman, 2013). Sarah and I identified experiences that the participants had noted as significant in the second interviews. The experiences that we identified were

- not knowing that a preservice teacher intended to withdraw from the practicum,
- mentoring a preservice teacher in an innovative learning environment (ILE) setting,
- mentoring a less experienced preservice teacher and then mentoring a more experienced preservice teacher,
- mentoring a preservice teacher who had already been offered a teaching job.

I designed the final interview guide so that each participant was encouraged to freely describe their recollections and reflections about these and other experiences that had arisen since they were last interviewed. The final interview guide was simple but Sarah's skill in

the interviewing process was critical. Once Sarah had introduced the focus of each interview her role was to summarise what she had heard and prompt with statements such as: How did you feel about that? What was that like for you?

Research Assistant Field Notes and Discussions

While Sarah took consistent care to ensure that I received transcripts of the interviews that gave the full account of what was said by the participants, I was not there to hear and see how the experiences were described. While I did have access to recordings of the interviews, I did not perceive body language, facial expressions or the look in a participant's eyes; I wasn't able to fully appreciate the substance of each participant's voice. Sarah was the one who was paying attention during the interview (Taylor et al., 2015). Sarah's field notes and our discussions about each interview were therefore a critical component of the data gathering for me. Sarah's notes were brief and descriptive. She noted the things that came to mind for her: participants' demeanours, and her thoughts and impressions. Our discussions offered me the opportunity to experience the interviews alongside her and provide guidance for the next steps in our process.

Working With the Stories

I feel uncomfortable with the term *participants*. I have worked with the stories of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono for 7 years. "Participants" feels clinical, as though I have taken elements of their lives to put under a microscope (Vagle, 2018). But that is not the case and so it is not how I use the term. I am grateful to Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono for sharing their experiences so that I could embark on this journey. They have been with me as I have talked with mentor teachers for preservice teachers in schools, attended conferences, taught and mentored preservice teachers and discussed the importance of preservice teacher education with colleagues. I have asked questions, reflected on what their responses might be telling me and asked again. I have read and connected and written, lost and found my way over and over, and read and connected and written again. Through all of this time, I was moving in and out of the data, developing a deeper and deeper understanding as I lived it (van Manen, 1997).

Heidegger (2008) suggested that "questions grow out of a confrontation with 'subject matter.' And subject matter is *there* only where eyes are" (p. 4). At first, my eyes were on details about Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono and their experiences and on what the literature reported. As I grew as a phenomenological researcher, my eyes turned from

superficial details to the places where questions arose (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Heidegger, 2008). I saw and understood words in a different way, wondered why I had not "seen" a particular comment or word before and found literature again as if for the first time. As I worked with the stories, I began to move from knowing to interpreting and being in each experience (Heidegger, 2008; van Manen, 1997) with Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono.

Early Stages

My journey of understanding with Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono began by way of polite introductions. I was turning to the phenomenon of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers (van Manen, 1997). I was committed to remembering what was it like for me and to understanding this experience for others – but I didn't know how to achieve that. I began analysing my participants' stories when I received their first transcripts (Spiers & Smith, 2019). I continually re-turned to my research question (van Manen, 1997) and reflected on what it was like for these teachers to become mentors. To begin, I worked from the first Excel spreadsheet that I had created and read each statement. For each statement, I asked myself what it revealed about my participants and their decision to become mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I reflected particularly on their past experiences of being mentored, their sense of self as a teacher and what they expected this new role would mean for them. I began writing my own thoughts, questions and prompts in response to reflecting on each transcript. I built on these early memos each time I revisited the participants' transcripts and when I wrote and rewrote their stories. For instance, my first memos related to Tahi's first interview included:

> Interesting focus on outside influences on becoming a mentor … expected in school/needed if you want progression … not strong reflection of "I think that I have this to offer and therefore I want to." Evidence of wanting to engage with learners for their benefit, formative approach. Key expressed concern is about personal relationships – links with focus on relationship when talking about being mentored ... "getting on." Examples given about the "how to." Interesting reference to research. Difficult to ascertain if Tahi knows what mentor teachers for preservice teachers do … there seems to be a sense of confidence in support. Doesn't seem aware of what it will mean for self with someone observing practice and discussing this. It will be interesting to explore whether Tahi sees a relationship between her practice as a teacher and as a mentor but I don't think now is the time to ask ... perhaps after next

> practicum ... “what aspects of your approach to teaching do you think you ...?” (VM preliminary memoing)

Becoming More Ontologically Focused

Connecting with the second interviews through my participant’s transcripts provided me with a new opportunity. I began to recognise elements of their transition from deciding and anticipating becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers to their first event working in the role. It took me some time to settle on the term *event.* Event seems somewhat impersonal; however, other possible terms such as *time* and *experience* are used for their own specific purpose in my writing. When I found Peck and Mummery’s (2018) suggestion that events could be viewed as “those aspects of the world that we direct our understanding processes toward” (p. 4), I selected event as the term I would use. I turned to the Excel spreadsheet created during the first data-gathering stage and developed it into an Excel workbook with a spreadsheet for each participant. I transferred all of the participants’ responses from the first and second interviews onto their individual spreadsheets in the workbook. This gave me the opportunity to reflect on all of my participants’ descriptions of their experiences up to this point. I continued to refer to Sarah’s notes and my earlier memos at this second stage of my analysis.

I began looking for, and recording, themes in each individual’s experiences. At one time, I reflected on my participants’

- sense of role definition,
- recognition of opportunities to learn,
- previous experiences, and
- the judgements that they were making.

At another time I reflected on aspects of their experiences such as:

- making meaningful connections,
- knowing what needs to be done,
- co-constructed learning,
- tension between freedom and authority, and
- relationships.

I wanted my writing to be informed by all of the learning that I had done up until this point. This process of reading and rereading the data, interview notes and researcher memos (C.

D. Murray & Wilde, 2020) helped me to look with fresh eyes (Heidegger, 2008). I made new memos for myself about each of the participants. For instance, my memos relating to Tahi after the second interview include the following:

> Unsurprising to see comment about time factors (interesting that prior consideration was given), will be interesting to see if this results in planning for time needed next time, and if so, how that planning is done/supported. Focus on what is needed of self … movement from systems and "to do." Evidence of understanding the personal "price." No direct comment on the concern about "getting on" but it appears that this wasn't a challenge. Will be interesting to see if this remains a worry. Unpicking own practice perceived as helpful. (VM, second interview memoing)

I began writing the first set of six stories. The stories were about each participant's decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, anticipation of taking on the role, and their first mentoring event. There were 16 months between the second and final interviews, and so, this writing took place over an extended period of time. I wrote and rewrote at various stages throughout this time. Each time that I returned to my writing, my thinking deepened and my story writing became more focused (C. D. Murray & Wilde, 2020). I constantly challenged my selection of quotations, the way that I was weaving them into my writing, and my reflections supporting each choice. I drew from the transcripts and used direct quotations (Diekelmann & Ironside, 2006) as much as I could in the initial story drafts.

At the same time, I was beginning to become more familiar with the literature about mentoring and mentor teachers and identity development and I often found that I was re-turning to the phenomenon of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I continued to make notes for myself about each of the participants. For instance, my continuing notes relating to Tahi include:

> I think that Tahi is talking about her style of teaching, not her style of mentoring so much. It is interesting that she is reflecting on her "self" as teacher … I wonder if that relates to where she thinks her style comes from. Interesting assumption that a first-year preservice teacher has a "style." She is looking for a match between the preservice provider's expectations and her belief about what she does – this is where reflection would come in. She mentions reflection as being important. Recognising preservice teacher's strengths – comparing them to own. Talking about what she learnt from the preservice teacher … encouraging preservice teacher development etc. is not in the discussion at this time. (VM, memoing during writing process)

During this time of writing and memoing, I found myself drawn to Gee's (2000) focus on "the 'kind of person' one is recognised as 'being,' at a given time and place" (p. 99). I considered Gee's "ways" to perceive identity. It became clear to me that how each mentor teacher viewed themselves – their perception of their identity – might influence what they chose to recount and how they described their experiences. And so, I was looking for key words and phrases that described the participant's experience (Giorgi et al., 2017) and key words and phrases that communicated their sense of self (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Day et al., 2006; Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005). In order to help myself understand and reflect more clearly, I grouped each of the participant's responses under the following headings:

- I am because I am (as a person);
- Predetermined things that I have to be/do (as a teacher and mentor teacher);
- I and others know that I am like this (as a person, teacher and mentor teacher);
- I am a mentor teacher because I do/am like this (that is what mentor teachers do/are like).

I then wrote reflective memos about the development of identity. Examples of my reflective memos about Tahi using Gee's ways to perceive identity are documented on Table 5.

Table 5

Example of My Memoing About Gee's (2000) Ways to Perceive Identity

Gee's ways	Examples of memoing: Tahi
I am because I am	Noticed age difference, judged self negatively re ability to connect with the students in the way that the preservice teacher can.
Predetermined things that I have to be/do	Having a buddy when you are new helps you survive … so needs to be a buddy? There are things to know – practical things and a buddy is essential to knowing these things.
I and others know that I am like this	Feels she encourages and offers opportunity – preferred way of helping others.
I am a mentor teacher because I do/am like this	Not sure of how her style as a teacher fits with what is needed as a mentor; focused on style and fit ... sent preservice teacher to another teacher to find style match. Perhaps this links to her current ideas that a mentor is a buddy and inducts. Knows what she believes about teaching but unsure about making a stand on where this fits in with preservice teacher education and an individual preservice teacher's needs.

When I came to the point that I was satisfied with my writing, I shared each participants' story with them. This gave me the opportunity to receive confirmation on the credibility of their descriptions (Creswell & Miller, 2000). I then set these stories aside and concentrated on the remaining data.

The process of writing, reflecting on and rewriting the first set of six stories prepared me to begin writing the four stories from the final interviews. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, two of the participants in the study withdrew before the final interview because of their personal circumstances. Final data was gathered from Tahi, Rua, Toru and Rima.

I returned to my individual spreadsheets and added the data from the final interviews underneath the earlier data for these four participants. It was important to me that I had all of the data in one place so that I could work with it in its entirety. I then worked with the data from the four final interviews, seeking themes that related to the focus for each individual participant. The focuses for analysis were, in each case:

- Tahi: Feeling disconnected from all of the information needed (withdrawal from the practicum)
- Rua: Mentoring in a team environment (an ILE setting)
- Toru: Learning together (with a less and more experienced preservice teacher)
- Rima: Dealing with ambiguity (mentoring a preservice teacher who had already been offered a teaching job).

While the focus for each interview was evident, I reviewed each focus as I began to analyse the data. I drew on my learning about phenomenological methods from the previous stages of analysis and looked for key words and phrases that described the focus of each participant's story. I wrote memos on my spreadsheets, reread the transcripts and drafted my first set of four stories. Writing and rewriting these stories gave me the opportunity to know each of my participant's experiences in a descriptive way. Once again, I moved back and forth between the transcripts and my spreadsheets, and used direct quotations as much as I could in these story drafts (Diekelmann & Ironside, 2006). For example, Tahi was feeling disconnected from all of the information she felt was needed when her preservice teacher withdrew from the practicum. My first draft of Tahi's story from her final interview includes:

> Tahi now realised that this "fake it till you make it" approach was masking "how inadequate the current preservice teacher must have felt." While the preservice

> teacher knew the curriculum and was coming across as being very capable in some aspects, the practicum as a whole was "too hard, too much." As a mentor teacher, Tahi wasn't getting a true sense of the amount of work that the preservice teacher was putting in: the long hours spent planning just for one group. (VM, first draft of final interview story)

Phenomenological Themes

As I continued my work, the difference between themes and phenomenological themes became clearer for me. In qualitative research, thematic analysis is generally conducted in order to find recurring patterns across the whole data set (Braun & Clarke, 2012). If I had set out to find themes across my data, I might have looked, for example, for patterns related to how all of the participants got on with their first preservice teacher. In hermeneutic phenomenology, themes are not generalisations. Each participant is treated as an individual. van Manen (1997) described phenomenological themes as "knots in the web of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun" (p. 90). For instance, Tahi was particularly concerned about "getting on." She remembered getting on with one of her own mentors, she worried about her relationship with preservice teachers and she reflected on how they got on. Phenomenological themes have *power* when they entice us into an experience; we connect, we empathise – and we feel a sense of loss when we leave our connection with that experience (van Manen, 1997). During this stage of analysis, I began to move from seeing the details of each of the participant's experiences simply as data to understanding the elements of the experience for what the elements might be (Heidegger, 2008). I became unconcerned about whether, or in what circumstances, the participants and their preservice teachers got on. I reflected on the *being* of getting on. I wondered: What is the nature of getting on? What relational principles govern getting on? What does Tahi's expressions about getting on reveal about the essential experience for her? and What can that tell us about becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers?

Hermeneutic Writing

Through hermeneutic writing, interpretations of a phenomenon are transformed into words so that the understandings that have been drawn from the phenomenon can be understood (Loftus & Trede, 2009). This means that the writing and rewriting process in this study was critical to both my understanding and my ability to communicate my understanding in a way from which others could find meaning. The appearances of hermeneutic writing can be

deceptive if is it viewed simply as interpretative. Interpretation is a common feature of research methodologies (Loftus & Trede, 2009). However, hermeneutic writing is reflexive and cyclical; it purposefully brings understanding revealed through the writing and reflecting process back into the writing until satisfactorily unambiguous meaning is achieved (Laverty, 2003; van Manen, 1997). Hermeneutics is not confined to a particular point in time because of the interrelationship between the participants, researcher and reader, who all contribute to the meaning that is achieved each time that the writing is read (Diekelmann & Ironside, 2006). Thus, in this hermeneutic phenomenological study, my purpose for writing was not primarily so that I could be understood. My writing was a process of seeking and presenting my understanding (van Manen, 2016) of the phenomenon of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. van Manen (1997) advised that hermeneutics is "more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure-grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of 'seeing' meaning" (p. 79). Time was an important part of the reflexive process for me. The longitudinal nature of this study gave me time to come to know the research process and the participants' experiences as I "lived" them (van Manen, 1997).

Experience As We Live It

When all of the story drafts (from the first, second and final interviews) were completed, I was ready to review the stories and transcripts again in full. It was during this stage of my analysis that my understanding of hermeneutic phenomenology moved from predominately descriptive to interpretive (C. D. Murray & Wilde, 2020). Description is an important first step in the hermeneutic process (C. D. Murray & Wilde, 2020). I had sought to step back and look for meaning in the mentors' words with an open mind, and I had found phenomenological themes. I used methods that allowed me to follow van Manen's (1997) advice and give empathic attention to my participants' experiences in order to gain understanding of what it was like for my participants to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. As I wrote the draft stories, I worked with the themes to identify elements that were essential to a description of the participants' experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers and those that were not. By working with the data in this way, I had come to know my participants and their stories.

My next step was to review all of my work to ensure that I was writing hermeneutically. In order to remain connected to each participant as an individual (C. D. Murray & Wilde,

2020), I created a Word document for each of the participants and I copied the text of their full set of draft stories into the right-hand column of a three-column table in each of their documents. I then turned my attention to each participant's experience one by one and focused on van Manen's (1997) sixth research activity: the "part/whole dynamic" (Eatough & Smith, 2017, p. 198). For each participant, I started at the beginning of the stories and remained mindful of the research question (C. D. Murray & Wilde, 2020; van Manen, 1997). What made these stories unique to someone who was becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers? I started by looking for *gems:* single enticing words or short phrases that drew me to them and suggested that there was something to be illuminated if I was to look more deeply (Eatough & Smith, 2017). Eatough and Smith (2017) suggested that there is more than one type of gem to be found: "shining, suggestive and secret" (p. 201). A shining gem is vibrant in its meaning. The meaning is less clear with a suggestive gem. Movement around and within a hermeneutic circle is required in order to find them (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Laverty, 2003). The meaning within a secret gem is veiled; it is found through intimate understanding of the context in which they are embedded. I highlighted gems and began making notes in the left-hand column. I used one highlighting colour for gems that were direct quotations and another highlighting colour for gems that were in my words.

When I had collected gems and made notes for one participant's full set of draft stories, I returned to the participant's transcript. I wanted to verify that each of my choices was truly a gem and I looked for other gems in the transcripts that I may have missed during my previous analysis. My next step was to reread the sentence in which each gem sat: both in the story and the transcript (Eatough & Smith, 2017). I then reflected on each selection within the text as a whole (Eatough & Smith, 2017). This meant that I moved in and out of the story and the transcript for each participant so that I could reflect on the text of each of the interviews and the series of interviews as a whole. In doing this, I was able to recognise each interview as a discrete description of the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers and the series of interviews as providing interrelated description of this process of becoming, over time (Eatough & Smith, 2017). I then worked down the right-hand column of the table, rereading my notes in the left-hand column and writing new comments in the right-hand column. In this way, I used the right-hand column to make note of repetition and clarify my thinking about what a particular gem might represent. I noted previous reflections that I needed to keep – and new reflections as they arose. I noted

everything that might prove useful. When I found repetition, I reflected on the meaning of each gem within its individual context in order to expand and deepen my notation for the full set of draft stories for that participant. For example, Figure 3 presents some extracts from my Word table related to Tahi's third story: Feeling Disconnected.

Figure 3

Excerpts From My Word Table for Tahi

Gems and comments	**Draft text** **Quotation / My writing**	**Preparing to write**
Implications of faking it … honesty about what is going on, sharing details with someone you don't really know…. How are these decisions made…how does a new MT know what to do and how to work in these circumstances? How does this work with jump in and do it? ... the two together? What does this mean for new MTs trying to communicate this and cope with the results? One thing masking the other? It seemed that … how do "becoming" MTs work all of this out?	Tahi now realised that this "*fake it 'til you make it*" approach was masking "*how inadequate the preservice teacher must have felt.*" While it seemed that the preservice teacher "*knew the curriculum*" and was coming across as being very capable in some aspects, the practicum as a whole was "*too hard, too much*." As a mentor teacher, Tahi wasn't "*getting a true sense of how much work was going in*" to the preservice teacher's preparation; the long hours spent planning "*for just for one group*." The preservice teacher "*was feeling overwhelmed*" and just didn't feel ready.	How things seem … How do any of us know what is true? Things that others tell us … and we tell ourselves. Words of "wisdom" that new MTs hear from the "initiated" and then use themselves – jump in and do it – fake it 'til you make it Masking what is really going on? How do both contribute … the person masking and the person "looking." How do new MTs recognise masking when they don't have a lot of experience recognising it? Personal and professional …. How much sharing is the right amount? New MTs' feeling of not knowing…. Why didn't I pick up on overwhelmed? What does this look like? How will I know if I see it again? Should long hours be an indicator – that isn't true for everyone. Some people can thrive on doing long hours sometimes. And they can still have balance. And then, there is that "thing" we tell ourselves … every teacher does long hours.

Note. MT–Mentor teacher

As I reflected on the meaning of a gem, I would often have a "that reminds me of…" moment and so I began to add comments about what I had read in literature in the right-hand column. When I had achieved what Smith (2004) termed a "degree of closure" (p. 42) with the data

gathered from one participant, I moved to the next set of stories, transcripts and notes – and repeated this process. Each time that I moved to a new participant's set of data, I tried to clear my mind of reflections and memoing related to all previous data sets (van Manen, 1997). It was important that my eyes were only focused on the lived experiences in front of me (Heidegger, 2008). Once I came to a point of closure with this stage of analysis, I was ready to begin writing again.

Writing Hermeneutically

By developing a deep descriptive understanding of my participants' experiences, I had progressed as C. D. Murray and Wilde (2020) advised, through a process of preparing for interpretive writing. I had found and written (and rewritten) descriptions of my participants' experiences. I had identified gems and gathered them together as treasure for my writing (Eatough & Smith, 2017). Loftus and Trede (2009) suggested that "hermeneutic writing is a dialogical activity between the writer, the phenomenon being explored and the potential audience" (p. 61). The writer should construct the text in a way that makes connections clear, expands on details and communicates thorough understanding (Loftus & Trede, 2009). Each element of the writing should be understood in its own right, and as part of the overall meaning of the text (van Manen, 1997) – thus moving around and within a hermeneutic circle (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Laverty, 2003; Loftus & Trede, 2009). I began to write my interpretations of the experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

In order to articulate the process of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers clearly for the reader, I maintained the three-story approach that I established earlier in the study:

1. deciding to become, and anticipating becoming, a mentor teacher for preservice teachers;
2. the first preservice teacher mentoring event;
3. further mentoring events.

For each participant, I began with their story of deciding to become, and anticipating becoming, a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. I worked my way down the right-hand-column of my table, and identified the phenomenological themes that I connected with in this experience. I then reviewed the story already drafted. I moved, deleted and added words and phrases. I read and reread my writing, until I felt that my final text communicated a clear interpretation of the participant's lived experience. I then moved to the participant's story about their first preservice teacher mentoring event and followed the same process. For each

participant's second story I created subtitles using the phenomenological themes that emerged about their first preservice teacher mentoring event. For instance, the phenomenological themes for Tahi's second story were: expectations, the "right" person, teamwork, and practical support.

I used the same process of identifying the phenomenological themes that I connected with in this experience; reviewing the story already drafted; moving, deleting and adding words and phrases; and reading and rereading my writing – until I felt that my final text for Tahi, Rua, Toru and Rima's third story communicated a clear interpretation of the lived experience of their further mentoring event/s. The flow of these four stories, and consequently the reader's ability to engage dialogically with the phenomenon, is improved by not using subtitles; and so no subtitles have been used. There are 16 interpretive stories in total, and these stories are presented in Chapter 7.

Rigour and Trustworthiness

In the sections above I have laid out in detail the process I used to apply hermeneutic phenomenology to the semistructured interview data. By developing and deepening my research methodology in a way that was faithfully aligned to my research goal, I have laid open my study for scrutiny to allow assessment of the study's credibility and rigor. Each decision that I have made is outlined with descriptions and examples of my process. I have maintained a clear record of documents and I have worked determinedly to develop a transparent hermeneutic phenomenological approach.

My connection to the research question was essential, but it was not the only connection of value. In order to be considered trustworthy, my research must also withstand the examination of others who share my interest and involvement in the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers' work. van Manen (1997) spoke of the "phenomenological nod" (p. 27): recognition from those who are connected to, or live, the experience that is described. I laid my research open to the scrutiny of a range of interested and involved colleagues in a variety of ways throughout the study. Essentially, van Manen (1997) noted, "a good description is collected by lived experience – is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience" (p. 27). Thus, opportunities to know whether and how my descriptions resonated with colleagues who understood my research terrain, were essential to my developing work. My supervisors had similar backgrounds to me in mentoring and working with mentor teachers and so each time that we discussed the data that I had gathered, their

feedback and reflections helped to validate, challenge and shape mine. Sarah, my research assistant, held personal knowledge of each of the participants that I could not have and so I valued our discussions during the data-gathering phase. Working with Sarah helped me to confirm and question the descriptions and early interpretations that I was developing. Sarah shared the interview transcripts with each participant to check for accuracy and I sent my six draft stories back to my participants via Sarah for their feedback on the credibility of my descriptions and interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000). I shared and discussed my early considerations with preservice teacher education colleagues at an international conference. Later on, I laid my data analysis open for scrutiny at a symposium for local school leaders and visiting lecturers who shared my interest and involvement in mentor teachers' work. During my daily work, I shared my developing descriptions with these and other school leaders, mentor teachers and visiting lecturers. During all of these opportunities I have remained intent on, and responsive to, what I could learn from their interpretive feedback. Because of the hermeneutic phenomenological nature of this study, there is no point when a perfect interpretation can be assumed. The critical moments in this study were when I gained the sense that my understanding resonated with the understanding of others – when I gained the phenomenological nod. Because of the hermeneutic phenomenological nature of this study, ultimately it must be "left to the thoughtful reader to decide on the accuracy of the phenomenological description" (Schmidt, 2014, p. 66).

Summary

In Chapter 6 I have described the research procedures employed to gather and analyse data in this hermeneutic phenomenological longitudinal study. My cyclic process of finding understanding through the hermeneutic writing process has been explained. I have outlined the pilot study and the study, and described matters related to rigour and trustworthiness. Part III, Chapters 7 and 8, presents the findings, discussion and conclusions arising from the study. Chapter 7 focuses on the analysis of the data gathered about the lived experiences of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono. These experiences are presented as reflexive writing in order to enable the reader to engage with the possible meaning of these experiences. The thesis concludes in Chapter 8 with a discussion which links my reflexive writing and the literature, conclusions arising from the study and reflections on the limitations of this study and implications for future research.

Part III

Chapter 7. Knowing the Participants' Stories

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the participants' stories as I know them. The stories are presented as a portrayal what it is like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers from Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's lived experiences. They are told in my voice, through my thoughts and reflections (taking account of my personality and presence), in order to reveal my deliberate and consciously attentive relationship with the data as a phenomenological researcher (Ashworth & Chung, 2007; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010). By presenting these stories, I intentionally open an opportunity for the reader to join us: to see and know their own lived experiences intertwined with those that are offered in the participants' stories (Ironside, 2005; van Manen, 2007).

This chapter has two parts. The first part presents my interpretations of each of the six participant's reflections on deciding to become, and anticipating becoming, a mentor teacher for preservice teachers as well as their first preservice teacher mentoring event. During the first event, each participant worked with a preservice teacher who was enrolled a 3-year qualification. All of the participants believed that their first mentoring event was positive. Each participant's story in Section 1 is structured under themes that arose from my analysis. My voice is supported by direct quotations from the written transcripts of the participants' interviews. I have used speech marks to distinguish these quotations from my writing. The stories in Section 1 of this chapter address the study's research question from a preliminary perspective: What was it like for each of the participants to begin to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers?

The second part of this chapter presents my interpretations of further mentoring events experienced during the study by the four participants who were available for the final interview: Tahi, Rua, Toru and Rima. Each of the following stories relate to events that occurred during the participants' second or third mentoring event. The stories combine my voice with the voices of these four participants to present an example of how these events might be explored. Once again, my voice is supported by quotations from the written transcripts of the participants' interviews. The stories are entitled: Feeling Disconnected, It

Is Not Just Me, Learning Together, and Stepping Up. Whereas no name or other identifier is used for the preservice teacher in Section 1 of this chapter, I have created fictitious names and used "she/her" for all of the characters in the stories with Tahi, Rua, Toru and Rima in Section 2. I have done this to support the reader's connection with the text. The stories in Section 2 of this chapter address the study's research question from a broader perspective: What is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers? In Chapter 8, I discuss the themes that emerge from all of the participants' stories.

Section 1: Deciding, Anticipating and the First Event

Tahi

Deciding and Anticipating

Tahi's decision to add this new role of mentoring to her already busy life as a teacher related to her perception of expectations within the school context. She sensed an expectation in her school that mentoring novice teachers was "something that had to be shared around" and that mentoring would be an opportunity for her own "professional development." For Tahi, mentoring preservice teachers was "seen as something that a senior, experienced teacher" did and it gave a teacher mana (prestige). And so, Tahi volunteered to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

As she anticipated her first experience as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, Tahi's focus was on the personal relationships that would be involved, and that made her somewhat apprehensive. She knew, from what she had seen and heard from others, that things didn't always go well between preservice teachers and mentor teachers. Tahi thought that an awkward relationship would be manageable for a short period of time, but when it came to working with "someone for 5 or 6 or 7 weeks," that might be more difficult. Tahi believed that her preservice teachers would need her to be "as nonjudgmental as possible" and they would need help to navigate all of the things that teachers have to know about and do. And, she wondered what it would be like if she and a preservice teacher "didn't get along."

Complementary relationships and support were critical to Tahi. She was very focused on having and being "the right person" in a relationship. She also valued team work highly: "if you don't work collaboratively as a team then you don't survive." The esteem value that Tahi placed on relationships, support and teamwork seemed to align with the support that she received during her own entry into teaching. Tahi spoke fondly about a mentor teacher who supported her as a beginning teacher. She measured the success of the relationship

between herself and that mentor teacher by the high level of "practical support" and information that she received: about "policies and processes and procedures" and "school-wide stationery … things that you have to know and if you don't know them it makes life really difficult." It seemed that having that level of support influenced how Tahi worked now. She credited her ability to remain in teaching at that time – and since – to the nature of the care that she received early on: "it was kind of sink or swim" and Tahi believed that she was "able to swim because [she had a mentor who] looked after" her. Tahi also talked about her confidence that support would be there for her as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers in her current context. She knew that she had supportive, experienced colleagues and that there was a senior staff member who "literally makes herself available if things go wrong."

Tahi's First Event

When Tahi talked about her decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers she had focused on a range of elements that were important to her: expectations, being the "right" person, team work and practical support. She was aware that she was modelling a particular "style" of teaching practice to her first preservice teacher, and that this may not have fitted with the preservice teacher education provider's expectations of her – or the preservice teacher's personal expectations of being a teacher. Tahi enjoyed having the opportunity to discuss and critique her own practice and she enjoyed the new team dynamic that was created by having a preservice teacher. While Tahi had thought before the practicum about the practical tasks that would be involved in this role, it wasn't until she was involved in the practicum that the amount of time she needed to give became clear.

Expectations. During the first interview, Tahi had talked about her perception of expectations from the school. She felt that there was an expectation to take on leadership roles, and that mentoring preservice teachers was a leadership role. This was not something that she reflected on when recounting her first mentoring event. Tahi wanted to gain clear and specific understanding of what was expected of her from the preservice teacher education provider and the preservice teacher. But she found it difficult to get her head around "all of the paperwork" and the lengthy booklet that had been sent to her by the preservice teacher education provider for her first mentoring event. Tahi would have preferred someone to tell her what was expected of the students and what she was supposed to do. Having a "video to watch" would have helped her absorb information better – rather than "falling asleep reading the documents over the weekend on her own." Tahi felt that it

was "a lot of stuff to get in [her] head" and she put effort into trying to make sense of the expectations. For example, she knew from the booklet that the preservice teacher "was required to write lots" and "do a reading rotation" with the class.

Even though Tahi felt that she did not have a completely clear understanding of what was expected of her, she developed her own expectations for the preservice teacher's practicum. These expectations were founded on Tahi's beliefs about teaching and students' learning. Tahi advised her preservice teacher not to create "these amazing plans and lessons and then make the kids do that plan." She believed that lessons have to be responsive to the students. Tahi encouraged her preservice teacher to "have resources, learning objectives and success criteria" but to then try to "modify the lesson" along the way. She believed that strong content knowledge was an important element of teacher learning. This made it possible for a teacher to adapt things to suit rather than "go on with this methodical kind of lesson that most kids are really passive with." Tahi didn't want the students in her class to be "passengers"; she wanted them to be "partners in a learning relationship." Tahi was aware that she was modelling a particular style of teaching practice and she worried about whether that fitted with the preservice teacher's personal expectations of being a teacher.

The "Right" Person. The importance of a two-way relationship, and being the "right person," had been a particularly strong theme during Tahi's first interview. She had been concerned about what might be expected of her personally as well as professionally. As she talked about her first mentoring event, Tahi focused on who she was as a teacher and mentor teacher and the possible implications of that style for her preservice teacher. Tahi described her mentoring style as "jump in and see." Tahi could see that she and her first preservice teacher were very different: in age, the strengths that they demonstrated, and what they expected of the students in the class. Tahi wasn't sure if this preservice teacher "was really convinced that [Tahi's teaching approach] was the way forward." Tahi knew that her classroom was often noisy, with students "discussing with each other and arguing with each other and giving each other feedback." Tahi knew that her first preservice teacher found this difficult and she was comfortable that the preservice teacher sometimes moved to another area in order to concentrate. While this relationship did not mirror the close alignment of expectations about relationships that Tahi described in her first interview, Tahi's efforts to continually reflect on her approach in light of the preservice teacher's needs and expectations were clear. Tahi wanted her preservice teacher to have "a taste" of teaching and "reflect and learn." Tahi alleviated her worry about expectations by encouraging the

preservice teacher to spend time in other classrooms so that hers was not the only style modelled during the practicum.

During Tahi's first interview she had reflected on the importance of "being open-minded" and she imagined that "anyone with a closed mind-set would find it difficult" to be a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. She had talked about the importance of not being judgemental. During her first experience of being a mentor teacher, Tahi made a lot of judgements – about her preservice teacher and about herself. Tahi evaluated the preservice teacher's progress in relation to her understanding of the practicum expectations. She thought about the difference in age between the two of them and how that influenced their expectations and relationship. She also reflected on the strengths that her preservice teacher brought to the practicum experience and she judged herself in a way that she hadn't done before. The preservice teacher played games with the students at break times, taught the students "how to get onto Google Drive accounts," "made a movie" with the students, and was skilled at drawing. Tahi was very aware of how the students in her class responded to the preservice teacher because of those strengths. Also, at times, reflecting on the preservice teacher's strengths made Tahi aware of her own "inadequacies." Tahi noticed that the students "went into [the preservice teacher's] personal space a lot quicker and a lot more readily than they went into" hers. Drawing was not something that Tahi considered herself to be good at, and she couldn't "run to save [her]self"; "but then," Tahi thought "some teachers are good at things and some teachers aren't."

Tahi found it "interesting" to see her "teaching pedagogy through someone else's eyes," to "hear their initial impressions and then their reflections over time." Tahi found it helpful to talk with the preservice teacher about "why things happened the way they did." She valued this opportunity to "explore her reasoning, justifications and explanations" as a way to help her to "discern and analyse her own practice." Through this opportunity to talk, Tahi found her own "appreciation of the complexity of a classroom and school deepened." But, Tahi found it "difficult to not take those impressions and reflections personally."

Teamwork. For Tahi, taking on the mentor teacher role also meant that she had opportunities to consider teaching as a member of a team. There were moves towards establishing a "modern learning environment" in Tahi's school, and she felt that one of the exciting things about that was the students' "ability to build rapport with more than one teacher and access more than one teacher's skills." Tahi saw her work with her preservice

teacher as a positive step in that direction. When it came to offering her students teachers who had a range of strengths between them – the two of them were "a really good team." Tahi particularly noted her preservice teacher's skill with technology and she admired her preservice teacher's ability to use drawing to help the students convey what they were learning. She enjoyed the collegial nature of working with a preservice teacher and the opportunity to have "someone to bounce ideas off" – someone "who knew the students well." Tahi enjoyed the new team dynamic that being a mentor teacher had afforded her during this experience.

Practical Support. Tahi placed high value on practical support. That sort of support had meant a lot to her during her career. While Tahi had thought about the time that would be involved in supporting a preservice teacher in a practical sense, it wasn't until she was involved in the practicum that the amount of time she needed to give became clear. Tahi had estimated that being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers would involve "about 1 extra hour a day." After the practicum, she calculated that it was more likely an hour and a half per day. She realised that she had "underestimated the amount of extra time that went into discussing and planning future lessons" with a preservice teacher. She'd previously thought about how "some teachers like having a student because they can take a reading group or a writing group" but she hadn't been so aware of the need to "meet for half an hour beforehand to go over expectations." Tahi was aware of the conscious compromise that was involved in this aspect of the work and having to deal with her thoughts that "it would be quicker to do these things" herself. Initially, Tahi attributed the extra time that she needed to give to the fact that her preservice teacher was in "Year 1." When she spoke to her colleagues about this, she realised that preservice teachers who had already passed a practicum needed the mentor teacher to make "an investment in time" as well. Tahi also found that there were practical benefits from having a preservice teacher in her class during these 2 weeks. She also saw that there were short opportunities to gain time, and that she was able to attend to some of her own tasks, such as "planning and preparation, while the preservice was taking the class for short activities."

Rua

Deciding and Anticipating

There was really a "multitude of reasons" for Rua's decision to take on this new role. Rua thought that it was "really important to share with others" and she "valued the opportunity

to reflect." She appreciated working as part of her current ILE team and she saw this to be the way of the future. Rua recognised that there were benefits for everyone: the students, the other teachers and herself. Including preservice teachers in the ILE team felt like a natural next step for Rua. There was another reason too: Rua "liked to say yes to things!"

As she anticipated her first experience as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, Rua focused on relationships. She also had some thoughts about the nature of progression through stages of experience and learning for a preservice teacher and for herself. Rua wondered about the two aspects together – relationships and progression. She thought that relationships might be different at different stages, such as working with a first-year and third-year preservice teacher enrolled in a 3-year qualification.

Rua understood that relationships were complex and she reflected on her own part in making them work. She remembered "an amazing mentor" from her own days as a preservice teacher. That mentor's "personality" had been important for Rua. It wasn't that they had been particularly similar as people or as teachers, but there was a similarity in expectation and levels of support: for example, with organisation, navigating systems and planning. Rua had also experienced expectations without support when she was a preservice teacher. She remembered that she "felt like she had just been thrown to the wolves" and that was "really quite intimidating." Rua reflected on her own tendency to be – "well not a control freak – but, quite direct." She knew that she "would need to remember that" about herself. She would need to "be mindful" that each preservice teacher "was learning" and that it was her role to "support and mentor, and not push too hard."

Rua was particularly aware that she "didn't have that professional development" for her "own practice as much" as she used to. She "no longer had access to all of the observation time" that she was "given as a provisionally [certificated] and registered teacher." Rua felt that having a preservice teacher would mean she would "be able to take a training role and evaluate" where she "was at." She "hoped that it would be a really positive learning experience for both of them." Rua didn't know what support she would need but she knew that she had "a really strong team." Her "buddy," an "incredible, collaborative teacher, worked alongside" her and the school had a "really supportive senior management" mentor ready to help her if needed. Rua was sure that she would "get as much support" as she needed.

Rua's First Event

When Rua talked about her decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers she focused particularly on the benefits that could be gained – for everyone. She was mindful of what the preservice teachers might need and she had talked about opportunities for her own learning. Rua was ready to be challenged. The complexity of relationships was also on Rua's mind at that time, along with a sense of responsibility for attending to details and being fair with her feedback. Rua related the success of her first practicum as a mentor for preservice teachers directly to the outcomes for the preservice teacher – and she looked at it from the preservice teacher's perspective. Rua also recognised her own achievement during this first experience as a mentor teacher – in relation to her ability to identify both success and lack of success for the preservice teacher, and through her own learning.

Outcomes for the Preservice Teacher. Rua didn't realise that, as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, she needed a plan. She didn't preplan how she and her preservice teacher were going to get to know each other or how she "would introduce the preservice teacher to the classroom environment." Initially she "didn't really think about the impact a preservice teacher would have on the day to day running of things." It wasn't until the second week that Rua realised she wasn't coping well with managing her class and monitoring the preservice teacher's needs and progress. While she was "keeping on top of the observations and notes," she needed a plan to "help her preservice teacher construct goals for the practicum."

Rua recognised that she "didn't really know what to do" as the mentor teacher when the preservice teacher experienced difficulties with managing the learning for the whole class. She realised that she had simply expected the preservice teacher to have "noticed all of the ways that time was organised, commands to stop the class and redirect them were used, the ways in which the teachers stopped and waited until all of the kids were looking before giving an instruction." Rua found herself thinking back to when she was a preservice teacher, and the support that she had valued. She remembered that when she first learnt about planning, for example, she received "very linear direction; 'then say this, and then say that, and then…'" Rua had worried about whether she would "pitch her expectations at the right level" and so she "sought guidance" from her senior mentor (from the school senior management team) about the preservice teacher's needs. Rua's senior mentor advised her that the preservice teacher needed her "to be more explicit about the 'management' of the classroom" and to be clear about what she was "looking for."

Rua believed that making mistakes was a really important part of learning and she had wanted to provide the opportunity for her preservice teacher to "try and attempt to do some things independently." She felt that "this was really important for preservice teacher learning." Rua's senior mentor helped her to see that it was about expectation: she expected the preservice teacher to ask questions instead of Rua asking the preservice teacher questions. Perhaps that was expecting too much. Rua realised that she needed to really focus on making sure that the preservice teacher was picking up on what she was modelling and what was happening in the classroom before she placed expectations on the preservice teacher. Rua's senior mentor advised her to give the preservice teacher the "opportunity to amend those areas of practice" in a manageable way. If Rua asked the questions this might help her to gauge the preservice teacher's readiness to take on new challenges.

Rua thought that the most important thing that she could achieve as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers would be for "the student to leave the practicum feeling successful; not just getting signed off but feeling accomplished, feeling confident to lead a classroom." But determining whether her own first experience as a mentor teacher was a success was "a hard one, because that depended on the success that you were trying to seek." Rua was conscious of the need for preservice teachers to understand "the whole picture of teaching and the demands that it places on someone." Preservice teachers had to be aware, for example, of the "time a teacher needed to invest into planning," the importance of "checking for prior knowledge – all of those little things that you learn as you go." Rua was sure that her preservice teacher gained understanding from the scaffolding and feedback that she provided and knew that progress had been made. But she was uncertain about whether the preservice teacher considered the practicum experience a "success." And so, Rua had a number of unanswered questions when the practicum ended. Did the preservice teacher see progress and success in the same way that Rua did? Was more explicit instruction necessary? However, ultimately, for Rua, her success as a mentor teacher related to outcomes for the preservice teacher. Rua knew that she had ensured that "success was pointed out" and so was "the lack of success"; she had emphasised that at times we "achieve through failing."

Giving Honest Feedback. "Throughout the practicum" Rua had told the preservice teacher that she was going to "give really honest feedback – not sugar coat anything." She had been aware of her strong personality before she took on this role. Rua wanted her preservice teacher to know that she wasn't giving honest feedback because she "wanted the preservice teacher to have a bad time" or because she "was thinking that the preservice

teacher was doing a really hideous job." This was just "who she was." Rua explained that if there was "an area that she could see that the preservice teacher needed to look at, she would say so, because that is really important to developing practice." Rua was "direct" because she "didn't want to put people in a situation where they had nothing" in the way of feedback and support. During her first interview, Rua had talked about feeling alone sometimes when she was a preservice teacher. To Rua, leaving someone without direct feedback would have been "just very cruel and she knew that she was not going to get the best teaching" from a preservice teacher that way. Rua thought that the preservice teacher seemed to be comfortable with her approach.

Attending to Detail. Detail was important to Rua. At the beginning of the practicum, she had provided "scaffolded sessions so that the preservice teacher could act" independently on her feedback. Rua had then expected to see independence. For example, Rua modelled teaching practice for the preservice teacher and they "planned together as a team: got the curriculum out, identified the achievement objective and where that would come from." There had been a lot of "attention to detail." Rua really liked that part of being a mentor teacher: "showing the cool things that she used." She felt that having access to resources meant that a teacher could more easily turn a good idea into an opportunity for the students. Rua thought that that kind of support was "just essential when someone was starting out."

Rua believed that "people naturally ask a lot of questions when they are really interested in something." She knew how "important observing others and asking questions" was for her own learning. And so, this belief formed her expectations of the preservice teacher. Rua expected the preservice teacher to ask a lot of questions and do things without being asked. She "found it frustrating" when that didn't happen. Rua sensed that she had been "holding back" from being too directive, because she "didn't want to come across as being a control freak." But she found that a more deliberate mentoring approach "had to emerge towards the end of the practicum" in order to meet the preservice teacher's needs. She noticed that she became "very quick to point out the lessons that were really successful and to correlate that with the planning and the reasons that these small lessons were really great." She did the same thing when lessons were not so successful.

And so, Rua realised that it was "not just about having expectations." As a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, she needed to make the expectations explicit "verbally: 'This is what

I expect.' 'This is how these lessons need to run – and if you want the class to stop, you know, you have got to actually wait until every single child has stopped even if it seems like you are waiting for 10 years. You just have to do it because the students won't respect your presence until that happens." Rua thought that she "would be a lot quicker at getting the preservice teacher to realise what their role was and to be more accountable for the observations" in the future.

Opportunities for Her Own Learning. Being a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher had changed the way that Rua thought about herself as a teacher. She had hoped that this new role would help her grow as a teacher. As the practicum progressed, she had felt "more aware" of her own "impact in the classroom." Rua thought about when she had last picked up the curriculum, for example, and how much she had been relying on her "prior knowledge." She knew that she "needed to refer to the curriculum more closely" than she had been. Rua reflected on how "sometimes it took watching someone else to recognise that you should probably do something a little bit more, or a different way." Being a mentor teacher had made her "more mindful" of her "purpose" as a teacher and how she "was delivering things." It made her "aware of how important it was to be sure" that she "was giving the kids the best kind of support." It was good to focus intentionally on what she was teaching and making sure that she "was aligning it with what the kids needed." It wasn't that she didn't do that before, but Rua thought that "you do get a little bit – not stuck in your ways – but, like you think that you are doing things all the time." Rua thought that "collaboration with people was really important to get ideas going particularly when you are starting out – because you have no ideas." Rua knew that she had provided her preservice teacher "a lot of opportunities to teach and to 'go for it.'" A beauty of working in the ILE space was that Rua had been able to "constantly check her expectations" with her "collaborative buddy" on her team as well as the senior mentor. Because Rua's collaborative buddy had "been teaching for a year longer than her and had a few students" she felt able to check that "her expectations weren't over the top."

Toru

Deciding and Anticipating

Toru assessed his readiness and capability and the potential benefits – for himself and preservice teachers – when he decided to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. He was surprised when the deputy principal at the school asked him if he was interested.

Being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers hadn't been on Toru's mind because he was very early in his career. He didn't expect that there would be such an opportunity until "2 or 3 years down the track." And so, Toru felt that he was "kind of volunteered" to become a mentor teacher, and he appreciated that. Toru saw the deputy principal's approach as "a vote of confidence" and recognition, "a lot of trust" that he had "the skills necessary to pass on." Toru knew that he had just recently been a beginning teacher himself. When he thought about how his own "progression had been," Toru thought that he would find it "interesting being an advisor" for someone else.

As he anticipated his first experience as a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher, Toru thought about the attributes that he considered important as a mentor teacher. There was a lot to weigh up. Toru believed in the importance of role modelling as a teacher – for students and preservice teachers. He took that seriously and he was nervous about whether he would model the "correct" practices consistently enough. Toru believed that he had "maybe a more relaxed style than others" and it was the professional aspects of the role that he was uncertain about. Toru wasn't too sure whether his "style should be replicated" by someone who was learning about teaching. Toru also believed that learning to be a teacher was dynamic and should be self-directed. Toru thought about the importance that he placed on observation in relation to his own learning. He saw a difference between somebody "observing and constructively critiquing" him, and observations that were undertaken by somebody who was learning from him. He wasn't sure how all of that would fit together.

Toru's memories of his own experiences of being mentored focused on motivation. Toru thought back to a practicum from his time as a preservice teacher and "learning from negative experiences." His mentor was someone who "seemed like they had just kind of switched off." Toru felt that his mentor was "kind of creeping towards retirement age and the attitude towards the students and towards the class" made Toru "question why they were still doing it. It just kind of seemed like a lot of negativity." Toru knew that he didn't "want to be like them." Another mentor teacher "gave really good advice" but would reinforce that "you need to learn it your own way, make your own mistakes." Toru believed that this mentor's strength was "not stepping over bounds. You've got to find your own ways of being a teacher." It isn't right to say "okay, it needs to be this way." Toru thought that it was important that a mentor teacher was able to communicate "it's scary but give it a go. It's the only way that you are going to learn. Yes, you are going to make mistakes but after that you

learn … if you can learn from those mistakes … then that's going to progress you much more than following what you feel should be expected."

Toru thought deeply about how teachers' practices impact on the learning environment. He knew himself to be the sort of person to focus on improving his practice and to learn from situations where everything didn't necessarily go well. Toru didn't know what sort of support he might need when he was working with a preservice teacher but he knew that help would be "just a couple of metres away." The other teachers in his syndicate were very experienced and Toru was confident that they would support him if he needed help. Toru thought that the opportunity he would have to "find out about somebody's values for their teaching and help them along, to assist them to become better, would be really cool."

Toru's First Event

During his first interview, Toru had thought back to the early stages of his learning to be a teacher. He wanted to be the sort of mentor teacher who supported a preservice teacher's reflections after an experience – with as little direction as possible. Toru was conscious that he needed to make sure that he knew about what it was that he was teaching, so that he was in a position to guide the preservice teacher as well as teaching the students. When Toru reflected on his first mentoring event, he described himself as a "guide" or "coach," and he laughed when he thought he might include "dictator" in his description. That was something that Toru was not. Toru felt that his first experience as a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher was "quite successful"; and, in making this judgement, he reflected on his own learning as well as the preservice teacher's.

Supporting – Not Directing. At the beginning of the practicum Toru told his preservice teacher, "you know, you are going to make a lot of mistakes and it's a good thing. I want you to try things – you're going to be introduced to resources and ways of teaching that you may still be getting a grasp on. There's going to be a big learning curve" particularly in relation to the "fundamental underpinnings." Toru encouraged the preservice teacher to "get in there, get stuck in, and that's the only way you know you're going to push yourself forward." Toru felt that he and the preservice teacher "had good respect – a good relationship." They were on the same page: they both felt that "you're going to make mistakes and that's absolutely fine – that's how you learn." Toru remembered that he was "allowed" to find his own way as a teacher and he knew that this was something that a person could only "take on" from personal experience. Sometimes, Toru thought, you learn

"through the fire of just disasters." He felt a sense of pride and accomplishment when his preservice teacher was able to take responsibility as a teacher.

Toru saw comparisons between his work as a mentor teacher and the way that he worked with students in his classroom. Toru liked to "push for finding out a lot of new things" and if the students "were really intrigued with something" he would encourage them to "run with it." Toru took the same approach with his preservice teacher. He believed that "everybody's got their own strengths" and they can "add flavour into lessons." During his first interview, Toru had reflected on his approach as a teacher. He had strong beliefs about teaching and learning and was quite specific about how he evaluated himself. Being a mentor teacher had changed the way that Toru thought about himself as a classroom teacher; it gave him "a lot more confidence." Having "that validation," and realising he could "guide somebody and not completely mess them up" – that was something that Toru had been working hard towards. He really appreciated the sense of trust that he had felt from the deputy principal when he was asked to take on the role. In a way, working with the preservice teacher gave Toru the opportunity to see for himself what others had recognised. He enjoyed seeing the benefits of his approach with his preservice teacher. Toru recognised a "big change in professionalism"; and he really enjoyed watching a novice find that "kind of assertiveness in being up the front of the class and being able to give directions and make sure that there is a firm expectation." It was really rewarding to feel "alright, you know, you can actually do this." "If you can teach a teacher, then you're doing something right!"

When the preservice teacher was teaching, Toru "imagined" what he "would do at that time and then contrasted it" with what the preservice teacher was doing. He would think, "okay, well how can you kind of push [the preservice teacher] in that new direction?" Even when the preservice teacher was "doing a really good job, there's always room for improvement." Toru would be thinking about how to "celebrate the positives and then offer other avenues for improvement." Toru had "learnt over the years that if something doesn't work then it's not the end of the world." He believed that "being comfortable in that knowledge allows for more experimentation." Toru had come to realise that "there isn't one specific style and you can't really emulate somebody else's style." If you try to emulate another person's style it's "not going to be as effective unless you bring that into your own. It'll feel kind of forced."

Guiding a Preservice Teacher. Toru found being a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher was "grounding." He didn't want to get "ahead of himself too much." It was not that

long ago that he was in the same position as the preservice teacher and he knew that while he had got to a certain point in his own career, he was still learning as well. Toru recognised that he had been "a little worried beforehand," but he felt that he "definitely learned a lot" during his first practicum as a mentor teacher about how to "guide somebody." Having a preservice teacher who had "confidence in their abilities" and was "able to ask questions … made it a lot easier" for Toru to be "able to guide." That was easier than if Toru had ended up "having to be quite pushy." Toru gave his preservice teacher the opportunity to "run through each lesson beforehand and to have a few days of being able to really understand how the lesson would work with the group." Toru believed that "confidence really comes from knowing which direction to go," and that that "confidence comes from having the freedom to be able to try on your own." His "advice was never 'you should not do this; you should do this.'" Toru focused on "seeing what works, adjustment and fine-tuning."

Toru had known that being a mentor teacher would mean that he needed to think about his approach to documentation; and he was right. This "really challenged" him. He needed to "push up" his "planning a bit more – because with experience you can scale it back." A lot of it sat in Toru's "head." He had "a pretty good guideline, but then for somebody coming in, it may not be enough information," so he needed to adjust his planning "to include that extra information" that he "normally wouldn't have." For example, Toru needed to make sure that he "wrote down the actual questions" that he planned to ask during a lesson, and to think carefully about the "the acts of teaching." He remembered how much work all of that extra recording was. Toru also thought about his understanding of the subjects that he was teaching. It was important that his "understanding was a bit more in depth" because, when he was a mentor teacher, "it wasn't just about working with the kids." As a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher, Toru was working with an adult who needed him "to be able to explain the process." One thing Toru found quite strange was the release of his own responsibility, and that surprised him. He thought that he "would be quite fine with just sitting at the back and doing observations and letting the preservice teacher" have the "teacher's space." But Toru found that he "wanted to jump in." He had to remind himself "just no, sit, stay": that the preservice teacher was coping well.

Whā

Deciding and Anticipating

Whā's belief in the power of connections and opportunity and desire for a new challenge prompted her decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Whā wanted to keep growing. She knew that she wasn't a beginning teacher anymore and she felt ready to be challenged in her practice. Her decision to take on this new role "felt like a natural next step." She thought that, "when things became comfortable" as a teacher, it could be "easy to just stay in that zone of, okay I know what I'm doing now."

As she anticipated her first experience as a mentor teacher, Whā experienced a mixture of emotions. She wondered about the expectations and possible challenges that she might face and she thought about the range of opportunities. Whā was "quite nervous about it – but more excited." Whā knew that preservice teachers would have "a lot of fresh ideas" and she was "really excited about learning from" them. She was "quite excited about the opportunity to work collaboratively with someone." And she was looking forward to the opportunity to "look at her own practice and be really reflective as well." Whā felt that teachers can "talk about being reflective, but it's good to have those experiences from time to time that actually force you to look really explicitly at what you're doing and why you're doing it." She knew that she was going to need to make sure that she had her "best practice going on because it doesn't matter if you're tired one day or whatever, you're role modelling to someone – you want to put forward your best foot."

Whā was used to taking risks and encouraging others that things don't "have to be perfect and that it's okay to just jump in and have a go at things. It might be a disaster but it might be awesome." But she knew that being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers "might be slightly daunting too." She wondered about "having someone come into" her "space" when she "wasn't used to it and handing over control" of her "classroom for however many days." That could be "a bit of a challenge." There was "the feedback side of things." Whā was "just wondering how to word things." She wanted to give her preservice teachers "the best experience possible" so that they could "learn and grow." Whā remembered a number of mentor teachers who had had an impact on her. One of these mentors had made it really clear that she didn't want Whā "to be a replica of her." That mentor had encouraged and supported Whā in "developing agency as a teacher." Whā admired another mentor teacher's ability to encourage her to take risks. She appreciated not having to "ask permission" and knowing that she had that mentor's support. Whā knew that, as a mentor teacher, she wasn't

going to be expected to be perfect, that she was "going to make mistakes and that's okay." Whā thought that she was likely to need support during the practicum, and she felt confident that she knew where to find it. She had already talked to her team leader quite a bit about taking on the role and she knew that she would get "willing advice and support" when she needed it.

Whā's First Event

When Whā discussed her decision to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers she talked a lot about this being "a natural next step" and opportunity: the opportunity to use her knowledge and skills to support others and the opportunity for her own continued learning. Whā knew that there was an outline from the university for the practicum; but there was still a sense that she was feeling her own way during her first mentoring event. Whā found that, by giving them the opportunity, the preservice teacher usually worked things out. Whā thought that being an effective mentor teacher was about giving the preservice teacher a "realistic glimpse into the whole picture of being a teacher" so that they could "really understand that it's not just what you see in the classroom during the day."

Giving Opportunities to Learn. Whā didn't really know "how much" she should be expecting from the preservice teacher because she "had never done it before." She found that "starting with very small steps, such as taking the roll and reading a book to the class, were good ways to introduce the preservice teacher to the class and begin to hand over some control." Whā and the preservice teacher "started with lots of little things and built them up gradually" and the preservice teacher was naturally reflective after every lesson. Whā found that the preservice teacher's ability to ask relevant questions and identify next steps meant that "lots of discussions" just "occurred as things arose." She felt that the preservice teacher "took on board any kind of feedback" that she gave and "it was a big learning process for [them] both." "Sometimes things needed to be discussed incidentally as they arose rather than at a later scheduled meeting time." But, the "level of scaffolding was greater" than she initially thought and she found that it was also "important to regularly make the time to address questions and discuss the preservice teacher's findings."

The whole idea of risk-taking was something that Whā had talked about during her first interview and it was something that she would think more about next time she was a mentor teacher. Her approach had been "quite structured and organised" to suit a preservice teacher who, Whā felt, "wanted things to go exactly to plan." Whā remembered needing that when

she was a preservice teacher as well. But, Whā believed that risk-taking was important and she thought, "in hindsight, she could have encouraged the preservice teacher out of that comfort zone a little bit more."

Whā was grateful for the preservice teacher's ability to take feedback because she had worried about giving feedback and getting the wording right. She felt that it was "always a tricky thing." She wanted to give feedback for next steps but she didn't want to "force a preservice teacher into being a carbon copy" of her. Whā wanted the preservice teachers she worked with to "find their own style." Whā thought that, as a mentor teacher, she had been "quite relaxed" in terms of letting the preservice teacher make choices, even down to "what to teach the kids based on their interests, rather than just trying to stick to her exact programme." She didn't think that her approach would be the same as it was that first time, every time. What Whā really wanted to do was "encourage her preservice teachers to use their strengths, work to their strengths and maybe think about some of the things that they are not so strong on and work on those." Whā believed that it was important to "allow preservice teachers to figure out what kind of teacher they were rather than trying to mould them." It was her role to provide "that level of scaffolding where they need it." That was what Whā did with the students. She wanted to be supportive "without being too controlling of things."

Validating others as "the expert" was important to Whā. She did that with her students and so she tried to support the preservice teacher in the same way. Whā looked for what the preservice teacher "was engaged in and passionate about"; she knew that was when a person's "eyes light up." She saw a lot of similarities "in terms of looking at strengths" and what the students and the preservice teacher "brought to the table." With her students she felt that she was "really big on trying to hook into their passions and their interests" and with her first preservice teacher, Whā recognised "these amazing skills." Whā tried to "get [the preservice teacher] to develop that" too. In her class, when Whā validated that knowledge, "the students really responded as well." That was the type of thing that Whā "tried to do with her teaching" whether it was with the students or the preservice teacher: "hooking into those passions." Whā wanted her students and her preservice teachers to "feel successful in something and recognise that they have something to bring to the table."

Gaining Opportunities to Learn. Whā had looked forward to having the opportunity to reflect on her own practice but she found that getting used to "having another

adult in the room was a real learning process." For the most part though, "it was nice to just have another adult there." Having another adult with her gave Whā someone to share things with: being able to share, "'did you hear that?' – when the kids said things – was very cool." It also gave Whā a "chance to kind of explore the whole collaborative teaching thing which was quite neat. It was good to just think about playing on each other's strengths and to have those discussions that you have with other educators." There were a few times when Whā wanted to "jump in and remind the preservice teacher about a forgotten step." But she also believed that "it doesn't have to be perfect the first time and that's how you learn." Because she was so used to being the teacher and taking charge, she found that she had to stop herself. Whā would keep reminding herself that "actually these were things that the preservice teacher could do: it's fine, it's not going to fall apart, just let the preservice teacher come to that realisation." But, taking "that step back was interesting" for Whā, and something that she had to "be really conscious of."

Being a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher had changed the way that Whā thought about herself as a teacher. She thought that having to demonstrate "best practice forced her to analyse some things." She would now look at what she was doing and "think well maybe this worked for me a couple of years ago but should I still be doing this? Is this still in line with what I want to be doing and what I believe is important in education now?" Whā had often talked to a trusted mentor during her first time as a mentor teacher and she had been "given quite a bit of practical advice." She had been able to outline what she had been doing, and ask all sorts of questions: "how much more should she be getting the preservice teacher to do; how could she scaffold the preservice teacher to give a bit more?" Whā asked about how she could "move the preservice teacher from just the basics at the start, how many groups to start with," and about planning. So, Whā felt that she had benefited from "a lot of support." She thought that she would "know or remember" much of that next time, but she knew that there would still be "those kinds of conversations" and they were "really helpful."

Rima

Deciding and Anticipating

Rima decided to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers because she felt ready. She had had time to settle into her career and she believed that she was now in a position to support others. Rima felt that she "was at that point" in her teaching career where she "had extra time to focus on giving back" rather than focusing just on her own class and herself.

Rima had achieved "a better work–life balance" and a degree of "confidence" in her "teaching ability" that meant she felt that she could "do it properly." Rima's sense of readiness also stemmed from her desire to be challenged in relation to her own thinking and practice and her eagerness for opportunities to learn more.

As she anticipated her first experience as a mentor teacher, Rima reflected on what she thought preservice teachers would need from her and also what she would gain. Rima was looking forward to "helping" and giving her preservice teachers "the opportunity to see how a classroom was run, to see their confidence grow." If her preservice teachers were to "push themselves in situations they were not comfortable with," they would need help – "someone to step in and support them." Rima knew the importance of being "a positive role model" and that her preservice teachers would need her to be a "good teacher." Rima valued the effort that her own mentors had made to be constructive and supportive. She remembered receiving "constructive feedback and support and the opportunity to go back and try it out again … try the idea out or go and see other teachers and see how they teach" from one particular mentor teacher. She appreciated the encouragement to "grab little bits of knowledge off everybody rather than just that one person." For Rima, this reinforced the sense of belonging to a community that teachers have. She remembered how impressed she was with "the balance between school life and personal life" that another of her mentor teachers was able to maintain. That mentor "wasn't just 'all teacher.'" She "had other parts of her life that she indulged in and was passionate about. She actually had a life!"

Rima was enthusiastic about what she could learn. She was excited to think that her preservice teachers were going to bring "all the new stuff that's coming out" from their preservice education courses. Rima was looking forward to "reflecting more" on what she was "implementing in the class" and to "being challenged" herself. She knew that her preservice teachers would need someone who was "honest, supportive, challenging and open minded to learning." There were some things that Rima thought would come more easily than others. She anticipated "constantly reflecting and justifying everything" that she was doing when she was working with a preservice teacher. Rima expected "spending extra time" doing that. She also considered what it was going to be like being the person to challenge and support another adult; she thought that "that might be difficult." Rima thought that she would need some support if that became a problem for her and she knew where she would turn for that – she'd talk with her colleagues.

Rima's First Event

It seemed to Rima that her first practicum event was a mixture of "really awesome ideas," the preservice teacher "doing things better" than Rima would, and "oh, God" moments! For Rima, readiness and balance were important. She was conscious of the stages of development as a teacher – and she felt ready to support a preservice teacher's learning. Rima was ready to "do it properly." Rima thought about the importance of balance in her work and personal life when she considered her own readiness to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. She really enjoyed working with other people and the learning that that afforded her. Rima was looking forward to progressing her own learning through her role as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

Doing It Properly. Rima felt that setting "the tone" of the practicum was important. She found that she needed to establish "this is what you have to do and this is how you're going to achieve that." She also encouraged her preservice teacher, when they were "doing planning, to come up with their own ideas and put them in'." Rima wanted the two of them to work together. Rima described her approach to mentoring as "open" and "fair." She had talked about her value of support in her first interview – and demonstrating "good organisation" and effective "support" was important to her now. Rima made sure that she and the preservice teacher began the practicum with a detailed conversation about everything that needed to be achieved. They kept a calendar – and they both had a copy. She felt that developing a timeline of when the preservice teacher was going to be teaching and the specifics of what that would be benefited them both. It meant that they both had clear direction as to what they had to achieve. As she had anticipated, Rima talked through lessons with the preservice teacher, gave guidance and choice, and modelled what was expected. She would have the preservice teacher "go through each lesson" with her and they would get resources together. Rima guided "mock lessons" with her preservice teacher "using the materials to be used during a particular maths lesson and demonstrating" what to say to the students.

Rima made sure that she told her preservice teacher not to follow exactly what she did when it came to building a relationship with the students. It was important that the preservice teacher was seen as an individual and she also wondered about how her way of building relationships with the students came across to her preservice teacher. Rima had "positive relationships with the students" in her class and they knew her boundaries. The work that she had done to achieve this meant that they could "all have a laugh and be silly." Rima

wondered if the preservice teacher might view the way that she "interacted with the students as unprofessional." Even though she had explained this, Rima found that sometimes she had to "over role model" aspects of relationship building so the preservice teacher would pick up on what she meant.

Supporting Success. Rima wanted there to be "no chance" for the preservice teacher to feel unsupported "in any way." She knew that at the beginning of the practicum her support and organisation was "a bit overboard" and she also knew that sometimes she forgot that her preservice teacher was just learning and her expectations might have been "too high." She expected the preservice teacher to "know how to give instructions or send the students off" to their task. Rima "kind of, took the training wheels off as they went along." This meant that later in the practicum Rima felt she was able to sit back and observe and let the preservice teacher make decisions. Rima felt that this approach contributed to the preservice teacher's success.

Rima found it "interesting" that a preservice teacher might sometimes "push the boundaries in terms of picking whether or not to do a task" related to the practicum requirements. She needed to use behaviour management strategies – and carefully pick the words that she used – to ensure that the preservice teacher responded in the way that she expected. She hadn't realised that it would be necessary with an adult to have to put strategies in place to "really hold them accountable to what she was asking them to do." Deadlines had to be specific and boundaries had to be clear. Rima couldn't just say that the preservice teacher needed to produce planning in advance. She found that her statements had to be very explicit; she had to specify a date for the preservice teacher. And so, instead of asking if the preservice teacher would "like to do the roll in the morning," Rima realised that she needed to say "tomorrow you are going to give roll call a try."

Rima was surprised to find that her preservice teacher wasn't confident with digital technology. Because it was important at her school – and "everybody's so digital these days" – Rima "just took it for granted" that all preservice teachers would be comfortable with digital technologies. Rima could relate aspects of the preservice teacher's progress to her own development as a mentor teacher. For example, by developing her strategies for giving clear expectations, Rima reinforced the need for her preservice teacher to use digital technology. And so, towards the end of the practicum she saw that her preservice teacher was using "ICT nearly every lesson that she could." Seeing her preservice teacher rise to the

challenges was rewarding for Rima; she was helping someone "grow and develop skills that would help them to cope when teaching."

Having to Give Feedback. Having to "give feedback" to the preservice teacher and discuss next steps was difficult. Rima "could do it with kids but she wasn't that comfortable giving feedback to adults." She had anticipated this challenge and she shared her concerns with her colleagues. Rima was given some useful advice: she should "just write it down." So, Rima wrote "observations on everything that the preservice teacher did" and then they "had follow-up discussions." She always included what the preservice teacher "had done really well and … needed to work on." This made a big difference to how Rima felt about giving feedback during the practicum. It took a while, but the preservice teacher started to respond to the observations that Rima gave and use the advice given. As a result, for Rima, "giving feedback didn't feel so daunting."

Progressing Her Own Learning. In Rima's mind, a good mentor teacher for preservice teachers was somebody who would learn from their preservice teacher as well as being the one who was doing the guiding. So she thought "it was cool" that the preservice teacher taught her "quite a few things" too. Some of these things were quite significant to Rima. By working with her preservice teacher, Rima had the opportunity to see how she could improve her approach to individual learning needs, particularly the students with lower ability in her class. Rima thought about her school's current focus on assessment and "reaching targets." She noticed the way her preservice teacher "extended these students" in her class. She was impressed, and she learnt some useful ideas about what she could be doing better.

Rima's reflections about herself in the mentor teacher role focused on her open style of mentoring. Initially she didn't really think she was an open kind of person. Rima thought that it was something that she had "had to develop." She recognised the influence of people she'd taught with and those who had mentored her in the past – and those who still did. Rima also thought about how much of her learning was "from mistakes … lots of mistakes." In her own first year of teaching, Rima recalled, "I was just like, total authoritarian, I was awful." She didn't shy away from that as a memory of her past; in fact, Rima reflected on how it taught her "how not to teach." Rima believed that reflection was important: "if you're honest with the kids and they give you honest conversations back, then you learn more about what you need to do to make it more effective for them." And so, "you kind of work with

the kids and figure out what works and what doesn't." Rima thought that it is the same working with preservice teachers. If her preservice teacher came up with some good ideas, Rima would talk about how she could work with the preservice teacher to make it happen. In reality, Rima felt, she "just transferred" the way that she "worked with her kids" – without talking to the preservice teacher "like a child."

Rima guessed that there is the same feeling about being a mentor teacher as there is about being a classroom teacher. As a teacher, "you love teaching because you get to support and help other people grow." Sometimes "you don't know if you're doing it right or wrong" as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. You are "always locked in your little classroom and don't really realise, or no one really recognises, what's going on"; so, Rima found it "quite nice" to be able to think "I'm fine actually. I think we're doing alright." But she knew that there were challenges and that she'd need to "keep practising with things like giving feed forward. The more you practise the better you get."

This whole experience had made Rima reflect on her teaching and justify what she did. That was interesting! "In a weird way, it kind of helped confirm" Rima as a classroom teacher. It was also interesting for Rima to reflect on the benefits and challenges of being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. She enjoyed the new ideas that a preservice teacher could bring in to the classroom; and "it's nice to support." Rima was "definitely excited" about the possibility of being a mentor teacher again. However, she needed to think for quite a while before she could identify the most important thing that she would want to achieve in the role. "That is tricky!" But Rima knew that she wanted to be sure she mentored preservice teachers "in the right way." It was important to her that she developed strategies to support whomever she worked with. However, Rima had mixed feelings about how much her students enjoyed working with the preservice teacher. On one hand "it was really cool" to see that the preservice teacher had high expectations, and, when her students said how much they enjoyed some things Rima would assure them that the class would do these things again. On the other hand, "to be honest," when the students were so enthusiastic about working with the preservice teacher Rima sometimes thought "damn it!"

Ono

Deciding and Anticipating

When Ono decided to take on the role of mentor teacher for preservice teachers, she was motivated by a desire to repay the encouragement and assistance she had received as she

began her career. Ono wanted to help. She wanted to be involved in "helping young people who really want to be excellent teachers and really make a difference in a kid's life, helping them to get to that point." She thought that it would "be a rewarding experience …. kind of like when you teach a kid a new strategy and they understand it and they can get that light-bulb moment."

As she anticipated her first experience as a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher, Ono thought about how new it would all be. Ono focused on understanding the requirements of the preservice teacher education provider, "what they're expecting of the preservice teacher." She was keen to know what was expected of preservice teachers so that she could understand what that would mean in relation to expectations of her. Ono knew that there would be a booklet that she could read, but she also wanted to know more. For example, she didn't know if she was "expected to jump in if things are going wrong or kind of just step back and then reflect – that kind of thing."

Having the opportunity to develop her own teaching style had been important to Ono as she started her career. Ono remembered the way that one of her own mentor teachers threw her "in the deep end and then helped" her "to swim." That mentor had given a lot of thought to what Ono needed in order to be able "to swim." Ono believed that that approach had changed her "perspective on teaching," made her "change her pedagogy" and "shaped the teacher" that she had become. Ono remembered the scaffolded support that this mentor teacher provided in detail. The mentor teacher got Ono to take "2 days getting to know the system" and watching the mentor. From then on Ono was "almost teaching everyday – at least a group." Ono felt included and that the mentor teacher cared about her ideas "right from the beginning." Ono particularly remembered the mentor teacher's approach if they didn't agree. Instead of "being like don't do it that way," Ono's mentor teacher would prompt Ono to think about her reasons. They would discuss why Ono had chosen a particular approach and how that would be of benefit for the students. Ono's mentor teacher would suggest that there might be "another way it could be done that would be more beneficial" and would leave Ono to make the decisions. Sometimes Ono's mentor teacher wouldn't say anything and just let things happen. Either way, if she went to the mentor teacher to talk about a lesson that didn't work, the mentor teacher would always trust that Ono could work out what had happened and why.

Ono reflected on the type of support that she had experienced and how much influence that mentor teacher had had on who she was as a teacher. She wanted to take the same approach; "instead of telling people how to do it," Ono wanted to work with her preservice teachers and provide opportunities "for them to learn how to do it." She knew that it wasn't always going to be easy. Ono knew that she was "more of a positive person." She found it easy to give "this is great, this is fantastic"-type feedback; and she sometimes found it "harder to be, 'that wasn't so great' …. to give criticism." Ono was "working on it." She didn't "want to hurt anyone's feelings or make them feel bad about themselves." Ono knew that there were other teachers in the school with experience as mentor teachers for preservice teachers and so she knew where to find support during the practicum if she needed it.

Ono's First Event

Ono felt a strong sense of responsibility to help make sure that her preservice teachers was "ready to be a teacher" because she would "hate for anyone to go into the teaching profession and be struggling." Ono had mixed feelings about this. She thought about how important it was for each preservice teacher to "decide whether this is actually the right thing" before committing to become a teacher. "Students' minds are very delicate and if you put someone out there" when teaching "isn't for them – then it can actually really destroy a child." And so, as she approached her first practicum event, Ono was focused on helping "people realise whether it is what they wanted to do." But then, Ono thought that preservice teachers didn't get a full, clear idea of what teaching really was about, even on practicum, "like the paperwork side of things and reporting and assessment. They see the teacher teaching all the time, on the go, but they don't see the other side of it."

Because Teaching Is Worthwhile. Ono wondered about whether "we need to try and find a way that they can see what teaching is all about, because they really don't get to, until they get to their first year" as a beginning teacher. At the same time, Ono thought that it was "really fun to watch [her preservice teacher] develop their teaching style and their behaviour management style and their rapport with the kids. It's fun to watch somebody do that. It's like when you've got a child on the mat and they're struggling with a strategy; and they're struggling and struggling. And then they click and you just see their whole brain just go, I've got it!" Being excited didn't mean that Ono thought that it was easy. It was a lot of work, and "while you're doing all the extra work, you're like, oh why did I sign up for this?" It came down to the fact that Ono thought being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers

was really worthwhile; "you watch them with the kids and they love it, they've got the passion … you're like, oh that was really cool!"

Knowing What. Ono found it hard to know what the expectations were for "how much they should be doing and how much reflection they should be doing." She remembered when her first preservice teacher arrived with "all that paperwork" and she thought "oh my gosh – what do I have to do?" But Ono had "read through it all" and tried to understand what she had to have, what she had to make sure the preservice teacher had done by the end of the practicum – and what she had to have done as the mentor teacher. She and her preservice teacher "had lots of discussions" about how the preservice teacher thought the "teaching was going and reflecting on that." She felt that these discussions and reflections were "quite helpful" for the preservice teacher and also for Ono to gauge how the preservice teacher felt about progress.

However, Ono felt, in hindsight, that she needed to be "a little bit more specific" with her expectations from the beginning. She knew that she "wasn't overly [specific] to start with." She hadn't said, "you need to be here at this time and you need to make sure you have this." And so, Ono thought that because her expectations were "a little bit more relaxed," the preservice teacher was a little bit more relaxed too. For example, Ono remembered that one night the preservice teacher had sent a text at 8 o'clock about planning for the next day. The message said that the preservice teacher "wasn't going to be able to do it." Ono remembered having to "do the planning for the next day at 8 o'clock at night." Ono learnt from this. She felt that if she had been "more, not strict, but … more clear with expectations" the preservice teacher "might have been less likely to bail out … at the last minute." Ono thought about how long she had been teaching. There were things that she just knew because she did them every day. She thought about first-year preservice teachers and how easy it was as a mentor teacher to "forget that they've not been in a classroom so they don't know that they need to be there and prepared by that time, otherwise it's going to stuff up their day." And she thought about the importance of experience. She thought, first-year preservice teachers didn't know this "because they haven't had it stuff up their day."

Knowing Why. Ono had a strong desire to "guide" preservice teachers "to their decisions, being more of a guider than actually telling them what to do." Initially Ono took the "this is how I would do it. What do you think?" attitude – "not, here are my plans, you do and teach that." Ono "didn't find it too difficult" to take that approach with a preservice

teacher. That was what she did "with the Year 6s; more than just telling them all the time what to do, you're guiding them, you're facilitating them to have their own learning." And so, Ono felt that she was just doing the same sort of thing she usually did, but with an adult. Although she thought that "with a preservice teacher you have to let go a little bit and let them make their mistakes, obviously, you wouldn't leave them to drown … but letting them make mistakes and letting them learn from them" was important. Sometimes that meant that Ono was challenged by the urge to step in: "it's hard." But Ono believed that whether you were a child or an adult, "you learn through your mistakes." Being a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher had changed the way that Ono thought about herself as a teacher. She thought that "having a preservice teacher come in… so full of passion" and "fresh ideas" gave her inspiration "to also want to go that bit further and do a bit more research." And so, after having taught for 7 years at the same year level, just "doing your thing every day," she felt that being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers gave her the opportunity to "have a look and see what else" she and the class could do. It "makes you want to push yourself that little bit further as well."

Section 2: Further Mentoring Events

Section 2 of this chapter presents four stories drawn from data gathered from further mentoring events experienced by those participants who were available for the final interview. These participants each worked with two or more preservice teachers over this 2-year study; Tahi and Toru worked with two and Rua and Rima worked with three preservice teachers. The following stories present my interpretations of these further mentoring events.

Feeling Disconnected

Tahi was excited about Amber returning for the second part of her final practicum. Everything had gone so well in the first few weeks and Tahi was looking forward to giving Amber more responsibility later on. Tahi would be able to do "testing and other stuff that she needed to do," and she was really looking forward to that. The students in her class were looking forward to seeing Amber too; Tahi had given a bit of a "build up" about how exciting it would be to have Amber as their teacher for "5 weeks." Tahi knew that Amber had a few challenges. "The naughty boys could be relentless, and they would try it on" with Amber. They "weren't 'too' bad – they weren't 10 on the Richter scale. But they were talkative and they were disruptive and they wouldn't do what they were supposed to be doing." A lot of things were going well for Amber during the first part of her practicum though. She "did

really well with small groups so when it was the reading rotation and the maths rotation and the writing rotation, we were all working in groups" and Amber had "groups … and worked really successfully … and that was really good." Tahi thought that Amber would show more and more agency as she progressed through the practicum and she would be there as a guide – it was going to be fine!

A week or so into the second part of the practicum Tahi noticed a few signs that Amber "was struggling." She realised that the expectations for this practicum were more complicated for Amber than she first thought. Amber was "going to find the whole thing difficult, but then that's what learning's about." Tahi told Amber "I'm here, I'll be here" – and she was. Tahi thought about a preservice teacher she worked with last year. She had similar challenges and was "adapting strategies" with Tahi's support. And so Tahi adjusted her approach so that she could support Amber more effectively. Tahi and Amber talked and worked on "reflections every afternoon." They focused on how Amber was planning and Tahi offered Amber more directions. She made the expectations and deadlines more explicit. She would say, "I've got to see it; you need to email it to me tonight.'" While the other mentor teachers for preservice teachers in her school were having issues with their preservice teachers, there just weren't big issues with Amber – she was going to be fine!

Just days before they had planned for Amber to take responsibility as the teacher of the class, Tahi received a phone call from Amber. It was the weekend and Tahi was at home. Amber said that she "was feeling overwhelmed" and just didn't feel ready. Amber had already talked with the course lecturer at her preservice teacher education provider by the time she called Tahi. And she had already pulled out of the practicum course. Amber had not said a thing to Tahi. Tahi just "literally got a phone call," after the fact! Tahi heard Amber tell her that it wasn't about Tahi or the support that she had offered. This all felt really "bizarre."

There were so many questions and thoughts going around in Tahi's mind and there were so many feelings!!!! She was sad and worried for Amber. She wondered what was really going on and why Amber didn't tell her about it – surely, she should have. But then, Tahi knew that she wouldn't have wanted to "go crying to her mentor teacher saying things like: 'I was up 'til midnight doing this for my writing group.'" This was really frustrating! Amber just withdrew from the practicum without even discussing the possibility with her. Tahi heard from her deputy principal that Amber had told the preservice teacher education provider that there were personal reasons that prevented her from giving her full commitment to the

practicum. Tahi was surprised about that. She "hadn't heard of any issues in the past." What if there really were personal reasons? Why hadn't Amber talked with her? What sort of personal issues would mean that Tahi couldn't help? Tahi would want to help. Tahi had told Amber "I'm here, I'll be here." Why wasn't that enough? Tahi wondered if her impression of her relationship with Amber was accurate. She thought that she was pretty good at getting to know people and that they had got on well. Maybe she wasn't as good at judging relationships as she thought she was. Maybe she wasn't as approachable as she had supposed. Tahi felt inadequate.

While she didn't want to feel this way, Tahi felt just a little bit annoyed. She and her students had been "left high and dry." Tahi had "built up" that big story for the students about Amber "taking over for 5 weeks" and then Amber "just didn't come back." How do you explain that to your students? Tahi wondered about the questions that her students would have and whether they would think unkind thoughts about Amber – or her!? Maybe the students would be relieved; Tahi just didn't know and she didn't quite know how to approach that conversation with them. Tahi was also annoyed about losing those "wonderful plans for doing testing and other stuff that she needed to do." Those plans just disappeared without warning overnight – and Tahi was left with 5 weeks of planning and teaching to do.

After some time, Tahi reflected on how she really felt. Tahi felt disconnected. There was a lot that she didn't know. Tahi didn't really know Amber. She didn't really know what Amber could do as a teacher and she didn't know what Amber really expected of her. Tahi didn't really know what the preservice teacher education provider expected of her either! People often advise others to "fake it 'til you make it." Tahi felt that "sometimes that's okay," especially when there is a basis of strong practice there – "you've just got to jump in and do it." But, Tahi wondered about these sorts of sayings.

Perhaps this "fake it 'til you make it" approach was masking "how inadequate" Amber must have felt. While it seemed that Amber was coming across as being very capable in some aspects, it was obvious to Tahi now that the practicum as a whole was "too hard, too much." For one thing, Tahi hadn't been "getting a true sense of how much work" Amber was putting in. Tahi wondered what evidence she should be looking for and how she would learn to find it. How do you see the things that you need to see? "Issues" are not always obvious. It had looked like everything was fine with Amber. Tahi knew that she wasn't the only one worried about this. When she talked with her more experienced colleagues, she found that they didn't

know everything about their preservice teachers either! There seemed to be such a range of ways that a mentor teacher could be "fooled" too, especially when your preservice teacher looked confident, or reassured you "I've got it, I know it, that's okay, I can do it."

Sometimes you can get "inklings" along the way, Tahi thought – but you don't always get clear messages. Tahi thought about the inklings about Amber that she recognised in hindsight. Amber had been "reluctant to make changes, resistant to feedback, not seeing preparation that was expected, coping with early practicum steps but not making progress to more complex activities and expectations, and making general comments about being busy." Oh, hindsight was a wonderful thing!

When Tahi volunteered to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, she hadn't expected that she would feel disconnected from the preservice teacher education provider. They were the ones who send the booklet of instructions. She had expected that she would meet a visiting lecturer who would help her – and it would feel like they were working together. Tahi was really confused and disappointed. She thought about the instructions that she had received about documentation and a written summary report. Tahi knew that mentor teachers for preservice teachers needed to "provide evidence of the preservice teacher's competency" and assessment against criteria at the end of a practicum. But in this case, no one seemed to care. Tahi would have liked to have talked with the visiting lecturer at least, but that person "never came back." Tahi was told that she "didn't have to write anything" for Amber. She would have liked to. No one even contacted her directly. Her deputy principal liaised with all of the preservice teacher education providers. She told Tahi that "there's nothing more you need to do, everything's fine, it's done." What did that mean?; what was "done"? Tahi felt unappreciated. Did she even matter?

Tahi reflected on when "other teachers had said becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is not worth it!" Maybe it wasn't. When she volunteered, Tahi had hoped to be part of a bigger picture, part of the network of teacher mentors for preservice teachers. She knew that Amber had worked with mentor teachers during previous practica and, now that she had withdrawn, Amber would likely work with another mentor teacher in the future. Maybe there was something that Tahi should have known. She understood "that you shouldn't make judgements based on what they've done in the past," but Tahi still thought that it would have "been beneficial" to have been informed if there had been something "relevant to know." If a similar situation had happened with Amber before, Tahi hadn't been given any indication

of that. So Tahi was left wondering. Tahi wanted to make sure that Amber's "future mentor teachers knew about the challenges" that had been evident during this practicum "so that they would be able to build on that" with Amber. But no one wanted to hear what Tahi had to say.

It Is Not Just Me

It had never been just Rua. Rua had been part of a two-teacher teaching team in an ILE throughout her teaching career; and she loved it! She loved the sense of community, she loved working with larger numbers of students and she loved working with the other teacher in her ILE – her collaborative buddy, Hazel. For Rua, there was no other way. Being part of a teaching team was the ultimate pleasure for her!

Rua believed that being "really competent and super-organised" was the secret to being part of a successful ILE teaching team. It made it easier to "slot in." In an ILE setting, you need to make sure that you are meeting the needs of so many different learners. That is "always a real challenge, and you need specific skills." To be successful working in an ILE you need to know who you are, have your own professional identity. You needed to be yourself and not try to "be other people for the sake of being other people." She knew that every teacher needs to have "classroom presence and to be engaging – and, of course, you need to be able to build relationships with many different students" in any classroom setting. But, the way that Rua and Hazel looked at it, "if you can show who you are as a teacher well and easily in front of 58 students … then you're going to really sparkle when it comes to working with smaller groups."

Sometimes the teaching team was bigger than just Rua and Hazel. There were teaching assistants in the room, other teachers in their syndicate team came in and out, and Rua and Hazel had both been mentor teachers before. Rua had been the mentor teacher for three preservice teachers now. She really enjoyed the dynamic that all of these other people brought to their team. She particularly enjoyed it when a preservice teacher joined them. It didn't matter whether Hazel or Rua was the "official" mentor teacher, Rua and Hazel always made it "a joint effort because it didn't make sense to have just one person doing that when everything else was done together." When they first started working together, Rua and Hazel had been worried about whether having two mentor teachers would be too much to manage for the preservice teachers who joined their team. They soon realised that the preservice teachers would have ended up working alongside both of them anyway. In the ILE, Rua and

Hazel "ran maths groups at the same time and kids were moving in between groups and … they just decided that it needed to be a group effort."

Rua believed that ILEs were "almost the perfect model for developing teachers because you're constantly surrounded by other people who know what they're doing; you're working with systems that have been tried and tested." The ILE was an ideal set up for preservice teachers; they get to "see something over time … see it develop." So, preservice teachers got to see Rua and Hazel "working on innovating practices quite a lot." Then, when a preservice teacher joined in – well, there were "three people doing it!" That was what Rua "really loved about having preservice teachers in the ILE. All of sudden three brains are working on something and there is a new perspective that maybe hadn't been thought about before." So really, Rua thought, "the more teachers the better!"

It was interesting to watch a preservice teacher join their team. Sometimes the preservice teachers "didn't even know where to look" and Rua understood. "It feels like there's so much going on when you're not used to" being in an ILE. Rua knew that the ILE environment created a different experience for many preservice teachers. Rua thought that, as mentor teachers, she and Hazel needed "to look at each preservice teacher as a whole package and think, so this is what they're really good at and, to be an effective classroom teacher, these are the bits that need to grow." For Rua, that meant that she and Hazel were "trouble-shooters in a way. After working with each preservice teacher and observing them in the space for a week and noticing all these things about them, [Rua and Hazel] needed to decide on what they could do to help the most." She thought about how important it was to "take things in steps." They would often get a preservice teacher to take the roll and give the first instructions to a group of students, and then they would step it up from there." They would aim for the preservice teacher to eventually be able to give "whole-class instruction. But, you know, there's often 58 students in the ILE – so that's big." Yes, it was big, but Rua and Hazel worked on "trying to steer each preservice teacher into being a little bit more of a leader in that space." Dealing with the personality side of things could be tricky in an ILE. Some preservice teachers found it all very daunting and they became quite overwhelmed. It can be difficult for someone new to work out how they fit it and be themselves. Rua encouraged preservice teachers to join the team – but she also thought that it was really important they didn't "lose who they are."

Rua often thought about the "pedagogy associated with ILEs. Programmes were based more around dispositions and student agency and collaboration," and "the focus was on students being able to self-manage" There was "not even a whisper of ILEs" when Rua went to university and that was only 5 years ago. She thought that "the speed at which ILEs were being developed meant that there needed to be a little bit more talk between universities and schools." Rua thought that universities needed to know about what was being developed, to "go into schools and have a look at one, just to see how they operate."

For Rua, teaching in an ILE had meant that, during her early experiences of being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, there was no sense of isolation. She recalled a time when the senior mentor (from the school senior management team) offered to talk with one of their preservice teachers about the need for a more professional approach to dress. Sometimes dress could be a sensitive issue. But Rua and Hazel didn't need the senior mentor to intervene. "It wasn't just me and the preservice teacher or just Hazel and the preservice teacher," Rua recollected. She and Hazel "had already been thinking about the dress issue" together and they had "already decided it would be better coming from the team."

Learning Together

Toru sat at the back of his classroom sifting through the artwork that had been strewn across the floor. The last student in his class had just followed his mother out into the afternoon sunlight. What a year it had been! Toru's students had all been looking forward to the summer break. So had Toru. He sighed, picked up a self-portrait and turned it over. *Pearl* was neatly written in light blue ink near the bottom.

"Ah, Pearl." Toru thought. "I hope that you are happy. I wonder how you are…"

It had been Pearl's final practicum before she was to qualify as a teacher and Toru had been impressed with how quickly she picked things up. Toru thought that she came a long way during her practicum with him. But, working with Pearl had certainly taught him a lot of things! It had been his first time as a mentor teacher for a preservice teacher, and Toru remembered feeling so new and – if he was honest – naive when he first met Pearl. That practicum was just over a year ago now – it felt much longer than that.

In the beginning, Pearl seemed a bit uncertain and so Toru and Pearl had worked on the basics: "this is how you do this and this is how you do that." Even though Pearl had had other practica, she still had to get to know his classroom and students – and so, Toru had

reassured himself, it would all be fine. A lot of things are new "unless you've already had quite a bit of experience within a classroom, been a teacher aide or something." To be honest, Toru felt like there had been a bit of a "a barrage of information" for Pearl in the beginning, but she seemed to "find her footing" quite quickly. Toru put that down to how he had helped with explaining the "basic underpinnings" and Pearl's willingness to take feedback. Toru had made sure that his early feedback to Pearl had been pretty direct, with, well, fewer options: "here's a choice of three things, choose one and go with that." That part of the practicum had been "directed, directed, little bit of team teaching, and then at the end it became like ... release." Pearl seemed to really appreciate this level of support. Toru remembered thinking that the second part of the practicum was going to go well; the foundations were all there! Toru looked at the fading self-portrait in his hand.

"I thought I was doing the right thing, Pearl," he whispered.

That look on Pearl's face! It had been a clue. Why hadn't he noticed? Late in the first week of Pearl's second block of practicum, Toru had told her, "I've got testing to do, I'll be in the library, just send a runner if you need anything. I know that you'll be fine; off you go."

And, he "didn't really notice that look … didn't really pick that up." Toru still felt a "wash" of guilt when he thought about that day. Even though he had only been a couple of doors away, he "shouldn't have left Pearl alone in the classroom. He should have been there in some capacity." But he genuinely thought that she was able to handle it, that she was ready to have the "space" to be herself without him there. After all, they had done all of that groundwork, she was planning well and her confidence with the students was growing. If she passed this practicum, Pearl was going to have her own class very soon. She should have been ready.

During the first break of the school day Pearl had told him that "things were getting a little bit hairy," but she seemed fine. Toru knew what *hairy* looked like and he had reassured her: this "all takes time, and if you have a bad lesson now the next one could be great … just as long as you are learning from each one and kind of reflecting on the process." Toru believed that "sometimes you learn that through the fire of just disasters." He had finished the testing that he wanted to compete that day, and so Toru had returned to the classroom anyway. Pearl seemed fine.

As that second block of the practicum progressed for Pearl, she became more skilled and was showing "quite a bit of knowledge." Toru was proud of her. But Pearl was "struggling." Struggling!?! It was such a shock. He still thought about how he had found out. Who would have thought that he would "get a call from someone's mother!" Now, that was something that he had never imagined; no one warned you about that! Pearl didn't tell him that she was struggling and she probably wouldn't have told him, either. She "just had a façade up." That phone call prompted Toru to have "a really, really honest conversation" with Pearl. He told her: "you're not an island, there are people on your team, use the people that you're working with, and let it out. If you're struggling with something, say it, because I still struggle with a lot of things."

After that Toru was "definitely more attuned to the emotional impact" for Pearl. In fact, he thought that he and Pearl "were quite similar." Toru knew that he could "put up that wall." He had "never really been a sharer." Pearl had "found it really tough" and she "wasn't happy about that phone call" – or their conversation – at the time. But once they had had that conversation, "the relationship was much more comfortable. They kept celebrating the positives but also the things that were tough." That conversation hadn't been easy for Toru either. He "had to approach it delicately" but in the end, Toru had thought, "this is for your own good." Toru placed the self-portrait on the table in front of him and moved to check on the debris in the cloakroom.

"Wow," Toru thought to himself. "Even though I was a preservice teacher just a short while ago, when you are a mentor-teacher, you don't really realise the impact."

Toru bent to pick up a solitary crayon and took it back into the classroom.

"And then, there was Opal," he thought.

That was another learning experience! He missed having Opal in his classroom; they were all sad when she left a few days ago. When Opal arrived, Toru knew that being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was a lot "tougher … required a lot more" of Toru "in terms of modelling" than he had first imagined. But then, Toru reflected, practicum "required a lot" from preservice teachers too. He had his experience working with Pearl to remind him of that.

With Opal the relationship was "much more balanced." Yes, he had needed to model for her. But they had "started off as team; they had been teaching together." Toru had then been

able to hand responsibility for teaching over to Opal. That was what he had wanted to achieve. That was cool!! With Opal, Toru felt that his work was about "getting into more." She had a strong "personal voice" about what she believed, good "subject knowledge, and she was comfortable being in the classroom."

Toru thought about how much being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers had helped him learn about, and "refine," aspects of the role. Of course, Toru and Opal had their "formal conversations" when they would "go through set goals and feedback, and look at the requirements of the practicum." Toru was "surprised" at the feedback that Opal could take on board and act on. Toru and Opal could talk about practice, and more than "just the general terms of practice." But it was their other conversations that he most valued. They had talked about things like why a teacher "used this type of questioning" or "spoke in this kind of way." They were "constantly having casual conversations ('I saw this' or 'I noticed that')." At times Toru gave "some research, or some resources or just a kind of steer down a path." There was a time when Toru noticed that Opal was using "a lot of closed questioning," and so Toru said "if you want to find out more information, you might want to think about the types of questioning you're doing." He talked to Opal "about open-ended questions and different ways to change how she was asking questions – and the next day" Opal "was asking questions differently and reflecting on the changes." This all made Toru up his game when it came to justifying his practice. Toru "didn't want to see emulation." He would rather see Opal "trying new things, forming relationships and developing her own way of responding to the students." Toru "didn't want to say 'you've got to be doing what I do.'" And, with Opal, he didn't have to!

Toru smiled when he thought about his difficulties stepping back so that Opal could have the teacher's role. Now, that was a painful learning experience and he hadn't expected it to be. Toru remembered that he had to make himself step back "forcibly, especially in terms of behaviour management" because it was an important time for Opal. Toru wondered why it was harder to do this for Opal than it had been when Pearl was with him. He would need to think about that. Toru found that when he stepped back "properly" his observations for Opal started to get a lot more focused. Toru thought that this was because he was able to shift his focus from "what the class was doing" to focusing on Opal. Allowing preservice teachers to take opportunities if they're ready for them was important to Toru – after all, that was what Opal and Pearl were in school for, and "most of the learning is from action."

Being a mentor teacher wasn't easy in either case, but it was "fantastic. You realise just how much knowledge you have when you impart it for preservice teachers – and that is surprising." Toru thought that "for those preservice teachers who are more confident and capable with self-directed learning," like Opal, he was more able to say "here's an avenue, explore this avenue." Toru was able be more like himself. Whereas, with those who need more directed learning, like Pearl, Toru had to be a more prescriptive version of himself. He had to say "here's a thing, here's a thing, here's a thing, we're going to be learning about these." It was interesting that both Pearl and Opal were both at the same level in their preservice education programme. That would mean they would both be thinking about the start of their careers. Perhaps Pearl was already teaching. Either way, Pearl and Opal were in for a wonderful ride. Toru laughed. They would be picking up after their students and maybe making decisions about what art work they might keep for starting the wall decorations the following year. Toru was glad that he had known them both. He wished them well on their journey.

Stepping Up

"I think that my students next year will be the same age," Jade told Rima as they packed up the outdoor kitchen equipment at the end of the day.

Rima was focusing on scraping the hardened mud off the students' gumboots – she wondered if she had heard correctly.

Jade continued. "I'm so lucky that I have a job already, and I'm really excited that my students will be the same age as your class. I can't wait!"

Rima had heard correctly and she didn't know whether to laugh or cry. What was going on? She was just starting to feel that she knew what to do as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. She had managed to work out what was expected from the two different practicum outlines that her other preservice teachers had brought with them. Rima was proud of herself about that. But no one had told Rima that she might get a preservice teacher who already had a job lined up before she had proven that she could pass this practicum. She didn't think that had been explained in the practicum outline. No one at her school had mentioned this. She wondered if this happened to other people. And she wondered if Jade was telling the truth.

But Rima found out that Jade was telling the truth. Jade had been offered a job – on the condition that she passed her practicum. Talk about pressure! Rima struggled to hide her confusion and irritation. This was way out of her comfort zone and she didn't want to embarrass herself in front of Jade. Rima hadn't worked with a preservice teacher from this particular programme before. Perhaps this was quite common – although, she really hoped that it wasn't. Rima would need to read the practicum outline again. She worried about when she might be able to feel that she was really a mentor teacher who knew what she was doing and not some sort of an imposter.

As Rima suspected, the practicum outline said nothing about a preservice teacher being offered a job. When she asked around at her school, no one else knew anything about it either. The practicum outline was less guided than what Rima had begun to feel comfortable with. But then Rima had heard that different programmes had different expectations. She felt like she needed to start all over again.

And so, start again, she did. Rima believed that you need to let a preservice teacher make their own mistakes and figure things out. She had started to develop her own way of feeling comfortable with this. For her first two preservice teachers, Rima had "preplanned everything" that she would do as the mentor teacher. It was sort of like "pouring" strong foundations for a sculpture – so that you could be really creative and it would still be fixed to the ground. Rima decided that Jade was in the later stages of her programme and, by offering her a job, someone had demonstrated faith in the fact that she should be ready to teach her own class. So, Rima began with a "looser and less guided" approach than with her other two preservice teachers.

Unfortunately, this meant that Rima and Jade were "off to a rocky start." It quickly became apparent that Rima's approach wasn't working well. Jade wasn't really pushing herself; in fact, she was "cruising." While Rima felt that she was "normally quite understanding" and patient, in this case she raised her concerns pretty quickly. Rima discussed her concerns with the deputy principal in the first instance; and she was supportive. Rima appreciated that. It made her feel that she was trusted even though she was not very experienced as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. And that support made her feel that the deputy principal would be there to work things through with her if things didn't go well. Rima sensed that the school really wanted Jade "to step up."

And so, Rima needed to rethink her approach to being a mentor teacher. She wanted to step up too. For the first two preservice teachers, Rima had made a plan with them at the beginning of the practicum, and given quite specific directions. Rima had worked on giving "really positive," full and explicit feedback. She would "normally try to pick on one thing" at a time so that the preservice teacher could keep working towards it. With Jade, Rima wanted to explicitly communicate "stepping up." She knew that this fitted with her own beliefs about "taking ownership of your learning," so Rima thought that "it was a good thing."

The problem was, that Rima had started to see quite a few gaps that Jade needed to address. And so, Rima had also identified the need for "quite a lot of structure" straight away. Balancing structure with the opportunity for Jade to step up was going to be tricky. Feeling like Jade's job offer hinged on the actions that Rima took and decision that she made really added to the pressure. Rima felt so out of her depth! She really needed to develop a plan and she started by talking with Jade. Rima told Jade that she was concerned, and that if Jade was going to pass this practicum, she needed to demonstrate independence and initiative.

Rima decided that her best option was to avoid talking about that job offer. She didn't want to make that the sole purpose of their work together. That wasn't right. But Jade was in her final practicum and she could refer to that. She told Jade that this was her "last chance before starting her career; she'd rather Jade took a risk and fell on her face and just picked herself up with Rima there to support her." It was better for Jade to make mistakes now. Rima wasn't usually the sort of person to write a lot of lists – but, boy, did she feel the need to "write a huge list of everything" now! That helped her focus on Jade's needs and on her own practice.

And so, with Jade's need to step up firmly in mind, Rima got to work. The first lesson that Jade had taught "wasn't really planned." So, Rima worked with Jade on "adding more structure to the lesson … planning the questions that will bring out the students' knowledge." She had to repeat advice and guidance and she found herself feeling like she needed to explain herself. She would have to say things like, "I'm just telling you this – not to be mean or to make more work for you – but to make this easier for you in the long run; you need to have questions in there, you need to have more detail in your planning, you need to have a lesson sequence." It was only after Rima had pulled Jade up – "a lot" – that a change could be seen. That made Rima wonder if she was right about encouraging preservice teachers to

take ownership of their learning … maybe her approach to being a mentor teacher "needed to be firmer."

Rima was surprised when she found out that Jade had started this practicum with limited experience in some areas. This whole experience seemed to be full of surprises! Hadn't Jade been offered a job? Hadn't she already had two other practica? This made Rima "reflect on her own expectations" again. What expectations did the previous mentor teacher have? How was Rima meant to work that out? And, how would Rima be sure that she was "making a fair judgment?" Rima wondered how on earth she was meant to be sure about how she worked with preservice teachers when there was so little information shared. It sure would have helped early on if she had had an understanding of Jade's previous learning experiences. If Rima could have "read Jade's previous report" it might have helped them both. It was "like getting a new student in your class. It really helps if you know where they've come from."

Funnily enough, this had turned out to be a good challenge for Rima. She wouldn't have thought so in the beginning. But it made it clear to Rima that, as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers, she was learning more as she went along. She guessed that the more preservice teachers she had, the more she would be able to think "so that's why this is happening, so this is what I need to do next time." In the end, while Jade didn't display the "inquisitive nature" that Rima would have liked to have seen, Jade made enough progress for Rima to feel that she could recommend a pass for her practicum. And so, Jade stepped up – and, Jade passed the practicum and was able to start her job. Rima was starting to see that she had more than one mentoring approach and what she chose depended on the challenge that each preservice teacher gave her. Maybe stepping up as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was being comfortable with starting all over again.

Summary

In Chapter 7 I have presented the analysis of the data gathered about the lived experiences of the mentor teachers for preservice teachers involved in this study. These experiences have been presented as reflexive writing in order to enable the reader to engage with the possible meaning of these experiences. The thesis concludes in Chapter 8 with a discussion which links my reflexive writing and the literature, conclusions arising from the study and reflections on the limitations of this study and implications for future research.

Chapter 8. Re-Turning to the Phenomenon

Introduction

This thesis presents Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's lived experiences using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. The hermeneutic phenomenological approach has allowed me to lay these mentor teachers' stories open (Ironside, 2005; van Manen, 1997) so that we can know what it was like for them to become mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Understanding what it was like for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono to become mentor teachers for preservice teachers is important. It is important because the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers is central to supporting preservice teachers' learning during practicum (see for example, Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Ellis et al., 2020; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Wang & Odell, 2002). Hence, the purpose of this study was to reveal Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences becoming mentor teachers, using their voices.

The hermeneutic phenomenological approach has allowed me to connect with the mentor teachers in this study and to live their experiences with them in a deep and personally meaningful way. I have carried, shared, discussed and reflected on their stories for a long time. I have purposely used their "names" in my writing as much as possible because when you name someone you recognise their value; you honour their place in the world. I have attempted to portray the essence (Moustakas, 1994) of their experiences in this thesis with care, authenticity and integrity so that new understandings and knowledge can be derived from what is presented on mentoring.

The way that I have undertaken this study is different to others that I have found in literature, for three reasons. One reason is that I did not start this research as a hermeneutic phenomenologist. The process of orienting to the research questions and living the experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers with Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono drew me more and more deeply into the cyclic process of finding understanding. I see that as a strength of the study, because it was when I felt that I had lost my way that the hermeneutic circle became visible to me. By seeking the parts of this phenomenon and remaining open to discovering new understandings, I was able to continually reconnect to the question and the process and work to remain oriented to the

phenomenon as a whole (van Manen, 1997). Another reason that this study is different is that hermeneutic phenomenology does not provide a "recipe" for research. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a stance, a process – a movement (Spiegelberg, 1994). Each hermeneutic phenomenological study should be different because each study orients to a different question (van Manen, 1997). While I have read a number of studies that were hermeneutically phenomenological, none of them followed the same process as each other and none were like mine. I have read studies in the literature that have contributed to the body of knowledge about mentor teachers for preservice teachers. For example, some researchers have used a thematic analysis approach and drawn conclusions about particular aspects of the work or experiences of mentor teachers for preservice teachers. A hermeneutic phenomenological study does not analyse; it interprets. Thus, the third reason that I believe this study is different to any other is that it presents an interpretation of what it is like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers and it invites the reader to find their own interpretation as they turn to the question (van Manen, 1997).

The Outline of This Chapter

Through this study I have found meaning in Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences (van Manen, 2016) and presented my interpretation as stories. In this chapter, I re-turn (van Manen, 1997) to the question: what is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers? I discuss my interpretations of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences; their selection to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers; the transition from teacher to teacher and mentor teacher; and the personal and professional implications of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers. Throughout each of the following sections I provide my final reflections on what becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers might be like, using allegories. Each allegory is embedded in the text. Implications for policy and practice and recommendations for future research are threaded throughout this chapter. By presenting the stories in Chapter 7 of this thesis and the discussion and recommendations that follow in this chapter, I intentionally invite the reader to engage with my understandings and to reflexively participate in a formative process of developing their own understanding of the phenomenon of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

Selection to Become a Mentor Teacher for Preservice Teachers

For Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, selection to become mentor teachers at their school gave them some indication that they were well regarded and it seems that they were all happy and excited about taking on the role. It was not unreasonable for these participants to believe that their selection was an indication of recognition by their school leaders. But it isn't clear in their stories what that recognition was based on. In Bullough's (2005) study of the "conditions that … facilitate mentor identity" (p. 143), Barbara was new to her mentoring role and the messages that she received from her school leaders about why she was asked to take on a mentoring role were also unclear. There seems to have been frequent discussion in the education literature about mentor teachers being selected because school leaders believed them to be "good" teachers (see for example, Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Grossman & Davis, 2012; Margolis, 2007). But there has also been a call for the basis of school leaders' decisions about mentors and mentoring (including their selection) to be more comprehensively investigated (Langdon et al., 2014; Youngs, 2007). As Bullough (2005), Langdon et al. (2014) and Youngs (2007) have all noted, school leaders' own understanding and experience in mentoring influence the decisions that are made about what and who are recognised and what and who are valued in that particular context. It may well be that the school leaders from these stories viewed involvement in preservice teacher education as an essential contribution to the greater good of education. The school leaders may have possessed the depth of understanding and substantial experience that would mean selection as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers in their schools was indeed a statement of high esteem for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono. However, the only thing that is clear in this study is that each of the schools regularly provided practicum opportunities for preservice teachers – and the school leaders decided who would mentor the preservice teachers placed in their schools.

Accordingly, it could be unwise for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono to view their selection as mentor teachers for preservice teachers as anything more than their schools' need to have enough mentor teachers for practicum. There are good reasons why Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono might have questioned the basis for their selection as mentor teachers for preservice teachers. When they were asked/selected to become mentor teachers they had not yet demonstrated mentoring attributes in the context of preservice teacher education. Discussion about the expected attributes of mentor teachers for preservice teachers is widely available in literature (Ellis et al., 2020; Feiman-Nemser, 2001b;

Grossman & Davis, 2012; Stanulis et al., 2019; Timperley, 2001; Wang & Odell, 2002); and mentoring expectations can also be found in practicum documentation (see for example, University of Auckland, 2021). Being a mentor teacher for preservice teachers is known to be unlike any other work as a teacher (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1993; Haigh & Trevethan, 2017; Sewell et al., 2017). It might, therefore, have helped Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono formulate an understanding of the expectations of their upcoming role in preservice teacher education if they had been involved in discussions with school leaders about the ways that they demonstrated particular mentoring attributes that were applicable to preservice teacher education.

Being selected to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers gave Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono little information about whether and how their selection as a mentor teacher for preservice teachers would be valued in relation to expectations within the school or the preservice teacher education provider – or in relation to The Council's (ECANZ, 2017b) resolve to provide high/er quality, relevant practicum opportunities for preservice teachers. While there has been a great deal of literature that says that the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers is valued (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Ellis et al., 2020; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021; Wang & Odell, 2002), I wonder who was taking responsibility for telling Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono that, as new mentor teachers for preservice teachers, they were valuable and who should have taken that responsibility.

> And so, it seems that for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was like being given a piece of flatpack furniture to make. People have been making this piece of furniture for years. Some of your neighbours have made this piece of furniture and you know that there are a lot of examples online that show what the intended finished product looks like for others. You've been given a few diagrams and a good percentage of the fittings – and some slightly faded instructions written in a range of languages that you are expected to be able to decipher. Important people need to know that you are getting on with the job – but working out how your piece of furniture is going to end up is over to you.

The Transition From Teacher to Teacher and Mentor Teacher

The descriptions in these stories provide insight into the transition between, and blending of, what Murray and Male (2005) referred to as "first order" and "second order" roles:

teaching and mentoring. For Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was unlike any other experience they had had before. While they remained in the same general teaching context, each of the participants encountered unfamiliar circumstances when they began working with preservice teachers. There were new situations to be negotiated and new experiences that required compromise.

The process of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers occurred within the context of teaching. Preservice teachers were assigned to learn at Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's schools, in their classrooms, with their students. The preservice teachers came to learn about and experience becoming a teacher. This meant that aspects of the "world" of preservice teacher education began to blend with Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's "world" of teaching. They began to adapt an already complex process of developing an identity as a teacher (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010) by adding elements of mentoring. This began to change who Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono thought they were (Ferrier-Kerr, 2009). They were becoming, as Kwan and Lopez-Real (2010) described, teacher-mentors.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono had thought about what they considered to be effective attributes of mentors: both personal and professional. It is not surprising that they reflected on their own experiences of being mentored early in their careers or that they thought about what they appreciated about particular mentors' approaches. Mentor teachers' tendency to reflect on, and reject or draw from, approaches that they have experienced as mentees has been commonly discussed in the education literature. Bradbury, in Bradbury and Koballa's (2008) study, and Susan, in Lammert et al.'s (2020) study, both reflected on how their experiences of being mentored influenced the way they navigated the relationships and expectations that were part of their mentor teacher role.

While they had thought about effective attributes of mentors, many of the decisions that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono made about what they needed to *do* for their preservice teachers essentially related to teaching. And so, during the early mentoring events in their mentoring careers, it appears that the *teacher* was very evident in the *teacher-mentor* (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010) with their mentor identities "subsumed under teacher identities" (Bullough, 2005, p. 153). There are a number of interesting aspects to Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's transition from teacher to mentor teacher for preservice teachers, which are outlined below: the focus on competence and confidence in particular, a sense of feeling

torn between their responsibilities as a teacher and as a mentor teacher, and the personal and professional implications of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

Competence and Confidence

It is particularly interesting that when Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono reflected on their own experiences as mentees, they largely focused on times when they had been able to feel competent and confident. The notion of preservice teachers according their mentors with credibility when they themselves felt competent and confident was highlighted in Ambrosetti's (2010) study of preservice teachers' expectations of their mentors. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono seemed to have a strong leaning towards helping their preservice teachers become competent and confident as teachers through their focus on things like planning, the development of lessons and being organised. From one perspective, these seemed to be useful and worthwhile – if not critical – decisions for supporting their preservice teachers. The preservice teachers came to the practicum with specific requirements from their preservice teacher education provider, and the mentor teachers wanted their preservice teachers to be successful. In this light, a mentor teacher's focus on having competent and confident preservice teachers made sense.

In fact, it could be argued that some documents that outlined requirements for success by the preservice teacher education providers might have reinforced a focus on competence and confidence. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono interpreted the messages in the documents that were sent to them as best they could. In some cases, the documented requirements guided early meetings between the mentor teachers and preservice teachers about what needed to be accomplished during the practicum for the preservice teacher to achieve competence. While reflection appeared to be valued by these mentor teachers, and there is evidence of an educative inclination as these mentor teachers worked to develop collaborative relationships with their preservice teachers, focusing on competence and confidence seems to have been a priority. As Maynard and Furlong (1995) explained, there can be benefits in a strong focus on competency for preservice teachers who are ready to use the knowledge and skills that they have already developed. In these instances, it would be appropriate for a mentor teacher to emphasise their role as instructor, observer, and feedback provider (Moon & Shelton Mayes, 1995). However, effective mentoring does not just involve providing instructions, observations, and feedback so that preservice teachers can achieve competence in relation to set requirements in a practicum brief. Opportunities for

preservice teacher learning are much more nuanced than that and so mentor teachers need to be able to balance instructions from the preservice teacher education provider (via a practicum brief, for example) with their own understanding of the context in which they are working and how adult students learn about teaching.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were new to the role of mentor teacher and their tendency to focus on matters of competency and confidence aligns with other studies (Bullough, 2005; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010). However, a gap in support for them as new mentor teachers may be evident. In the early stage of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers – when they were all finding their way – none of them described knowledge of the preservice teacher education programme within which the practicum sat or comprehensive understanding about preservice teacher education. Moreover, while an educative inclination was evident, none of these new mentor teachers demonstrated comprehensive knowledge about the current focus on educative mentoring for preservice teachers. As Langdon (2014) and Timperley (2013) explained, educative mentoring is not a simple undertaking. Specific understandings and skills are required for an educative approach to mentoring. This involves more than a collegial relationship, collaborative planning and the freedom to ask questions. Langdon and Ward (2015) and Stanulis et al. (2019) reiterated the importance of intentionally developing a relational environment that enables questioning, challenge, reflection, and co-construction of professional knowledge and practice for educative mentoring. As Maynard and Furlong (1995) noted, a focus on competency is useful for particular purposes during the preservice teachers' programme of learning. However, if a mentor teacher's focus is predominately on competency, it may work against the opportunity to develop an educative mentoring environment.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono knew that they were finding their way, and they each took their new role seriously. Elements of the role that were more mentor than teacher, such as the expectation to observe the preservice teachers and give feedback, tended to concern them. While the concerns that they had about enacting their role come through in their stories, professional development and guidance about appropriate approaches to take as a mentor were not evident. Moreover, there is no evidence in their stories that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono participated in opportunities to moderate the judgements that they made during observations or the focus of what was communicated when giving feedback. It might have been useful for these new mentor teachers to have had the opportunity to examine and discuss feedback that was appropriate for preservice teachers during these early practicum

events. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono did appear to have a broader focus than the "traditional follow-me model" that Clarke et al. (2014, p. 175) referred to; however, there was also appreciable initial concern about getting feedback "right." Preservice teachers' learning relies on clear, targeted and goal-oriented feedback (Ellis & Loughland, 2017). Mentor teachers for preservice teachers need to be able to distinguish between the types of feedback that underpin effective learning, such as Hattie and Timperley's (2007) feedback about the task, the processing of the task, self-regulation, and the person; and they need to be able to provide the right feedback at the right time and in the right way. Each of the preservice teachers that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono worked with and will work with in the future deserves accurate feedback that is appropriately targeted to their learning needs. Also, having been selected as mentor teachers for preservice teachers, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono deserved to feel competent and confident in their ability to provide feedback – before they worked with their first preservice teachers. If there is to be, as Copland (2010) argued, clear and agreed understanding between the mentor teacher and preservice teacher about the purpose of feedback – and confidence that the preservice teacher education providers' requirements for success are being met consistently – perhaps this type of learning cannot wait.

After mentoring their first preservice teachers, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were beginning to feel confident in their role. They were certainly all keen to continue working as mentors for preservice teachers. However, it is difficult to know what the basis of their growing sense of confidence was. As I noted earlier, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono did discuss practices and attributes that align with those that are promoted in the literature about mentoring preservice teachers. However, it seems unlikely that they were evaluating themselves solely in relation to findings in literature. It also seems unlikely that, as Feiman-Nemser et al. (1993) found in their study, they were able to articulate a clear sense of the preservice teacher providers' expectations of mentor teachers for their preservice teachers. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's developing sense of confidence and competence appears to be the result of self-assessment using ideas and expectations that they had picked up from their own experiences of being mentored and their mentor colleagues over time.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono developed approaches to mentoring from what their experience told them was useful for teachers to know, understand and be able to do. At times, they drew on their local community of other mentors from their own school for guidance. They had a sense of what their preservice teachers seemed to respond to; and so,

it seems that these judgements about their own confidence and competence as mentor teachers for preservice teachers mirrored what has been reported in literature. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono founded their developing teacher-mentor identity (see Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Day et al., 2006; Richardson & Watt, 2018) and mentoring practices largely on their experiences as mentees (as in Bradbury & Koballa, 2008; Lammert et al., 2020) and the expectations of teachers and mentors in their own school communities (as in Bullough, 2005).

There appears to be a missed opportunity here. As they transitioned from teacher only to teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were all keen to know and understand what was expected of them. They all made attempts to match what they knew about mentoring to what they did in practice, and they were all prepared to utilise guidance that they could immediately access to support their developing understanding. But the link between their readiness to learn and the information and guidance that they needed appeared to be tenuous. This study is not the only one that has perceived a poor link between mentor teachers for preservice teachers and preservice teacher education providers. Clarke et al. (2014), for example noted that "without a clear understanding of the ways in which [mentor] teachers participate—or are expected to participate—in [preservice] teacher education, it is difficult to know how best to support or facilitate that work" (p. 164). While there has been a substantial amount of research about what mentor teachers for preservice teachers should know and be able to do, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono needed more than Langdon's (2017) "commitment to learning … [and] willingness to unravel treasured beliefs and practices" (p. 541) and impersonal documentation to support them as they were becoming mentor teachers. They needed "time to build knowledge and to inquire, assess and enact new knowledge and learning" (p. 541) within their school community.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono have shown that, for them, mentoring was being learnt on the job while working with preservice teachers. They were learning from their reflections on their own practice. Studies such as Hudson (2013), Ambrosetti (2014a) and Stanulis et al. (2019) have shown that mentor teachers' understandings and practice can be developed and strengthened if appropriately guided professional development is put in place while mentor teachers are mentoring. For example, Stanulis et al. (2019) found that their mentor teachers benefited from an emphasis on "concrete practices with opportunities to develop over time in educative ways" (p. 1) and Ambrosetti (2014a) noted potential for mentor

teachers to use their contextualised learning about mentoring preservice teachers to modify their own practice. Without personalised, contextualised support as they began to become mentor teachers for preservice teachers it appears that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's judgements about their competence and confidence were based on how well they were repeating their version of what had "always been done." There is some reason for concern that, as time progresses, these judgements might become entrenched and therefore, as Langdon (2017) and Orland-Barak and Wang (2021) cautioned, difficult to change. If the beliefs and practices that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono brought with them into their mentoring role are not challenged through appropriately guided professional development, there is a risk that their belief and practices are unlikely to change. New groups of teachers who are becoming mentor teachers will need guidance and support to develop the understandings and skills required for effectively mentoring preservice teachers. I suspect that, without personalised, contextualised support as they become mentor teachers, they too might develop their practice on the job based on what they believe to be "good teaching" and what has always been done.

It is clear from the range of documents published by The Council that mentoring and mentors are in the policy spotlight in New Zealand. The Council has highlighted the importance of professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers and committed to ensuring that there would be research-informed "improvements in the integration of theory and practice, and increased professional learning opportunities" for those involved (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 4). It might be useful for The Council to engage with the interpretations of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers that are presented in this thesis. Further, this small-scale study could be viewed as a start in the development of a wider body of studies that highlights the role of mentoring in teacher education. Reflexively developing their own understanding of the phenomenon of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers might give some assistance to those who are charged with making "recommendations about the capability and ongoing development" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) of mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Moreover, further research into the reasons for school leaders' selection and resourcing of mentors and mentoring for preservice teachers in their schools appears to be warranted. This research could form part of the ongoing work on The Strategy (ECANZ, 2018b) and The Framework (ECANZ, 2018a) and support a heightened focus within these two important documents on the place of preservice teacher education, mentoring and mentor teachers in

the "creation of leadership capacity in our educational organisations" so that they "can keep growing" (ECANZ, 2018a, p. 3).

> It seems that for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers was like being a passenger on a cruise ship with a lot of other passengers who all want to visit the same important geographic area that you do. You have brought a beloved and trusted map of the area with you and everyone has been given their own new map of where you are all going. Everyone's old and new maps – and the ship's instructions for emergencies – are written in their own language. You believe that there might be a single translation of those maps and instructions but no one has provided a translator to take on that work. You think that, given a chance, you could probably get to this important place on your own; someone you trusted has taken you on a similar trip before. Everyone seems to know where the captain is, but you would like to know why the captain is heading to this geographic area, what the captain's map and instructions look like … and if the captain is really on board. The first mates appear from time to time with encouragement that you are all going to a great and important place, they will find and talk to the captain – and you will all get "there" in the end.

Teaching and Mentoring

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono seemed to welcome the transition that they were making from teacher to mentor teacher. It is not surprising that they felt a sense of accomplishment when they believed that things were going well. But it is also important to recognise that tensions between their teaching and mentoring roles (and "styles") occurred on occasion for these new mentor teachers.

As Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers, their own understanding of their identity and beliefs about their teacher competencies and dispositions were tested. It is interesting to note the reflections of some of these new mentor teachers about the way they worked with, learnt from – and the expectations that they had of – their students and preservice teachers. Writers such as Timperley et al. (2007) emphasised that mentoring preservice teachers is not the same as teaching students. Thus, when new mentor teachers compare the nature of their teaching and mentoring work, these can be important moments of reflection about who they are becoming as mentor teachers. It is not clear from Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's stories if they

had opportunities for such reflections. It seems from their stories presented in this thesis that they viewed the colleagues around them as being useful when they needed advice about an issue. However, it is not clear whether the advice provided by their colleagues demonstrated in-depth understanding of the differences between teaching students and mentoring preservice teachers. It could be useful for new mentor teachers for preservice teachers to work through testing situations with a mentor of their own. This would provide new mentor teachers with opportunities for personalised, contextualised support during the practicum.

The preservice teacher education literature has emphasised the need for preservice teachers to be able to adjust their practice as required in order to meet their students' learning needs – *while* they are teaching (see for example Männikkö & Husu, 2019; Timperley, 2013; van Tartwijk et al., 2017). This is the sort of learning that occurs during practicum under the guidance of mentor teachers. In 2011, Grudnoff noted the appeal in preservice teacher education literature for mentor teachers to be considered "full partners … rather than viewed as providers of classrooms for students to teach in" (p. 231). If mentor teachers for preservice teachers are to be able to competently and confidently provide learning opportunities that acknowledge preservice teachers as partners, *they* need to be able to recognise cues for their own learning, interpret and reflect on these cues, and adjust their practice as required in order to meet their preservice teachers' learning needs. Further research into new mentor teachers' opportunities to critically examine the connections and differences between teaching and mentoring practices could support the development of such personalised, contextualised support for them. It might be possible that such personalised, contextualised support for teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers could underpin partnerships such as Grudnoff (2011) and Timperley (2013) envisioned.

The Council recognises that there have been calls for partnerships between schools and preservice teacher education providers and the provision of professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers for preservice teachers (ECANZ, 2017b). The Ministry of Education and The Council have commissioned research related to exemplary learning opportunities for preservice teachers, such as Timperley (2013) and Whatman and MacDonald (2017); and The Council has acknowledged calls to "support the development of quality practica arrangements and partnerships" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7). Should The Council reflexively engage with these interpretations of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers (as part of a wider body of literature), considerations about how such partnerships could be developed and

resourced to support the "capability and ongoing development" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) of teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers may result.

> Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experience of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers seemed to be like having a trusted Duplo train set in your toybox from childhood. That train set and you have shared some wonderful moments and you have always loved being a train driver. You have experienced some mishaps too but you and your trainset have always come through stronger together. But that train isn't the only toy in your toybox that is important to you. Sometimes you want different and more challenging toys to play with. Sometimes going on journeys with that train is just what you need, but other times working on your Lego Star Wars Millennium Falcon spaceship model and becoming an astronaut feels more like you. Sometimes when other people come to play, you are not too sure whether you want to be a train driver or an astronaut. Those people can be helpful, especially when they help you find new pieces to go on the Millennium Falcon spaceship model. But sometimes other people coming to play can just make things confusing. In reality, you are not too sure whether being a train driver or an astronaut makes it more fun for you – or your friends when they come to play. What you would really like is to create a toy world where you can be a train driver and an astronaut and that world makes sense to you and your friends who come to play.

Emotions and Becoming a Mentor of Preservice Teachers

From the outside, the shift from teacher to teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers looks primarily professional – but it is also very personal. It is all very well to know theoretically that there is a difference between teaching students and teaching preservice teachers and to be excited about sharing your professional world (Ambrosetti et al., 2014; Ferrier-Kerr 2009) with someone new to the profession. Stepping into that "place" is a different thing altogether. As they began the process of becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono faced a range of related emotions and challenges that seem to be particular to this phenomenon.

As Hargreaves (1998) has argued, teaching is an inherently emotional activity. It is therefore to be expected that mentoring preservice teachers involves a range of emotions too. Sometimes the emotions that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono experienced were in direct response to events that occurred during a practicum, and at other times the emotions

related to their general sense of self: their identity as a teacher and as a mentor. At times, when a decision or action had consequences for both themselves and a preservice teacher, these new mentor teachers felt conflicted. In this section I reflect on some of the emotions involved when the experiences of teaching and becoming a mentor of preservice teachers combine.

Excitement and Anticipation. The excitement and anticipation about becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono felt was apparent. They were making a change in both their professional and personal lives and there seemed to be a sense of moral purpose associated with their decisions (Hargreaves, 1998). As mentor teachers for preservice teachers, they were gaining the opportunity to contribute, for example, to a less experienced colleague's learning and opportunity to join the teaching profession, to the work of their school and to their profession as a whole. Moreover, for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, mentoring preservice teachers was not just about the preservice teacher receiving mentoring; it was also about them *feeling* like they were mentors. They were taking on new challenges, creating opportunities for new learning and establishing new opportunities for feeling happy and purposeful in their work (Hargreaves, 1998). It is understandable that they felt excited and a sense of anticipation. However, a sense of purpose related to an activity such as mentoring can raise the emotional "stakes" for the individual involved, as Bullough and Draper (2004) asserted, with "both success and failure … understood to reveal something profound about one's self, moral standing, and ability" (p. 286). There were risks associated with the new opportunities to feel purposeful in their work: for example, to their sense of accomplishment as teachers and how they were recognised in their community. As mentor teachers for preservice teachers, those risks would always be present, but it is important to recognise that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were new mentors for preservice teachers; this study describes their first experiences.

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences as new mentoring teachers for preservice teachers provide a reminder about the importance of recognising and appreciating firsts; the first-time excitement and anticipation about doing something that is believed to be worthwhile is unique. A first-time experience involves a sense of the familiar mixed with the unknown. The mix of emotions involved when the familiar and unknown combine can be confusing. Providing personalised, contextualised support at the time that teachers become new mentor teachers could help them utilise the excitement and anticipation that they feel and manage any other confusing emotions that might arise. The time when a teacher

is becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers could be an ideal time for them to be supported to develop focused goals that align with their sense of purpose, the specific needs of the preservice teacher with whom they work and their capability and development as a mentor involved in preservice teacher education.

Feeling Recognised in Their Professional Community. Making this transition from teacher to teacher and mentor teacher for preservice teachers increased the ways that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono felt worthwhile. Their desire to *give* to their profession was fulfilled in a new way; and becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers *gave* to them. As mentor teachers there were new opportunities to share their practice and be recognised in their community: some of those opportunities might not have been available to them if they had not become mentor teachers of preservice teachers. Many writers have described the importance of community for the development of identity and a sense of social worth (for example Alsup, 2006; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; J. L. Cohen, 2010; Sachs, 2005; Wenger, 2000) As Alsup (2006) noted, recognition from one's community can reinforce a person's feelings of personal power and their feelings of vulnerability. Thus, Timperley's (2013) caution about the potential for communities to reinforce the "wrong" things is important to remember.

Gee (2000) wrote about the ways that a person can be recognised in their community. Using Gee's "ways" of identity recognition, the shifts in aspects of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's sense of institution-identity and affinity-identity can be seen in their experiences. On the surface, these institution and affinity shifts can be easily recognised; each of them was known as a teacher and they were now becoming known as also a mentor teacher. Each of these two roles has recognisable and agreed characteristics (Gee, 2000). Of these three ways of being recognised, it is most interesting to consider the shifts and negotiations that might have been occurring in relation to how Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono felt and recognised themselves within their professional community: their discourse-identity. Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's stories have helped me to reflect on how these three of Gee's notions of identity might intertwine.

I wonder how the beliefs and ideas of a new mentor teacher for preservice teachers, about themself as a teacher and a mentor teacher (and their reflections on those beliefs and ideas), affected changes to their institution-identity and affinity-identity. How does a new mentor teacher for preservice teachers manage their own beliefs and the beliefs of others during this

time of transition? How do those beliefs affect how they see themselves (with their particular knowledge, skills and understandings about teaching and learning) as worthwhile members of their community? This would be an interesting and important area for further research. Greater understanding about the development of discourse-identity of mentor teachers for preservice teachers during the early stages of their transition could give useful insight into how support and professional development might best serve them during this time in their careers. Such research could contribute to the "exploration of teachers' potential as mentors … within and beyond their own organisations" (ECANZ, 2018b, p. 17). Greater understanding of what these mentor teachers need to support the development of their identity as teachers and mentors at this time might contribute to a heightened focus on the place of preservice teacher education, mentoring and mentor teachers in the creation of leadership capacity (ECANZ, 2018a) suggested earlier in this discussion. I suggest that development of informed, targeted, personalised support for mentor teachers for preservice teachers has the potential to strengthen "the leadership capacity in our educational organisations [so that that capacity] can keep growing" (ECANZ, 2018a, p. 3). I further suggest that taking a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to exploring teachers' potential as mentors (that is, conducting research that portrays them and their experiences) could contribute to a foundation of understanding for the development of targeted, personalised support.

A Tangle of Emotions. Of the many other emotions that are apparent in Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's stories, the feelings related to pride, disappointment, empathy, worry, caution, inadequacy, naivety and guilt stand out for me. Identifying these emotions is not intended to indicate any particular themes; this is not a thematic analysis. But, as I reflect on Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences, these emotions each stand out on their own – as well as being all tangled together.

As Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono began the transition from teacher to mentor teacher, who they were, what they believed and how they operated in particular situations (Hastings, 2008) were up for scrutiny in new ways and often by new members of their community. When Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono worked with a preservice teacher, their practices as teachers and beliefs about teaching and learning were often the subject of examination. This is to be expected given that the purpose of the practicum was for the preservice teacher to explore teaching practices. However, being put in the position of having to demonstrate and justify their practice and beliefs for the purpose of a preservice teacher's learning was

new for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono. While the work that they were doing for the preservice teacher was mentoring, they were being judged by the preservice teacher as both a mentor and as a teacher.

Being a teacher was important for each of the new mentor teachers in this study; being known as a teacher was critical to their sense of identity (Gee, 2000). They each had strong beliefs about teaching and learning and they were keen to share their teaching practice with preservice teachers. They each had developing expectations of what preservice teachers needed to learn and be able to do in order to become teachers – and the preservice teachers had expectations of what they might learn too. This meant that the practicum was a time when expectations, judgements and way/s of operating were in the spotlight from both perspectives: the preservice teachers' and the mentor teachers'.

Hastings's (2004) qualitative case study into mentor teachers' perceptions of their mentoring role during practicum examined the impact of expectations and judgements during practicum for 20 Australian secondary school mentor teachers. It would seem from Hastings's study that none of the emotions that are expressed in Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's stories are surprising. Hastings counted disappointment and guilt among her participants' prevalent emotions, for example. The expectations and judgements related to teaching that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono brought with them into their new mentoring role, and what they thought preservice teachers needed to experience and learn, influenced the sense of purpose that they each held (Hargreaves, 1998). Their sense of purpose influenced the way that they worked to develop accurate emotional understanding (i.e.: to identify and manage their emotions; Hargreaves, 1998) for themselves and with their preservice teachers. The way that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono worked to manage their expectations, judgements and emotions (and their degree of success in doing so) influenced their experience of their work as new mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

There were tacit controls on how the relationships between Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono and their preservice teachers had to be developed. The preservice teachers were assigned to them and the relationship had to be developed in a very short period of time (Bullough & Draper, 2004). The expectations and boundaries of the relationships were founded on practicum requirements provided by the preservice teacher education providers. Fair and valid judgements about the preservice teachers' achievement against the practicum requirements (Haigh & Trevethan, 2017) needed to be made. It is no wonder that some of

the participants in this study thought about how information about the preservice teachers' previous experiences and learning needs might have been helpful for them as new mentor teachers. Hastings's (2008) participant, Therese, felt a sense of "powerlessness" when she struggled to develop emotional understanding (Hargreaves, 1998) with, and about, her preservice teacher. Being party to pertinent information may have helped Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono develop accurate emotional understanding, identify and manage the tangled emotions that they felt and thus develop confidence when circumstances became complicated for them.

This study has identified a range of emotions that Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono identified and attempted to manage during their first experiences as mentor teachers for preservice teachers. While they experienced emotions such as excitement and pride as new mentor teachers, there were also feelings such as inadequacy in the sight of their school students, caution about how to approach difficult conversations, and naivety because something significant was going on for a preservice teacher personally and they hadn't picked that up. At the same time as they were feeling a tangle of emotions, Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono were attempting to maintain a fair and balanced approach to assessing the preservice teachers' progress during the practicum (Haigh & Trevethan, 2017). It is to Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's credit that they dealt with their emotions and wanted to continue with mentoring preservice teachers. That commitment seems to speak to "something profound about their self, moral standing, and ability" (Bullough & Draper, 2004).

Other studies, such as Hastings (2004, 2008), have identified the emotional nature of mentoring for those who mentor preservice teachers. But there is more to know. There is a place for further research into how teachers who are becoming mentor teachers navigate the emotions that arise for them and the impact on their development as mentors during this period of transition. Recognising and understanding the emotional component of mentoring work for new mentor teachers might enable change to the ways that we prepare and support teachers as they become mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Left Out, Disregarded, and Abandoned. It is not possible to know from the data gathered in this study the degree to which preservice teacher education providers and visiting lecturers were involved with Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima or Ono's first experiences as mentor teachers for preservice teachers. This is because, as I noted earlier, there is little

mention of preservice teacher education providers and visiting lecturers in their descriptions. However, it is difficult to ignore the impression that during one practicum, the preservice teacher education provider and visiting lecturer who was assigned to work with Tahi and her preservice teacher appeared to be to be barely present.

At the time, Tahi was enmeshed in a range of emotions: disappointment, empathy, worry, caution, inadequacy and guilt and feeling naïve. The preservice teacher education provider and visiting lecturer's apparent minimal and indirect communication added another layer of emotion for Tahi (Hastings, 2004). As a result of the way that situation seemed to be managed, Tahi also felt left out, disregarded, and abandoned. These feelings are much the same as those Barbara, Bullough's (2005) participant, felt when she received little acknowledgement from the preservice teacher education provider for her work.

Responding to the calls to "support the development of quality practica arrangements and partnerships" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) offers an opportunity for The Council to support the "capability and ongoing development" (ECANZ, 2017b, p. 7) of teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers. The establishment of quality practica arrangements and partnerships must surely include recognition of the emotional burden that teachers take on when they become mentor teachers for preservice teachers. If new mentor teachers are able to feel emotionally secure and supported, they are more likely to confidently develop the understandings and skills that will enable them to support preservice teacher learning. Further research into the ways that schools and preservice teacher education providers can enact authentic partnerships in the practicum (for example, taking a third space approach such as Grudnoff et al., 2017, described) could include ways that these partnerships can openly address the emotional challenges that are present in the professional activity of mentoring preservice teachers. A central focus of this research could relate to finding ways that the development of quality practica arrangements and partnerships can enable the value of the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers to be expressed in ways that communicate appreciation and clearly articulate the professional significance of the mentoring role.

> For Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono, becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers seemed to be like being on your first roller-coaster ride But, this is no ordinary roller-coaster ride. The other riders matter on this roller-coaster ride. They make a difference to how you feel when you take that first ride. The sense of companionship in having someone in the seat beside you makes a difference, and it

makes a difference if that person feels more like a companion than a supervisor judging your every move. It can make a difference if the person beside you ignores you during the ride or if there is no companion at all. The people in the cars in front and behind you and those who have just completed their ride make a difference. You can learn from them and avoid mistakes that you see them make. You can see the parts of the ride where it is safe to relax and you can see the times you might want to strap yourself in more tightly. Then, there is the person who manages the controls; who selects the speed, counts the riders on and decides whether they will watch your first roller-coaster ride or tend to other things. The people in the queue and others watching from below – everyone around who is interested in roller-coaster riding – make a difference too. They are there to see how you respond if the roller-coaster stalls on your first ride, or something breaks. It is never just you on that roller-coaster ride. They are all there to see your skill in riding, your nervousness – and the exhilaration of your ride. These other riders and watchers notice your desire to join the queue again; and they notice your musing about whether the next time will be the same as the ride you had before. It is never just you on that first roller-coaster ride, but, ultimately, it is always your ride.

Summary of Implications, Limitations and Recommendations

Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences of becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers suggest that there is a place for personalised, contextualised support for teachers as they become mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Such support could be provided by schools and preservice teacher education providers together in the context of the work of mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Professional learning opportunities for teachers as they become mentor teachers for preservice teachers could include

- clarifying the role of mentor teachers for preservice teachers in preservice teacher education so that each individual new mentor teacher is equipped to confidently make judgements about their own competence as a mentor teacher;
- critically examining the interrelationship between teaching and mentoring;
- developing knowledge and skill in a range of mentoring approaches and the ability to effectively select approaches and adjust their practice to suit individual preservice teachers' professional learning needs;
- building professional community networks that enable opportunities for shared reflection on problems of practice and opportunities for professional learning;

- developing understanding of relevant preservice teacher education programmes; and
- making judgements about preservice teachers' knowledge, skills and understandings during practicum.

These recommendations validate a policy direction that appears to have been advancing for some time. It is unclear, however, where the onus (and therefore the resourcing) for progressing this policy direction lies. The Council's emphasis on the importance of professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers (ECANZ, 2017b) is encouraging. Endorsing the development of quality practica arrangements and partnerships which enable professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers offers an opportunity for The Council to support the capability and ongoing development of teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers, in context. Moreover, supporting the capability and ongoing development of teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers, in context, in ways such as those described in this thesis, has the potential to enhance the creation of leadership capacity so that our educational organisations can keep growing.

It is not clear in either The Framework (ECANZ, 2018a), The Strategy (ECANZ, 2018b) or *Our Vision: Initial Teacher Education* (ECANZ, 2017b) where the responsibility for resourcing increased professional learning opportunities for mentor teachers for preservice teachers, or enhancing leadership capacity in schools, lies. It appears that achieving clarity about where these responsibilities lie would be a significant and crucial step forward.

Limitations of the Study

While sufficient data were gathered in this longitudinal, hermeneutic phenomenological study to interpret what it was like for Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono to become a mentor teacher for beginning teachers, the findings of this research cannot be viewed as representative of the experiences of mentor teachers for preservice teachers. It is acknowledged that five of the six participants are female and, with six participants in the study, there was only a small representation of different cultural backgrounds. It is common for the number of participants in phenomenological research to be small (Creswell, 2014; Murray & Wilde, 2020), so the number of participants in this study may be viewed as a limitation. They were also all volunteers, who were prepared to add participating in a research project to their first experience of mentoring a preservice teacher; so, it may be

considered that these circumstances might produce a certain character to the experiences described. This needs to be remembered when considering the outcomes of the study.

The length of time between interviews can also be viewed as a limitation of the study. While time can afford participants an opportunity to reflect on their experiences, it is not possible to know if the time delays in this study were beneficial. Long gaps in time between interviews might have affected the participants' ability to remember accurately. The longitudinal nature of my study affected the opportunity for two of my participants to remain involved. They might not have withdrawn if the study had concluded sooner.

Because of the hermeneutic phenomenological nature of this study, other factors such as the influence of the schools' contexts was not analysed. It is possible, for example, that the philosophical beliefs and practices of school leaders might have influenced the participants' reflections on their experiences (Langdon et al., 2014).

While I adhered to Schuman's concept of a series of three interviews (Seidman, 2013), greater breadth of data may have been gathered in this study if I had included more interviews. It could also be argued that more interviews were warranted because I was a novice hermeneutic phenomenological researcher. At least one further interview may have provided the opportunity for me to gather an increased richness of phenomenological data. All of the participants displayed a tendency to talk about detail and their observations and views about a situation (van Manen, 2016). A further interview may have provided the participants with the opportunity to delve more deeply into their experiences as they lived them.

Suggestions for Further Research

This small-scale study should be viewed as a contribution to the development of a wider body of studies that highlight the work of mentor teachers in preservice teacher education and the importance of understanding new mentor teachers' experiences. The implications and limitations that I have identified also suggest areas for future research. Further hermeneutic phenomenological research into the experiences of mentor teachers for preservice teachers, using samples that are representative of different subsets of mentor teachers in preservice teacher education, could provide rich and more variable perspectives, increase the applicability of the findings to a range of contexts, and add to our knowledge of the transition from teacher to mentor teachers.

There is a place for further research into mentor teachers' identity development and how teachers who are becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers navigate the emotions that arise for them during this period of transition. Future research could focus on the impact of emotions on teachers' identity development as mentors. Understanding identity development and the emotional component of mentoring work for new mentor teachers might enable change to the ways that we prepare and support teachers as they become mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

Supplementing the study with other qualitative research (such as case studies and narrative methodologies) into new mentor teachers' opportunities to critically examine the connections and differences between teaching and mentoring practices would be valuable. Future research employing a range of quantitative methods could assist the development of personalised, contextualised support for new mentor teachers for preservice teachers.

This study has identified the potential for further research into the place of mentor teachers for preservice teachers in building leadership capacity in our educational organisations. Further research into the potential for schools and preservice teacher education providers to provide support for mentor teachers for preservice teachers together in the context of the practicum is therefore suggested. Research related to partnerships in the practicum that focuses particularly on understanding mentor teachers' experiences within these partnerships, and activities that communicate appreciation for, and clearly articulate the professional significance of, the mentoring role would be an important contribution to this body of preservice teacher education literature.

Concluding Statement

This thesis has presented the lived experiences of six participants as they were becoming mentor teachers for preservice teachers in New Zealand. Using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, I have laid these new mentor teachers' stories open (Ironside, 2005; van Manen, 1997) so that we can know what it was like for them to become mentor teachers for preservice teachers. Hermeneutic phenomenology champions the power of language; and it is through faithful interpretation of each participant's choice of language and adherence to the hermeneutic circle (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2010; Laverty, 2003) that meaning has been drawn by one researcher to illuminate the lived experiences of these participants.

Through this study I have found meaning in Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences (van Manen, 2016) and presented my interpretation as stories. In this final chapter I have re-turned (van Manen, 1997) to the question: what is it like to become a mentor teacher for preservice teachers? I have discussed my interpretations of Tahi, Rua, Toru, Whā, Rima and Ono's experiences and I have provided my final reflections on what becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers might be like, as allegories.

As I have discussed my interpretations throughout this chapter, I have reflected on links between the interpretations in this study and three key New Zealand policy documents (ECANZ, 2017b; 2018a; 2018b). I have also suggested possible opportunities for further research that have been raised by this study. I invite each person who reads this thesis to reflexively develop their own understanding of what they read so that all of our understandings can be added to a shared and dynamic body of knowledge of becoming a mentor teacher for preservice teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet – Participants

Epsom Campus
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 623 8899
Facsimile 64 9 623 8898
www.education.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street
Auckland 1150, New Zealand

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
(Participants)

Project title: Investigating the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher and the effects of the processes involved on the mentor teacher's work with student teachers.

My name is Vivienne Mackisack and I am a Professional Teaching Fellow in the School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice and the Associate Director Primary Teacher Education at the Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland. I am currently undertaking a research project in order to complete the requirements of a Doctor of Philosophy degree through the University of Auckland. **I am inviting you to participate in this research.**

The question underpinning the research project is:
What is the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher?

The following aspects will be investigated:

i. How teachers' identities change as they become mentor teachers
ii. The professional (formal) and personal (informal) processes involved in becoming a mentor teacher
iii. The effects of those processes on the mentor teacher's work with student teachers

Who is being invited to participate?
Primary school teachers who are considering taking on the role of **associate teacher** and who have not previously been mentor teachers for student teachers or provisionally registered teachers in any school setting, at any time are being invited to participate. If you don't want to take part, you do not have to give a reason and no pressure will be put on you to try and change your mind.

Who is going to conduct the research?
Initial communication is being made by a research administrator. A research assistant will conduct all of the research procedures and maintain contact with participants. I am not involved in any of these procedures and will not at any time receive any information that will identify you to me. This is very important because my role at the Faculty of Education involves leadership of primary practicum courses and it is essential that I maintain ethical practices with regard to confidentiality for participants. The research administrator and research assistant have completed confidentiality agreements.

What will I have to do if I take part?
If you agree to take part you will agree to be an associate teacher for primary student teachers from the Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland on two occasions during 2015. You will also over a one year period beginning in February 2015, complete 2 semi-structured individual face to face interviews, 2 individual phone interviews and journaling while undertaking the mentor role (your choice of either written or digital voice recorded). The interviews will be digitally recorded. You will

also be asked to provide copies of records that you keep of your work with student teachers during the year of the study. I anticipate that the total time commitment for each participant will be approximately four and a half hours over the 12 months.

Participants can complete journals in either written or recorded form or a mixture of the two. I will provide each participant with a digital voice recorder. At the end of the study you will be entitled to keep the digital voice recorder.

If I agree to take part what happens to what I say?

There are no right or wrong answers for this study – it will be important to hear your opinions and experiences. The findings from this research will provide insight into the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher and the effects of the processes involved on the mentor teacher's work with student teachers. Once submitted for assessment for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, the final report will be lodged in the University of Auckland library at Epsom campus. Data collected in this study may support further research in this area and papers may be written for publication and presentation to professional and academic audiences.

Participants in this study cannot be offered anonymity as there will be a number of other people who are aware of your involvement in the research; for example leaders at your school and student teachers placed with you. All data will be about you and your work, collected individually, and will remain confidential. The student teachers with whom you work will be informed of this study by the research administrator and research assistant and placement with you will infer that the student teachers understand and accept what is involved. You will be asked to select a pseudonym for yourself and your student teachers. These pseudonyms will be used in all documentation as well as in the final report and any subsequent publications and presentations. No written reports will be able to identify you, your student teachers or your school in any way.

You might decide that you do not wish to accept this invitation if you are concerned that I might recognize your voice. All data will be analysed in written format. A sent journal (either written or digitally voice recorded) will indicate your permission for it to be included as data in this research. As the researcher it can be useful to hear the way in which statements are made. For this reason I intend to transcribe the recordings of each of the interviews. The research assistant will ensure that no voice recording delivered to me contains information that would enable my identification of a participant. If the research assistant has any doubt a transcriber will be employed through usual University of Auckland procedures.

You will be provided with a summary of your transcripts by the research assistant at certain points during the year to verify that the summary accurately documents how you recognize yourself to be in the role at that time.

The digital voice recorder and transcripts files will be stored in a password protected computer folder by the research assistant. Digital voice recorder and transcripts files will be cleaned of identifying information before being stored in a password protected computer folder by me. The data will be kept in secure storage for a period of six years. You will be asked to consent to the data being destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

Do I have to take part?

No, taking part is voluntary. If you choose to take part you will have the right to withdraw at any time, however there will be an expectation that you will be committing to the study for its duration because gathering data over time is important for the credibility of this study. Should participation in this research cause or be perceived by a participant to cause adverse consequences for him or her, the situation will be addressed directly with the participant. In a case where adverse consequences occur or are perceived to occur the participant will have the right to withdraw from the research. Should you withdraw you may not be able to require that data collected up until that point is removed from the study.

What happens if there are incidental findings?

It is possible that this research could give rise to incidental findings about a participant's practice or situation. If an incidental finding does not raise concern no action will be taken. Should an incidental finding raise concern this concern will be addressed directly with the participant, which follows usual practice within the teaching profession (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2014).

What do I do now?

Think about the information on this sheet, and contact the research administrator at (dedicated email address to be provided), phone (09) 6238899 Extn (to be provided) or one of my supervisors if you have any questions. If you agree to take part, please sign the consent form and return it to the research administrator at (dedicated email address to be provided) or by post at the address below by (date to be inserted following Ethics approval).

The consent form will not be used to identify you. It will be filed separately from all other information.

Thank you in advance for your time and assistance in making this study possible.

My supervisors are: Dr Fiona Ell, Lecturer, School of Learning, Development and Professional Practice and Dr Lexie Grudnoff, Deputy Dean Teacher Education.
The Faculty Dean is: Professor Graeme Aitken.

Faculty of Education
University of Auckland
Epsom Campus
Private Bag 92601
Symonds Street
Auckland
Phone (09) 6238899

Dr Fiona Ell: Extn 89847
f.ell@auckland.ac.nz

Dr Lexie Grudnoff: Extn 48890
l.grudnoff@auckland.ac.nz

Professor Graeme Aitken: Extn 48821
g.aitken@auckland.ac.nz

For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 extn. 83711.

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON
26 August 2014 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 012903

Appendix B: Consent Form – Participants

Epsom Campus
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 623 8899
Facsimile 64 9 623 8898
www.education.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street
Auckland 1150, New Zealand

CONSENT FORM
(Participant)
THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title: Investigating the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher and the effects of the processes involved on the mentor teacher's work with student teachers.

Name of Researcher: Vivienne Mackisack

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, have understood the nature of the research and why I have been asked to give consent to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to register as an associate teacher for student teachers and fulfill the role for at least two student teachers at different times during 2015.
- I understand that I am invited to participate in the research because I have not ever been a mentor teacher for a beginning teacher or a student teacher during practicum: in any school setting, at any time.
- I understand that I have the right to decline to be involved in this research project.
- I understand that the research administrator and research assistant will undertake all communication with me and data collection related to this study and that the researcher will not be informed of my identity.
- I understand that the research administrator and research assistant have signed confidentiality agreements.
- I understand that I cannot be offered anonymity.
- I understand that data will be collected individually and will remain confidential.
- I understand that pseudonyms will be used in all documentation as well as in the final report and any subsequent publications and presentations to professional and academic audiences.
- I understand that the student teachers with whom I work will be informed of this study and placement with me will mean that a student teacher understands and accepts what is involved.
- I understand that student teachers placed with me will have signed a consent form inclusive of a confidentiality statement.
- I agree to the face to face and phone interviews being digitally voice recorded and transcribed.

- I understand that I will be provided with a digital voice recorder for the purpose of this research and that it will be mine to keep.
- I understand that I am able to choose to journal in written form or digital voice recording or a mixture of both.
- I understand that a sent journal will indicate my permission for it to be included as data.
- I understand that the researcher may transcribe my digitally voice recorded interviews and journaling.
- I understand that a third party may transcribe my digitally voice recorded interviews and journals and, if so, that person will have signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I choose to take part I will have the right to withdraw at any time, however there will be an expectation that I will be committing to the study for its duration because gathering data over time is important for the credibility of this study.
- I understand that if I choose to withdraw I may not be able to require that data collected up until that point is removed from the study.
- I understand that data will be kept for 6 years, after which they will be destroyed.

I have / have not met in person or spoken on the phone with the researcher.

- I agree to take part in this research.

Name _____

Contact Phone number_____ Contact email address _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON
26 August 2014 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 012903

Appendix C: Confidentiality Agreement: Research Assistant

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Te Kura Akoranga o Tāmaki Makaurau
ncorporating the Auckland College of Education

Epsom Campus
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Avenue
Auckland, New Zealand
Telephone 64 9 623 8899
Facsimile 64 9 623 8898
www.education.auckland.ac.nz

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street
Auckland 1150, New Zealand

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT
(Research Assistant)

Project title: Investigating the nature of the transition from classroom teacher to mentor teacher and the effects of the processes involved on the mentor teacher's work with student teachers

Researcher: Vivienne Mackisack

Supervisor: Dr Fiona Ell; Dr Lexie Grudnoff

- I agree to conduct the research for the above research project.
- I understand that this will entail:
    - receiving the names and contact details of participants who have been selected and making initial contact to review research protocols;
    - providing my phone and email contact details to participants;
    - making all appointments as needed for this research;
    - establishing, and using, pseudonyms for each of the participants and the student teachers with whom they work;
    - conducting all face to face and phone data collection procedures for this research;
    - digitally recording all face to face and phone data collection;
    - receiving and collating written and digitally voice recorded journals;
    - arranging for all digitally voice recorded interviews, conversations and journals to be transcribed;
    - ensuring that the researcher only receives digitally voice recorded files, written journals associate teacher documentation and transcripts that are cleaned of any identifiers;
    - establishing secure processes for all of the above;

I understand that the information that I receive while discharging these duties is confidential and must not be disclosed.

Name: _____ Date: _____
Signature: _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON
26 August 2014 FOR (3) YEARS REFERENCE NUMBER 012903

Appendix D: Sample Interview Protocols for the Study

First Interview

Before conducting these interviews, the research assistant will have had a minimum of one informal conversation with the participants either by phone or face-to-face visiting.

The interview will begin with
- introductions (including Viv and her role in the study)
- the purpose and focus of the study (e.g: about the process of becoming, designed to help build understanding, not an evaluation of practice, not about the preservice teacher)
- explanation of the procedures (e.g.: pseudonyms, contact, checking interpretations)

Indicative Questions
Why did you decide to become a primary school teacher?
What makes you feel successful as a teacher?
Please could you describe your most memorable experience as a student teacher.
What would you say are the attributes of being an effective mentor teacher?
What do you think being a mentor teacher is going to mean for you?

Second Interview

Throughout the interview it is important to remember and prompt for: decisions and experiences, activities and practices, sense of self, future self, role definition, opportunity to learn, experiences, judgments

Indicative Questions

Please tell me about your experience during the practicum.	E	
What do you think were the particular elements that contributed to your feelings about your practicum experience as a mentor teacher?	A&P	
What one word would you use to describe the style of mentor teacher that you think that you are?	SoS	closed
What specific attributes of this style of mentor teacher do you recognize in yourself?	SoS	closed
Is recognition of these attributes new for you, or is this something that you have recognised about yourself before? Please explain?	SoS	closed with prompt
Please describe what is most important to you as a mentor teacher at this moment.	RD	

Note: E – experiences; A&P – activities and practices; SoS – sense of self; RD – role definition

Final Interview

Indicative Question
Please tell me about (a memorable experience) during your time as a mentor teacher.

Throughout the interview it is important to prompt when needed. For example: that's interesting, how did that feel? tell me more about…